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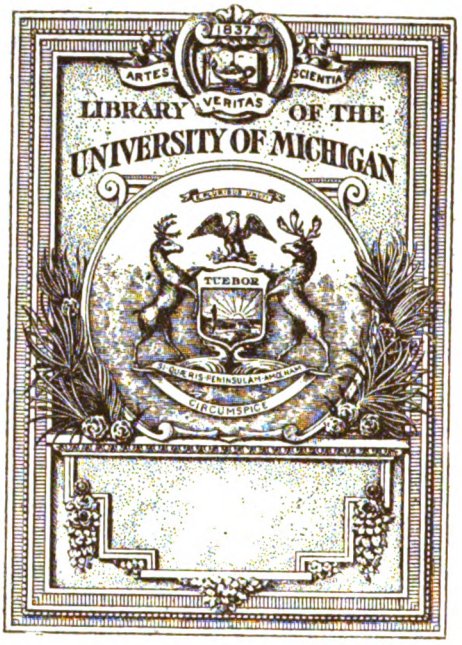
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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By JEFFERY FARNOL.

CHAPTER I.—WHICH DESCRIBES AMONG OTHER THINGS A PAIR OF WHISKERS.

IN the writing of books, as all the world knows, two things are above all other things essential—the one is to know exactly when and where to leave off, and the other to be equally certain when and where to begin.

Now this book, naturally enough, begins with Mr Brimberly's whiskers; begins at that moment when he coughed and pulled down his waistcoat for the first time. And yet (since action is as necessary to the success of a book as to life itself) it should perhaps begin more properly at the psychological moment when Mr Brimberly coughed and pulled down the garment aforesaid for the third time, since it is then that the real action of this story commences.

Be that as it may, it is beyond all question that nowhere in this wide world could there possibly be found just such another pair of whiskers as those which adorned the plump cheeks of Mr Brimberly; without them he might have been only an ordinary man, but, possessing them, he was the very incarnation of all that a butler could possibly be.

And what whiskers these were! So soft, so fleecy, so purely white, that at times they almost seemed like the wings of cherubim striving to soar away and bear Mr Brimberly into a higher and purer sphere. Again, what protean whiskers were these! whose fleecy pomposity could overawe the most superior young footmen and reduce page-boys, tradesmen, and the lower orders generally to a state of perspiring humility; to his equals how calmly aloof, how blandly dignified; and to those a misguided fate had set above him how demurely deferential, how obligingly obsequious! Indeed, Mr Brimberly's whiskers were all things to all men, and therein lay their potency.

Mr Brimberly, then, pompous, affable, and most sedate, having motioned his visitor into his master's favourite chair, set down the tray of decanters and glasses upon the piano, coughed and pulled down his waistcoat; and Mr Brimberly did it all with that air of portentous dignity and leisurely solemnity which, together with his whiskers, made him the personality he was.

'And you 're still valeting for Barberton, are you, Mr Stevens?' he blandly inquired.

'I 've been with his lordship six months now,' nodded Mr Stevens.

'Ah!' said Mr Brimberly, opening a certain carved cabinet and reaching thence a box of his master's choicest havanas; 'six months, indeed! And 'ow is Barberton? I hacted in the capacity of 'is confidential valet a good many years ago, as I told you, and we always got on very well together, very well indeed! 'Ow is Barberton?'

'Oh, 'e 'd be right enough if it warn't for 'is gout, which gets 'im in the big toe now and then, and 'is duns and creditors and sich-like low fellers as gets 'im everywhere and constant! 'E 'll never be quite 'imself until 'e marries money—and plenty of it!'

'A American hair-ess!' nodded Mr Brimberly. 'Pre-cisely! I very nearly married 'im to a rich widder ten years ago. 'E 'd 'ave been settled for life if 'e 'd took my advice! But Barberton was always inclined to be a little 'eadstrong. The widder in question 'appened to be a trifle par-say, I 'll admit; also it was 'inted that one of 'er—lower limbs was cork. But then 'er money, sir! 'er jools!' Mr Brimberly raised eyes and hands and shook his head until his whiskers quivered in a very ecstasy.

'But a wooden leg!' began Mr Stevens dubiously.

'I said "limb," sir!' said Mr Brimberly, his whiskers distinctly agitated—'a cork limb, sir! And, lord bless me, a cork limb ain't to be sniffed at contemptuous when it brings haffluence with it, sir! At least, my sentiments leans that way.'

'Oh, ditto, certainly, sir! I 'd take haffluence to my 'eart if she came with both le—both of 'em cork, if it meant haffluence like this!' Mr Stevens let his pale, prominent eyes wander slowly round the luxuriant splendour of the room. 'My eye!' he exclaimed; 'it 's easy to see as your governor don't 'ave to bother about marrying money, cork limbs or otherwise! Very rich, ain't 'e, Mr Brimberly?'

Mr Brimberly set down the decanter he chanced to be holding, and, having caressed each fluffy whisker, smiled. 'I think, sir,' said he gently—'yes, I think we may answer "yes" to

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your latter question. I think we may tell you and admit 'ole-'earted and frank, sir, that the Ravenslee fortune is fab'lous, sir, stoopendious and himmense!'

'Oh lord!' exclaimed Mr Stevens, and his pale eyes, much wider now, wandered up from the Persian rug beneath his boots to the elaborately carved ceiling above his head. 'My aunt!' he murmured.

'Oh, I think we're fairly comfortable 'ere, sir,' nodded Mr Brimberly complacently; 'yes, fairly comfortable, I think.'

'Comfortable!' ejaculated the awe-struck Mr Stevens; 'I should say so! My word!'

'Yes,' pursued Mr Brimberly, 'comfortable, and I ventur' to think, tasteful, sir; for I'll admit young Ravenslee—though a millionaire and young—'as taste. Observe this costly bricky-brack! Oh yes, Young Har is a man of taste indoobitably I think you must admit?'

'Very much so indeed, sir!' answered Mr Stevens, with his pallid glance on the array of bottles. '"Three Star" I think, Mr Brimberly?'

'Sir,' sighed Mr Brimberly in gentle reproach, 'you 'ere be'old cognac brandy as couldn't be acquired for twenty-five dollars the bottle! Then 'ere we 'ave Jubilee port, a rare old sherry, and whisky. Now, what shall we make it? You being, like myself, a Englishman in this 'ere land of eagles, spread and otherwise, suppose we make it a B and a Hess?'

'By all means!' nodded Mr Stevens.

'I was meditating,' said Mr Brimberly, busied with the bottles and glasses, 'I was cogitating calling hup Mr Jenkins, the Stanways' butler across the way. The Stanways is common people, parvynoo, Mr Stevens—parvynoo; but Mr Jenkins is very superior, and plays the banjer very affecting. Our 'ousekeeper and the maids is gone to bed, and I've give our footmen leave of habsence—I thought we might 'ave a nice quiet musical hour or so? You perform on the piano-forty, I believe, sir?'

'Only very occasional!' Mr Stevens admitted. 'But,' and here his pale eyes glanced towards the door, 'do I understand as 'e is out for the night?'

'Sir,' said Mr Brimberly ponderously, 'what 'e might you be pleased to mean?'

'I was merely allooding to—to your governor, sir.'

Mr Brimberly glanced at his guest, set down the glass he was in the act of filling, and—pulled down his waistcoat for the second time. 'Sir,' said he, and his cherubic whiskers seemed positively to quiver, 'I presoom—I say I presoom—you are referring to Young Har?'

'I meant Mr Ravenslee.'

'Then may I beg that you'll allood to 'im 'enceforth as Young Har? This is Young Har's own room, sir. These is Young Har's own picters, sir. When Young Har is absent I generally sit 'ere with me cigar and observe said picters. I 'm fond of hart, sir; I find hart soothing and restful. The picters surrounding of you are all painted by Young Har's very own 'and—subjeks various. Number one—a windmill very much out o' repair, but that 's hart, sir. Number two—a lady dressed in what I might term dish-a-bell, sir, and there isn't much of it, but that 's hart again. Number three—a sunset. Number four—moonlight; 'e didn't get the moon in the picter, but the light 's there, and that 's the great thing—effect, sir—effect! Of course, being only studies, they don't look finished—which is the most hartistikest part about 'em! But, lord! Young Har never finishes anything—too tired. 'Ang me, sir, if I don't think 'e were born tired! But then 'oo ever knew a haristocrat as wasn't?'

'But,' demurred Mr Stevens, staring down into his empty glass, 'I thought 'e was a American—your Young Har?'

'Why, 'e is and 'e ain't, sir. 'Is father was only a American I'll confess, but 'is mother was blue blood, every drop guaranteed, sir, and as truly English as—as I am.'

'And is 'e the Mr Ravenslee as is the sportsman? Goes in for boxing, don't 'e? Very much fancied as a 'eavy-weight, ain't 'e? My governor 's seen him box, and says 'e 's a perfect snorter, by Jove!'

Mr Brimberly sighed, and soothed a slightly agitated whisker. 'Why, yes,' he admitted, 'I'm afraid 'e does box; but only as a amitoor, Mr Stevens, strickly as a amitoor, understand.'

'And 'e 's out making a night of it, is 'e?' inquired Mr Stevens, leaning back luxuriously and stretching his legs. 'Bit of a rip, ain't 'e?'

'A—wot, sir?' inquired Mr Brimberly with raised brows.

'Well, very wild, ain't 'e—drinks, gambles, and hetceteras, don't 'e?'

'Why, as to that, sir,' answered Mr Brimberly, dexterously performing on the siphon, 'I should answer you, drink 'e may, gamble 'e do, hetceteras I won't answer for, 'im being the very hacme of respectability, though 'e is a millionaire and young.'

'And when might you expect 'im back?'

'Why, there 's no telling, Mr Stevens.'

'Eh!' exclaimed Mr Stevens, and sat up very suddenly.

''Is movements, sir, is quite—ah—quite metehoric!'

'My eye!' exclaimed Mr Stevens, gulping his brandy-and-soda rather hastily.

'Metehoric is the only word for it, sir,' pursued Mr Brimberly with a slow nod. ''E may drop in on us at any moment, sir.'

'Why then,' said his guest, rising, 'p'r'aps I'd better be moving?'

'On the other 'and,' pursued Mr Brimberly, smiling and caressing his left whisker, ''e may be on 'is way to Hafghanistan or Hasia Minor

at this pre-cise moment—'e is that metehoric, lord. These millionaires is much of a muchness, sir, 'ere to-day, gone to-morrer. Noo York this week, London or Paris the next. Young Har is always upsetting my plans, 'e is, and that's a fact, sir. Me, being a nat'rally quiet, reasonable, and law-abiding character, I objects to youthful millionaires on principle, Mr Stevens—on principle.'

'Ditto,' nodded Mr Stevens, his glance wandering uneasily to the door again, 'ditto with all my 'eart, sir. If it's all the same to you, I think p'r'aps I'd better be 'opping—you know.'

'Oh, don't you worry about Young Har; 'e won't bother us to-night; 'e's off Long Island way to try his nooest 'igh-power racing-car 'e's driving in the Vanderbilt Cup Race next month. To-night 'e expects to do eighty miles or so, and 'opes to sleep at one of 'is clubs. I say 'e 'opes an' expects so to do.'

'Yes,' nodded Mr Stevens, 'certainly; but what do you mean?'

'Sir,' sighed Mr Brimberly, 'if you'd been forced by stern dooty to sit be'ind Young Har in a fast automobile, as I 'ave, you'd know what I mean. Reckless! Speed! Well, there!' and Mr Brimberly lifted hands and eyes, and shook his head until his whiskers vibrated with horror.

'Then you're pretty sure,' said Mr Stevens, settling luxurious boots upon a cushioned chair, 'you're pretty sure 'e won't come bobbing up when least expected?'

'Pretty sure,' nodded Mr Brimberly. 'You see, this nooest car is the very latest thing in racing-cars—cost a fortune, consequently it's bound to break down—these here expensive cars always do, believe me.'

'Why then,' said Mr Stevens, helping himself to one of Mr Brimberly's master's cigars, 'I say let joy and 'armony be unconfined! 'Ow about Jenkins and 'is banjer?'

'I'll call 'im up immediate,' nodded Mr Brimberly, rising. 'Mr Jenkins is a true hartist, equally facetious and soulful, sir.'

So saying, Mr Brimberly arose and crossed towards the telephone. But scarcely had he taken three steps when he paused suddenly and stood rigid and motionless, his staring gaze fixed upon the nearest window; for, from the shadowy world beyond came a sound, faint as yet and far away, but a sound there was no mistaking—the dismal tooting of an automobile horn.

''Eavens an' earth!' exclaimed Mr Brimberly, and crossing to the window, he peered out. Once again the horn was heard, but very much nearer now, and louder; whereupon Mr Brimberly turned almost hastily, and his visitor rose hurriedly.

'It's very annoying, Mr Stevens,' said he, 'but can I trouble you to—to step—er—downstairs—*with* the glasses? It's 'ighly mortifying, but may I ask you to—er—step a little lively, Mr Stevens?'

Without a word Mr Stevens caught up the tray from the piano and glided away on his toe-points; whereupon Mr Brimberly, being alone, became astonishingly agile and nimble all at once, diving down to straighten a rug here and there, rearranging chairs and tables; he even opened the window and hurled two half-smoked cigars far out into the night; and his eye was as calm, his brow as placid, his cheek as rosy as ever, only his whiskers—those snowy, tell-tale whiskers—quivered spasmodically, very much as though endeavouring to do the manifestly impossible and flutter away with Mr Brimberly altogether. Yes, it was all in his whiskers.

Thus did Mr Brimberly bustle softly to and fro until he paused, all at once, arrested by the sound of a slow, firm step near by. Then Mr Brimberly coughed, smoothed his wing-like whiskers, and—pulled down his waistcoat for the third time. And lo! even as he did so, the door opened and the hero of this history stood upon the threshold.

(*Continued on page 21.*)

FORGOTTEN ISLES OF THE WEST INDIES.

NO islands of the West Indies are less known than those of the Virgin Group. Yet possession of the westward isles has been the steady aim, for some years, not only of the United States, but of Germany as well. The equally interesting and as little known islands of the eastern section, bold, craggy, and high, like those to westward—with the exception of that low, flat island famed in the history of the buccaneers, Anegada or 'Drowned' Island—are among the colonies now forgotten by Britain, since their importance declined with the emancipation of the slaves, and the consequent great reduction in its exports. But it was in Virgin Gorda the Spaniards worked the first mine for precious metal in the New World.

St Thomas, St John, Santa Cruz or Ste Croix, Savana, Brass, and the lesser islands now again come into diplomatic history after more than one hundred and sixty years' existence under the rule of Denmark, the Government of which, under Frederick V., bought them in 1754 from a Danish trading company, into whose hands they had come by purchase, capture, or possession through settlers. For some few years during the Napoleonic war, however, they were held by Britain.

Few islands, even in the Caribbean Sea, with its annals of almost continuous war and piracy

throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, have witnessed such scenes as St Thomas in its early days. For, like its British neighbour, Tortola, to the eastward—St John intervening—it was originally settled by Dutch *boucaniers*—who took their name from their method of preserving the flesh of cattle by smoking it, as they had been taught by the Caribs—toward the middle of the seventeenth century; and they in turn were driven out by the French filibusters in 1667, after a savage struggle.

The Virgin Islands were discovered by Columbus in 1493, and named by him Las Virgines, after the Romish legend of St Ursula and her eleven thousand sisterhood, for then as to-day the islands and keys seemed innumerable. In 1586 Sir Francis Drake, in his memorable voyage to the Spanish Main, also named them the Virgin Islands, in compliment to Queen Elizabeth. But already their old inhabitants, the Caribs, had passed away, for the islands were, St Thomas included, wholly uninhabited. To-day the only evidence of that most interesting race in the Virgins is the heaps of burnt coral lying along the shores of rocky keys which now have not even a sign of vegetation.

There are picturesque towns in the West Indies which linger in the memory, but none can approach Charlotte Amalia, the capital of St Thomas, an island only twelve miles long and one to three broad. The writer remembers often making it from seaward in early morning, when the flush of tropical dawn was dyeing the blue heavens with floods of carmine, amber, and creamy yellow, and the land-wind was rippling the sea to windward into dark-blue wavelets. Through the haze the land loomed big. To the right lay Myhlenfeldts Point, with whitewashed lighthouse and ancient battery, rising grounds, trending steeply up to Bellevue and Flag Mounts, a blur of jungle, groves of trees, and cultivated land. As the steamer approached the narrow entrance there rose the dim, distant heights of Judgeberg, and Kiaer with its white tower; near to westward Crowell Point, with its signal-station; and, farther, French Hill—so called from the fight between the *boucaniers* and the filibusters in 1667—covered with patches of vivid greenery. Right ahead lies the harbour, where, with but little improvement, the greatest navy in the world could anchor all its ships in perfect safety at all seasons of the year. Beyond it is Charlotte Amalia, that peculiarly charming little town, orderly arranged along the north shore of the haven, but straggling up toward the mountain range behind. Its red-tiled brick and shingled houses gleam from behind rows of coco-nut and cabbage palms, silk-cotton and green fruit trees, but are partly hidden till the banks of woolly mist, dissolved into golden haze in the sun's rays, quickly clear away. On the west and east sides of the harbour, which is like a water-bottle in shape—the long, narrow neck of the bottle being the channel leading seaward—steamers and sailing-vessels are moored, with a liner belonging to the French Compagnie Générale Transatlantique, or the R.M.S.S. Company, or other line, just moving out from her jetty.

Here in 1788 was but a sleepy Danish settlement, the last resort of wild spirits in the West Indies; for justice, though slow, was sure, and the law was administered with a stern hand. But in that year Admiral Rodney captured the island of Eustatius from the Dutch—a vast capture—with upwards of one hundred and fifty merchantmen, for Eustatius was then the centre of trade, contraband and other, in the West Indies; and thus St Thomas became the depot for all commerce. In twenty years the free population of Charlotte Amalia increased from fifteen hundred to twenty-five thousand persons. As the letter of a great-granduncle of the writer states, 'Everything, contraband or not, is to be found here. India goods—tea, spices, Canton crape, Madras coifs, nankeens, &c.; wines, spirits, and preserved fruits from France; dried meats, medicinal waters, &c., from Germany; lumber, shingles, maize, salt fish, &c., from the States; the coffee, cotton, and rum of the Antilles—these, with articles of European manufacture, whether for use or luxury, from a toy to a steamboat, may find purchasers at St Thomas.' This spell of great prosperity was repeated for a brief period during the blockade-running days of the American Civil War, when the free port of St Thomas figured very large.

Along the water-front of the town lies King's Wharf, the landing-place of the numerous shore-boats that ply between the shore and the steamers' anchorage or the farther sides of the harbour, which sweeps eastward in a broad curve round a wooded savanna, where there are delightful residences laughing out on the water from their screen of foliage. Groves of palms forming covered walks intercept from view the houses rising from seaward with more or less acclivity. In other parts the red-and-yellow buildings stand out with striking effect where unscreened by greenery. Many picturesque dwellings are scattered in the neighbourhood, some on low eminences, others almost lost in the jungle, where they nestle on the hillside, here, on the very edge of the low sea-cliff, and there, towering over the port from the mountain-side. Indeed, when viewed from the water's edge, these, and the windmills higher yet above them, seem almost to hang over you.

The great trading street of St Thomas extends in a broad line parallel with the water-front for about a mile and a half, and has changed with the times; yet among the old-established firms one still finds in use the ancestral 'fireproof'—that is, a large stone building, into which

you enter by large, thick iron doors. These admit you to a kind of above-ground vault, where the merchandise is piled up to the roof for protection against the fires which used to rage but too frequently in the town.

Charlotte Amalia is, however, not at a standstill, and in American hands may become the show-place of the West Indies. Equally so it may outrival the other islands in its products; and its exports of sugar, tobacco, and cotton may far exceed those of slave days. The emancipation of the negroes brought ruin to the Virgin Islands, as well as to most of the West Indies, a few of which have won back their prosperity only in this decade. Often, in St Thomas, when one has left the road—that, among the wild and rocky hills extending east to west, and branching north and south, is washed rugged by the heavy rains—and takes to the track, one finds the remains of large gates, and what was once a wide carriage-drive, now wholly overgrown with trees of hardwood and prickly pear, mangosteen and cashaw, and undergrowth. This drive leads to the ruins of a large plantation-house of brick, including the remains of a coach-house and stables, with large slave-buildings attached. Nature has reclaimed her own again!

It was here, when one was following what had once been a carriage-drive leading to the neighbouring plantation, that a view was obtained of that which has partly prompted the Washington Government to bid for St Thomas and sister-islands. Through the overhanging evergreens and manchineel one saw the sea below and its tangled islets, hemmed in to westward by the blue highlands of Puerto Rico, only some thirty odd miles away.

Safe it is to assert that St Thomas, after a few years of United States pushfulness and organisation, already bearing great fruits in Puerto Rico, would become not only the 'Pearl' of the Lesser Antilles, but also a notable tourist centre. The island is healthy, and its soil is among the best in all the Antilles. It lies on one of the great trade routes, and is exceedingly picturesque from Nazareth in the east to Bordeaux and Botany Bay in the west. There could be no finer outlook than that obtained from Signal Hill, nearly in the middle of the island. The scenery from this spot is like a vision of fairyland expanding at your feet. The views of the haven and town and shipping, under various aspects, with the wild country around, are enchanting. The eye travels, too, along the irregular south and north coasts, with their many islets and rocky keys, out towards St John's, Tortola, José Vandyck, and other picturesque islands, their wooded mountains in the foreground, all laved by the silver waters, till sea and isle are lost in the blue-gray haze of distance.

It is worth noting that St Thomas, which may in time be developed into an important United States naval base, was formerly held in part by German colonists from the Duchy of Brandenburg. At this day it is lucky for Britain and her Allies that Denmark, some eight years ago, stoutly refused Germany's bid of eight million pounds for her colonies. There would now have been a Heligoland, stronger even than that in the 'wet triangle,' which would have commanded the sea lanes of the West Indies, and, southwestward, the initial approach to the Panamá Canal.

But within less than two hours' swift steaming there lies, east-north-east of St Thomas, the second oldest and most forgotten possession of ours in the West Indies; and it, in turn, commands the Atlantic approaches to the island on which the Kaiser and Herr Ballin have so set their hearts.

Rugged, rocky, with a harbour at Roadtown on the south side which could soon be rendered one of the best in the Caribbean, Tortola, once the property of James Hay, Earl of Carlisle and merchant adventurer, could be turned into a Gibraltar as easily as it was made an important strategic position in the eighteenth century. It was the age when fleets of British merchantmen, convoyed by men-of-war, swept up Drake's Channel, the finest and most striking sheet of sea-water in the New World, lying broad and fair between Tortola, Beef, and Scrub Islands on the north, and the charming fringe of keys, rocks, and islands on the south. West Indiamen, snows, and other merchant vessels gathered at the rendezvous under the lee of Peter or Norman Island, on its south side, to await the arrival of the naval escort. Strong batteries defended Roadtown; and Purcell Fort, Hodges Fort, and others held Drake's Channel under the protection of their cannon. To-day the ruins of the fortifications can hardly be traced among the giant growths, and the average Tortolan is careless of their whereabouts.

Few of Britain's forgotten outposts present features so novel and romantic as Tortola. A continuous mountain ridge for nearly all its twelve miles from east to west, with creeks, channels, and lagoons in almost every direction, its lofty green heights look down upon the picturesque chain of surrounding islands, with St John and St Thomas lying beyond. Tortola is now chiefly peopled by peasant proprietors engaged in raising cattle, growing vegetables, and burning charcoal, which they in the main trade with St Thomas. But a century ago the island was covered with sugar and cotton plantations, most of them managed by Scotsmen, chiefly from Greenock. Not until the development anew of the British West Indies is seriously and practically taken in hand will Tortola recover from the blow given by the emancipation of the slaves.

Were the famous epicurean of early nineteenth century Roadtown, who gave breakfasts noted

throughout the sybaritic West Indies, to return, he would perhaps find but little change in the long, so-called street of the town.

Still outlined on the silvery surface of the Road and waters beyond are the steep, dark-green hills rising high over creek and lagoon; the many-branched trees stand out against the sky, and palms with their graceful foliage show dark. Drake's Channel, spreading far and near, still seems to meet the heavens, except for the peep of the distant islands in the south-east. Still the one-storied, piazzaed houses of shingle straggle along, facing the beach and quay, some of them embosomed in greenery; while narrow and winding paths debouching from the street climb west and north-west over the mountains, looking down from precipitous crags over the luxuriant vegetation and the low street appearing close underfoot, with its mangroves, mountain-cabbage, and coco-nut palms.

Part of the interior of Tortola is almost as wild to-day as it was when the Carolinean Englishmen and Dutchmen of buccaneering bent settled there, and cut each other's throats. There is many a narrow savanna and gorge where the manchineel and bois immortelle and cactus again grow thick; and here and there a wilderness of tropical vegetation where the Scots sugar-planter once throve. The cotton-tree soon overgrew the ruins of his house, and the garden grounds became overspread with wild mangosteen and cashaw apples, plantain and banana trees, Barbadian vine, and American aloe, on the rare blossoms of which the bejewelled humming-bird loves to hover.

Virgin Gorda (with its lodes of copper, molybdenite, and gold), Peter Island, Anegada, and the fairyland of José Vandyck—they too are among our forgotten Virgins. The history of the group is the history of the decline and fall of the British West Indies, which alone, if properly developed and administered, would solve many of the food problems that the British Isles will have to face in the near future.

LA SIERPES.

By ANDREW W. ARNOLD,
Author of *The Attack on the Farm*, *Pepita*, *Père Mumbart*, *Henriette*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

'WELL, I suppose I must go and see about that horse,' said my comrade, Pierre Delnard, moodily, as we stood in the shade under the piazza of the Real Palacio at Barcelona one broiling day in July 1812. 'It's not a bad one, but I don't care for the colour; I don't care for an Isabelle*; still—— *Sapristi!*' he exclaimed suddenly in a very different tone, 'there are a couple of beauties. Do you see them? They are coming straight toward us.'

'Yes, *ma foi!* I see them,' I replied. 'Both are perfect in their way, but of the two I prefer the blonde.'

'Well, I don't,' said Pierre. 'There's more devil, more what they call *fuego*, in the dark one. What pearly teeth; what rosy lips! But do you know,' he continued with conviction, as they came nearer, 'I have seen the brunette before, and at the *quartier-général*, too. I suppose she's a *muchacha* there. It was droll. Fardonarelle—he thinks himself irresistible—and I were waiting in the *patio* for the General to come out, when this very girl—and I am certain it was she—came along the cloisters. "Ah, *chiquita mia*," he cried, and he was going to chuck her under the chin; but, *ma foi!* though she may look very *amoroso* now, you should have seen how she sprang aside, and the way her eyes flashed and her hand flew to her breast. She's got a *punalica*, and I'll warrant she knows how to use it. He very soon gave her plenty of space, I can tell you.'

It was evident, as the pair crossed the crowded *plaza*—for it was market-day—that they had some great and, from their manner, very pleasant secret. I had seldom, if ever, seen two girls walk more lovingly. The brunette, who was slightly taller than her companion, had her arm round the latter's waist; and they were quite oblivious as they came toward us to all the cries of the stall-holders as they tried to draw attention to their wares; the finest melons and the daintiest *turrones* (almond-cakes) were nothing to them.

Without doubt, to me the blonde was vastly superior. To keep off the blazing sun she held her fan above her in such a way that one could not see her quite so well as one would have wished; but the happy, trusting smile in those soft radiant eyes, as she looked up into the bright twin stars of her companion, was quite enough for me. Besides, from the quality and fit of her short black jacket and pink skirt, and the costly *arracadas*,† she seemed of a higher class than her friend, who had a shawl over her head, and appeared to be a superior sort of factory-girl. Close to us two urchins were spinning tops. 'La Sierpes!' suddenly exclaimed one of them to his companion as he looked up

* Very light bay.

† Huge amethyst ear-rings peculiar to Catalonia.

and saw the two girls. 'Sh! 'sh!' muttered a sunburnt peasant leading his donkey, as he shook his head and frowned at the boy.

The defeat of Marshal Moncey at Almansa by the monk Rico caused the latter to be the acknowledged leader of the guerrillas in Catalonia; but there was a young fellow, Juan Larlonez by name, who, from his audacity, and above all by his craftiness, by which he had truly earned his sobriquet of La Sierpes ('the Serpent'), was fast becoming as famous as the monk. There seemed to be no limit to the infernal artfulness of this clever, handsome young rogue. The most fantastic stories were told of him. Disguised as an old witch, it was said that he had actually one evening told Marshal Suchet and his *état major* their fortunes.

'Did you hear that?' I whispered to my companion, drawing him aside as the two passed close to us.

'No,' he answered; 'I was staring at the girl. Let us see which way she goes.'

'But she's not a girl, I tell you; it is La Sierpes.'

But he shook his head with an incredulous laugh. At a safe distance we followed the amorous pair, who, quite taken up with each other, walked closer than ever. Cleverly as the fellow was disguised, he had made serious *faux pas*. His yellow skirt should have been longer. Small as his feet may have been for a man, and finely moulded as his ankles were, the difference from those of his *belle amie* was apparent at once.

'Anyway, I've no time; but suppose it is La Sierpes,' said Pierre, 'it is no affair of ours. This is police work. You would have twenty *navajos* in you if you attempted to touch her, or him, whichever you like.'

'I know that. Who dreams of taking him here? But just think what it would mean in the way of promotion!'

'Well, I am not going to make a fool of myself, whoever it is. I don't believe that that snake would go promenading about in broad daylight with a girl, especially such a pretty one as that;' and, promising to meet me in the evening, he set off to keep his appointment. I saw the difficulties and the danger; but one never rises in this world by shirking them.

In the distance, coming toward me, I saw a *maréchal des logis* and a brigadier, smart fellows both of them, belonging to my own regiment. I saw the way they naturally gazed at the girls, and how they turned and looked at them as they passed.

'Sergeant,' I said sharply in a low voice as they saluted, 'have you seen any of our police?'

'Yes, *mon capitaine*, I saw one, if not two, a little way ahead of you.'

Then, to his astonishment, I told him what I knew. 'Look!' I continued, 'they have turned down that street. Go as quietly but as fast as you can, and find an *agent*.'

Then I told the brigadier to follow me at a short distance. It was a long thoroughfare that they had turned into, and it was not very crowded. The pair crossed to the shady side; and in a listless way I followed in the sun. Then they went into a narrow street. As I crossed the road I could see nothing of the sergeant or the *agent*, and I was about to tell the brigadier to wait for them, when he said he saw them, and, what is more, they saw him.

'Follow me, then,' I said; and we hastened on.

We were close upon the love-sick couple when they turned into a squalid yard, where, to my surprise, I saw a brigadier and two artillerymen loading a wagon of straw. Now was my chance. With a light step I sprang forward. 'Halt!' I shouted, with my left hand on the guerrilla's shoulder. The blonde gave a scream and darted away; while 'the Serpent' wriggled from my grasp, leaving a shawl in my hand, darted aside, turned, and fired. But I was ready for that, for my bullet struck his arm first, and, instead of my heart, his bullet, I found afterwards, had entered my foot. In a second the wily young rogue would have escaped up some steps leading to a loft. He had started, when I hurled my smoking weapon at him. It struck him full on the head, and he fell in a heap.

The whole incident had happened in a few seconds. At first the denizens of the wretched buildings were too surprised to do anything; but the sight of a hated *gavacho* * Frenchman attacking an apparently helpless girl was too much for the Spaniards, whose deadly *navajos* were quickly produced.

'Bind him!' I cried to the artillerymen as I drew my sword and faced a couple of Spaniards who seemed as if they would spring at me. Luckily at that moment the sergeant and a police *agent* arrived.

'Cut down any one,' I cried, 'who tries to get out or to enter;' for I knew our lives were not worth a *reale* if it got abroad that we had captured La Sierpes. The latter, quickly and securely bound with the linen torn from the skirts he was wearing, was placed in the cart. Then it was, for the first time, I felt I was wounded, and I had to be lifted into the wagon beside my unconscious victim. Once out of the courtyard, we galloped as fast as we could to our quarters, passing harmlessly through the crowds, who little thought the far-famed Sierpes was lying on the straw a prisoner.

The sight of a girl in the wagon as we entered the barrack-yard soon brought the troopers from their quarters; and, as the news of the capture of the dreaded young guerrilla spread, many were

* A name of the greatest loathing, derived from the Arabic word *gafa*, a leper.

the congratulations I received as I sat on a bucket with my foot under a tap of running water till the *médecin-major* turned up. Not till he had had some wine did 'the Serpent' regain consciousness, and then he refused to give his name, though his identity was soon established by a letter hidden in his corset.

Though my wound was a small one, from one of the bones being broken it was troublesome; and the *major*, after he had got the bullet out, told me that I could not be fit for service for a month. This was hard; but I went to sleep from the opiate the *major* gave me, highly pleased with my day's work.

Spanish barracks are notoriously unhealthy, and the one we Chasseurs occupied down by the harbour behind the Arsenal was horribly so. There were few cleverer officers on the *état major* of General Foy than my kind-hearted uncle, General Brunier of the Engineers. In Alsace we children always called him uncle, though he had married only a step-sister of my father.

Looking on me very much as a son, the General, as soon as he heard of the misfortune that had befallen me, very soon came, and quickly persuaded my colonel to allow me to be taken to his own quarters, which were in a fine old real Moorish house with a beautiful *patio* having a colonnade all round of very graceful columns, palm and orange trees, and a fountain in the centre that always played. The *major* admitted afterwards that the opiate he had given me was too strong, and when I became conscious, and heard the splash of the fountain, and the scent of jasmine and roses came through the open window, no wonder I thought I was dreaming.

'Now, Henri, my son, you will have a fair chance; only you will have to be quiet for a day or two. You did a fine thing in catching that rogue, who was quietly shot last night. Moreover, it appears, through your catching him, they have unravelled a plot that he had a hand in to blow up the house occupied by General Foy;' and my uncle went on to corroborate what Delnard had told me. 'Why,' he said, 'the young scamp actually went to the *quartier-général* dressed as a servant to examine the terrain, as they intended to get into the cellars from a neighbouring house. Renaud, the chief of the police, told me; he is coming to see you to-morrow, and I should not wonder if Foy comes too.'

Sure enough, Colonel Renaud came, and I asked him who the beautiful girl was, as she was really the magnet that had drawn the notorious guerrilla to his doom. She was, it appeared, a famous beauty commonly known as La Blonda; but her real name was Pedrilla Lebron, and she lived with her grandmother. It was she that La Sierpes used as an intermediary to communicate with his friends in the town; for, seated on her donkey, she would pass through our lines and take messages to her lover. For a sum which to her meant affluence all the days of her life, the old grandmother told all she knew, and at the same time agreed to let us know more. La Blonda, meanwhile, was placed in security, but kindly treated.

It was given out that the officer who caught the guerrilla was not badly wounded, and had rejoined his regiment; for if La Blonda had seen me or any one connected with me who had had a hand in the capture of her lover, our lives would not have been worth much.

To while away the time of my convalescence I got a guitar, and used to sit up in bed and play it. I had one gift, and only one, which I had any right to be proud of, and this was a fine voice. Nature had given me this, I suppose, as a compensation for my very plain features. I must have inherited this gift from my mother, who taught me to sing as a child. She was an heiress in her own right. Though my father was a banker in Strasburg, we always went to Paris during the winter; and when my regiment, after the campaign of Wagram, was quartered there, at her desire I had the very finest masters for singing. Thus the time passed very pleasantly, and in a week I was able to go down to the *patio*. This was a step onward; but what did as much as anything else was a visit General Foy was good enough to pay me. He was very kind, and told me, if I had a favour to ask, not to hesitate to do so.

The day following the General's visit I was resting in the *patio*, when an officer of the police and another of the *duane*, with a gentleman and his daughter, arrived. The girl was about eighteen, and strikingly beautiful. I was so much taken up gazing at her that I scarcely noticed the others, who were engaged talking to the doorkeeper.

Then they made their way to an entrance to a suite of *appartements* opposite those of my uncle.

'Well, sir,' said the officer of police to the stranger, a very strongly built man about fifty, with a handsome but determined face, who seemed to be in anything but the best of humours, 'I think you have every reason to be content. These quarters are better than the common jail, and it is no great hardship to keep within the town and report yourself once a week.'

I did not hear his answer, but I doubted if it would be a very grateful one. Soon I saw the face of the beautiful girl—even more of a blonde, perhaps, than the fair friend of La Sierpes—at a window on the second floor; and shortly after the two officers came down. But that the two strangers would have heard me, I would have questioned them about the new arrivals. However, I had not to wait long before I knew all I wanted, for the new-comers came down and went

to the doorkeeper, and in a few minutes they came straight to me.

'Sir,' said the gentleman, speaking in most excellent Spanish, 'permit me to tell you I am William Vandermeeren, merchant of Amsterdam. Alicante is occupied by the English. My daughter and I left that place on an English ship for Genoa. We were driven out of our course by some Barbary pirates. However, we escaped from them, but were eventually sighted and captured by a small French privateer. They treated us—at any rate, my daughter and myself—very well, and brought us here. But we should have been put in the common jail, only I mentioned to the authorities that Señor Vegara, a great banker of this city, would any day meet my bill for one hundred thousand *pesetas*. I had not much money upon me, but I used it judiciously. I went with an officer to the banker's. He, alas! is away at present, nor would they say when he will be back; but his son satisfied them as to my identity; though on his own responsibility he would not, in these troublous times, advance me any money. However, as a Dutchman, I am allowed out on my parole, but I may not leave the city. Altogether, it is a terrible thing for me. I have important affairs to see to at Genoa, and, above all, I must look after my daughter. The only valuables we have at present are my gold watch, and a bracelet that her mother gave her. I am only hoping that the price I get for the former may last us till Vegara comes back.'

He had spoken so fast, though I should say he was naturally of a very cool and phlegmatic temperament, that I had not been able to get in a word.

'I am sorry for you,' I interposed; 'but don't let the want of money trouble you. See here,' I continued, taking a note out of my pocket; 'there's a note for one thousand *pesetas;* that will keep you for a time.'

A flush came over his cheek. I thought at first he was angry.

'No, no,' he said, 'I will pawn my watch first; but do not think I am not grateful, deeply grateful. It was not for that I came to you, however. I am told that you know General Foy, that your uncle is on the staff, and that you are acquainted with the chief of the police. It is your assistance with them that I ask for.'

Now this was a very different matter. I saw the soft, almost beseeching, glance of the daughter, and the anxiety on the shrewd face of the father, as they awaited my answer. I told him that he overrated my importance; that I was but a captain of Chasseurs, with no influence whatsoever; and that it was really more an affair for the civil authorities. 'But, rest assured,' I continued as I saw the bitter disappointment on their faces, 'I will, I swear, do what I can for you.' And then I asked them what they thought of the city. It was the girl that I wished to draw out, but she was very reserved, and her father took up most of the conversation, till Zebedé, my Alsatian servant, appeared to help me upstairs. But I could not get the beautiful figure and the soft eyes of the daughter out of my head. That she should be Dutch too seemed remarkable. I did not profess to have much knowledge of the women of that country, but the few I had seen were of a very different type.

'Well,' said my uncle when I told him of the incident, 'if her father can draw bills for one hundred thousand francs he must be fairly well off. I should like to see the fair *señorita*. Don't you make a fool of yourself, my boy. You leave it to me. You need not fear; they cannot get away if they want to. Now I am off to dine with the General, and then we are going to the opera to see the new company that has come; but I shall not say a word about this affair to him to-night.'

So that evening I found relief in singing songs of a plaintive, love-sick description such as the Moors sang to give vent to their feelings in days gone by, and went to bed thinking that none of those in whose honour the songs were written could have been more lovely than the Dutch girl whose Christian name even I did not know.

(*Continued on page 28.*)

WOODPECKERS AND FORESTRY.

By James Ritchie, M.A., D.Sc.

THE spring of 1916, with its false starts and unwonted severity, played havoc with many of the more sensitive of the early-mating birds. Upon the woodpeckers it fell like a blight. The smiles of January and February had lured them from their winter shyness to set about the time-honoured courtships of spring; but spring frowned, and rain, frost, and blizzard broke up the happy couples, leaving many a separated bride and bridegroom to die of cold and misery. Yet, till last season, the woodpeckers have been making headway. Reports from many counties showed that they were becoming more common in several of their old haunts in England, and that they were colonising new localities; even in their northern haunts in the lowlands of Scotland isolated accounts seemed to show that they were increasing in numbers, and perhaps also in range.

What bearing has the presence, or the increase, of woodpeckers upon the problem of timber-values, which has already assumed an aspect

so important, and the significance of which will be multiplied many times with the renewal of afforestation which is to follow on the conclusion of peace?

It can hardly be denied that woodpeckers do some damage in the woods. True, all the British species select for the actual repository of their nests a portion of timber already in decay, the rotten core of this or that tree; but they have no compunction in seeking that rotten core even when they have to burrow their way through solid wood to reach it. The green woodpecker, or yaffle, in particular, will make for the hollow resonance which has answered his surface percussion through a considerable thickness of perfectly fresh wood. Now this wood, even though it be unsound at heart, is still of considerable commercial value, especially if the tree be old, of great girth, and suitable for the uses of the cabinetmaker.

But the actual perforation for the nesting-hole is not the limit of the damage done, for in chiselling his tunnel the woodpecker has destroyed a portion of the thin layer of sapwood which, like a fine garment under sackcloth, clothes the tree beneath the bark, and on the activity of which the growth of the timber depends. For many years after such damage, the new wood formed in the neighbourhood of the destroyed sapwood will be imperfect in growth, showing gaps and irregularities, and bearing signs of bleaching or discoloration sufficient to ruin it for fine purposes. Moreover, the open wounds of old nest-holes give easy access to bacteria of decay, fungus spores, and harmful insects, all of which again tend to the discoloration and deterioration of the timber. On a lesser scale, the same can be said of the slighter damage caused by the woodpeckers in their hunt for insect food. For in this pursuit, also, they frequently penetrate the sapwood, and the petty injuries, like the evils that men do, live after them, embalmed in future growths as 'bird's-eye,' 'gnarling,' and other unseemlinesses of colour and grain.

This may be regarded as the extent of the harm caused in our own country, where woodpeckers are among the rarer of birds; but where they are abundant in numbers and kind the tale of their enormities is much more serious. In the United States some two dozen species occur, and individuals are common; in a single season as many as twenty-two red-headed woodpeckers were killed, 'one after another, while attempting to make a nest in a church-steeple,' and finally a pair succeeded! In the States, therefore, are to be found the normal types of damage to growing timber, such as occur in Britain; but, owing to an increasing pressure of competition, many woodpecker individuals have seceded from their allegiance to nature, and have adopted the reprehensible practice of making nesting-holes in dressed wooden posts, telegraph and telephone poles, and even in the timbers of wooden houses. The nest-holes in the telegraph-poles may number from one to a dozen or more; and, as each hole is three or four inches in diameter, the poles may be seriously weakened. On a single section of the Southern Pacific Railway as many as three hundred poles had to be changed at one time on account of this damage alone, and in another case one hundred and ten out of two hundred and sixty-eight white cedar poles were found to have been perforated. The timbers of a small wooden school near Ukiah, in California, were so destroyed by small holes made by woodpeckers to contain acorns for winter food that in the course of a few years it was found preferable to erect a new building rather than carry out the necessary repairs on the old.

But, apart from this sort of illegitimate destruction, the natural damage caused to growing trees in the United States is serious enough, for it has been reckoned to exceed in value a quarter of a million pounds sterling yearly. The greater part of this damage, however, is due to the ravages of a peculiar group of woodpeckers —the sap-suckers—the three American species of which actually feed upon sapwood, to the destruction of the valuable timber of such trees as maple, walnut, hickory, and chestnut. Fortunately none of our British woodpeckers has developed so obnoxious a taste.

Every shadow has its light, however, and there is a bright side to the woodpecker's activities. The majority of his kind are confirmed insectivores. To be sure, even the insectivorous species have been convicted of vegetarian propensities, for (apart from the sapwood destroyed by the American sap-suckers) they have been found to feed on fruits—blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, and an occasional apple; on mast, acorns, beech-nuts, and hazel-nuts; and on seeds, sometimes, but rarely, including grain. Yet such must be regarded as a supplementary diet, unimportant from the economic point of view, since an examination of three thousand four hundred and fifty-three stomachs of woodpeckers, recently carried out by the United States Department of Agriculture, revealed the fact that even where the percentage of vegetable matter was considerable, it consisted mainly of the seeds of weeds and non-economic plants.

On the other hand, the animal food of the woodpeckers is of some economic significance, and bears weightily upon the question of successful forestry. At each stage in its history a tree is exposed to the ravages of insects, as seed, seedling, grown tree, and decaying stump; but such a statement gives little idea of the activity and quality of its enemies, for the insects have specialised in their objects of attack, so that roots, stems, and branches, growing shoots, leaves, and fruits, each become the sheltering and feeding grounds of their own

peculiar ravagers. Were the insects to have their own way unrestrained, every tree, long ere the birds were nesting in its branches, would be the home of thousands of individuals, if indeed it had not already fallen under its own weight through their depredations. Even with the checks imposed by nature on insect multiplication, the annual damage done in the woods of the United Kingdom by insect agency must total many thousands of pounds sterling; in the United States the destruction so caused to 'forest trees, and their crude or finished products,' has been estimated, after careful investigation, at over twenty million pounds a year.

Now, woodpeckers play a special part in nature's system of insect checks; for, while to other birds may fall the honour of the greatest slaughter, to the woodpeckers alone is given the facility of locating and dealing with the deep-boring, and therefore more destructive, insect larvæ. A British investigator has recently recorded that he finds 75 per cent. of the food of our woodpeckers to consist of injurious insects, the quality of which can be judged from a selection of their English names—pine weevil, pine beetle, black pine beetle, ash bark beetle, elm bark beetle, osier weevil, small poplar beetle, pine-shoot clearwing moth, birch clearwing moth, and so on. This represents the woodpecker's own feast; but, in addition, one must not forget to reckon, also in his favour, the enormous numbers of soft-bodied larvæ of boring beetles upon which he fattens his nestlings during their infancy.

These results entirely agree with those of the extensive inquiry of the United States Department of Agriculture, where, except in the case of a few perverted species, the weight of evidence was strongly in favour of the woodpecker as a destroyer of harmful insects. Indeed, he seems to select his fare with some eye to human approbation, for the report tells us that 'whatever sins woodpeckers may commit, the destruction of useful beetles is not one of them.'

A careful survey leads us to the discovery that when his sins are balanced against his merits, the scale unhesitatingly dips in favour of the good points in the woodpecker's character. Without his aid the damage caused by insects, and especially beetles, to growing timber would be increased manifold; and it would be ill, in view of these services, to grudge him house-room, or to remember against him the damages he himself causes, mainly in his quest for the real destroyers. Rather it would be wise for proprietor and forester to encourage the increase and spread of woodpeckers, regarding their prospecting bores less as malicious mischief than as wounds after the nature of those of the surgeon who cuts to cure.

THE SALT SMUGGLERS.

I THINK that in the old days in China more bloodshed and lawlessness were caused by salt smuggling than by the illicit trade in opium, and that is saying a good deal. But how dangerous and desperate a fraternity these salt smugglers then were this adventure of mine will, I think, serve to show. They had, indeed, actually succeeded in rendering one station (their especial *bête noire*), placed near the West River, quite untenable, of course to the great detriment of the imperial revenue. Their method was simple, but successful. They just patiently waited for a very dark night, when a heavy white mist had risen from the great river, and the European officer and his men were sufficiently off their guard to give them their chance. Then they promptly stormed the station, leaving all who resisted in it dead or dying, and, after looting it, coolly returned to their usual haunts! The last unfortunate European in charge having, as he put it, only escaped death 'by the skin of his teeth,' became a cripple for life.

Now, as soon as the news of this catastrophe was brought in, I, being young, and delighting in dangerous work, must needs apply to be transferred to what was then unofficially known as the Forlorn Hope; and, no one else being likely to do so, I was at once sent, permission also being given me to take sixty of my own foreign drilled men, provided so many could be induced to trust themselves in such a death-trap. As a matter of fact, however, every man-jack I had volunteered to go with me, so I was enabled to pick out those most suitable for the work. I also commandeered four new long brass 'nines' from store, with the spherical shell, round and grape shot, fuses, and good British gunpowder thereto appertaining, though not without doubts as to being called over the coals for so doing. For I shrewdly suspected that these desperadoes would have drawn the four iron 'teeth' the station possessed when they captured it.

But I must now describe the kind of place I found the Forlorn Hope to be, so that how things happened in the way they did may be comprehended. The strategic importance of the position was considerable; for not only did it command the great main road leading from one province to another, but its guns, if its gunners could shoot straight, would make the passage of the wide river they faced extremely dangerous for any smuggling craft, except on the darkest nights. The structure itself consisted of two very strongly built brick houses and, in official language, a small 'fort,' in reality a square stone tower such as wealthy bankers and pawn-

brokers build in Kwang-tung, and defend when needful by armed employés. All three buildings, though built at different times, were joined together, and formed one good-sized edifice. The tower had a flat stone roof, which was battlemented, and pierced with two embrasures on each side, its walls being loopholed for musketry-fire.

The station stood on rising ground, its front facing the main road, its rear the river. Between it and the river lay a small town, the principal shops and market-place of which stood on the bank of the stream, a few houses on its outskirts being about a quarter of a mile from the station. One only, a large house with a cemented yard by the side of it, enclosed by a wall, stood near the station, being only about thirty or forty paces from it. This was then empty, and, I suppose, had been occupied by the family of one of those killed in the last attack.

By the time I reached it my new home had been repaired, cleaned, and generally put into order again. But the wrecked veranda outside the officers' quarters in the two brick houses, which ought to have been rebuilt of the same material, was, I found, merely a most realistic imitation of brickwork in painted pine! Doubtless a squeeze of officialdom out of the contract! Nor was I long in discovering another; for, on going on to the roof of the tower, I found that, out of the four guns frowning from its embrasures, three were equally realistic representations of the real thing in painted teak. The fourth, though not a 'quaker,' was dropping through its rotten carriage, and would only be serviceable at close quarters. My predecessor, too, with mistaken confidence, had greatly enlarged the windows in his own quarters, even removing the iron-lined shutters, and substituting open venetian blinds for them. I noted also that the station, instead of facing the gap between the high hills, looked directly on to the side of one of them which was little more than half a mile away; so that, did the smugglers' muzzle-loading rifles and small smooth-bore guns have a range of even nine hundred yards, it would be commanded from the hillside!

There was, however, no cover nearer than the houses some quarter of a mile off, except, of course, the solitary one close to us. But the cookhouses and servants' quarters, which should have been inside, were outside the main building; so, as I meant to take no risks—that I didn't fancy myself, that is—I had the 'quakers' and the rotten carriage of the ancient gun chopped up for firewood, and that rusty weapon itself remounted and placed in the guardroom to command the entrance, the door of which was plated with iron externally. I had loopholes cut in the side wall to command the cookhouses too; and, as I couldn't pull down the empty house without paying for it, I rented it from its builder and owner.

Now, besides my sixty men, my interpreter, and 'boys' (servants), I had the services of a European 'instructor,' almost an invalid from lung trouble, but a very good and reliable man—a 'blue ribbon' man, too, a great rarity then—so that I did not fear to leave the station in his charge if necessary, for I took over all his outside work myself—which was fortunate, as it turned out.

But I am anticipating. For nearly four months after I took charge of the Forlorn Hope the whole district was so quiet that I almost fancied that its sobriquet must be a misnomer. So, being somewhat off my guard I suppose, I went out to a suspicious-looking craft some distance off in a light gig, with only half-a-dozen men, instead of in the longboat with its three-pounder and numerous crew. As I suspected, she proved to be a smuggler, so my carelessness resulted in an ugly cut on the head, a damaged gig—and a useful lesson. For, on our trying to board her, my helmet was slashed through by a 'chopping spear,' and a plank in the gig's bottom stove by a heavy round-shot being dropped into it. Most fortunately, however, the dinghy had followed us, her crew suspecting trouble; and these smuggling gentry had reckoned without our blue lights and signal-lamps. These the fort promptly replied to by dropping a spherical shell right across the smuggler's forefoot. Then, to our surprise, her crew instantly lowered their half-hoisted sails and surrendered.

But when I got on board I understood why well enough, and became as anxious as the master and the supercargo—their men had jumped overboard—to prevent another shell from arriving; for she carried a consignment of Chinese gunpowder in barrels, not nearly so good as British of course, but amply sufficient to send smuggling craft, gig, and dinghy sky-high! My men then pursued the swimming smugglers, and accounted for two—I think of set purpose—of the desperadoes, the men who had handled the sword-bladed spear and the solid shot so skilfully.

I hardly knew how to dispose of our 'seizure,' for my small magazine in the vault of the tower was full, and finally I decided to let my men stow the powder away out of sight in the brick cellar of the empty house, as that could be entered from the trap-door in the cemented yard facing the station. The barrels, after being safely stored, were covered in by heavy stones and logs of timber, old fishing-nets being thrown over the pile to screen it from prying eyes, lest the powder should reach its destination after all.

Now, ever since I had taken charge of the Forlorn Hope, I had had, almost needless to say, spies out afloat and ashore; but these had hitherto always reported that neither on the roads, in the tea-houses, nor amongst the shipping was there any unusual number of suspicious characters in evidence. But now, as if my seizure of their powder had started the game,

reports of gatherings of known contrabandists inland, and of smuggling craft lying higher up the river, began to come in. One day, as I sat at *tiffin*, a big *tankar* (seafarer), all covered with dust and perspiration, pushed past my outraged interpreter and horrified house-boys, and walked up to me. Hastily rising, I took him out on to the veranda, and then sternly demanded, 'What thing?' for such a proceeding would have caused him to cool his heels in the stone cell if he hadn't been a former hand of mine.

'To-night have got,' he laconically replied.

'How do you savey [know]?' I said.

'More better you look see, ca-pi-tan,' was all the answer I got, and without another word he saluted and marched downstairs into the entrance, where his severely wooden expression, stony glare, and absolute silence exasperated my inquisitive interpreter and much-interested sentry almost beyond endurance.

Meanwhile I hastily donned a Chinese jacket and bamboo hat hanging in the guardroom, gave some hasty directions to my petty officer as I slipped my gun into the hip-pocket of my white trousers, and then followed the Shantung seaman, who had had more than a nodding acquaintance with these salt smugglers 'once upon a time.'

A walk of a couple of miles over the hills brought us to a gap beneath which the broad river lay spread out like a panorama; and, following the direction of my guide's outstretched hand with my glass, I was enabled carefully to examine two craft lying just opposite us. They were typical smuggling craft, capable of carrying about two hundred tons of salt each, in build very much resembling two Brobdingnagian whale-boats, furnished with 'eyes' in the bows and overhanging cabins in the stern, their bright teak sides and yellow Muntz's metal sheathing, where it showed above the waterline, flashing in the sun. Besides their heavy main and fore masts, they had a small mizen perched in their sterns, and the fine grass-mats of their huge fan-shaped sails were supplemented by others of light canvas and duck, such as balloons, stun-sails, and jibs. A number of long sweeps (great oars) propelled them in calms, these being *pushed* by a large number of men who *stood* to work them, their numerous crews making frequent spells (rests) possible.

Eight twelve-pounder guns were on each broadside, with a twenty-four amidships. The side-boards (bulwarks) were very low, however, and the men who worked the guns, therefore, were entirely exposed to an enemy's fire. Racks for small-arms aft and amidships held a regular armoury of muzzle-loading rifles, 'tower' muskets, steel-headed spears, short swords, and double-barrelled pistols. But the favourite 'projectiles' for the guns were 'mixed shot'—balls of all sizes from an orange to a walnut, or iron bullets in mat bags. Two huge white flags with defiant inscriptions on them flew from the main and fore masts, both vessels, indeed, being in full 'war-paint.' This, and the fact that there were several large boats from the shore alongside, into two of which they were then busy lowering a six-pounder from the stern of each vessel, showed that the smugglers were preparing for a landing. That, of course, was sufficient for me; and to the sardonic grin and brief, 'Can do, capitan?' of my companion, I merely replied, 'Hi' ('Yes'), and walked quickly back to the station, the Shantung man lingering to make sure we were not being spied upon, though my Chinese garments and white leg-wear made this little likely.

As soon as I reached the guardroom the order to fall in was given, and within five minutes I had every man at work improving our defences. First I had all the lower windows built up with large stones, spaces between being left for firing through. Then, in case the great iron-covered entrance-door should be blown off its hinges, I had a barricade of ballast-stones and sandbags built up behind it, the ancient iron gun taken from the tower being built into this and crammed to the muzzle with bags of iron bullets on top of as heavy a charge of powder as it would stand. The ranges on to the mountain-side had already been marked off, and the distance to every other coign of vantage was known to a yard. Fire-buckets were filled and placed in my quarters, the wooden venetians to the windows being closed, and sandbags piled up behind them; the wretched sham of a veranda was also lined with sandbags, after it had been well drenched with buckets of water; the cookhouses were dismantled, the doors and all other woodwork being taken away. The civilian native staff had bolted at the first sign of trouble, 'going to report to the authorities' being their 'save face' for it! The house close to us I could not shift farther off, but I relied on its being situated right under our guns. Then, when everything possible had been done, I ordered an extra quantity of food to be served out at the men's evening meal, and invited my only European to take his with me, vainly wondering when I did so if either of us would have any need for another! Afterwards, when, looking from the tower, I observed a thick white mist rise from the river and spread for some distance beyond it, I thought the night was certainly an ideal one for a surprise attack, the darkness being so dense that it could almost be felt. It must have been a little after gunfire (nine o'clock) when a loud knocking at the closed and barred door sent me to a loophole to demand the business of the men who were hammering at it. But I got no satisfactory reply, and after being refused admission they went off.

'He wantchee see allo inside,' volunteered my new acting orderly, the Shantung seaman.

'Why?'

'So he can savey if you ready he.'

'You think they wanted to rush the station?'

'No, he road man makee come first topside.'

'You think the smugglers from upcountry will block the roads and occupy the hillside before the attack commences, then?'

'Hi,' shortly responded my informer, who, I was aware, knew a good deal more about these gentry and their manner of proceeding than he chose to tell.

For some time after this, however, nothing happened; but on going up to the roof of the tower to see that the guns and their ammunition-chests, &c., were all ready, I saw a number of glowworm-like points of light on the side of the high hill facing the station and the roads converging on it. These I knew to be torches and oiled-paper lanterns. Indeed, I had hardly got them into focus with my night-glass before the darkness was spotted with tiny red flashes, whilst the unmistakable *cheep* and faint thud of iron and leaden bullets on the walls of the station facing the hillside showed that the game had begun.

Then, evidently emboldened by our making no reply, the contrabandists descended lower, formed into groups, and fired together, the flashes from many muzzle-loaders clearly revealing their position. This was what I had waited for; and, the distance being known almost to a yard, spherical shell from the long brass 'nines' on the roof of the tower were soon bursting amongst them with such accurate aim that the hillside was quickly wrapped in darkness and silence once more. But though, between the dense white river-mist and the blackness of an unusually dark night, it was quite impossible to distinguish objects even close to the walls outside, and though every light was carefully screened, the more solid blackness of the main building was distinctly discernible, and enabled our assailants to keep up a most nerve-trying sniping. For out of the hundreds of bullets that pattered against the walls every now and again, several would find the loopholes and window apertures. Soon, too, sounds of cracking and straining on the roofs of the cookhouses caught my ear, and I ordered men to the loopholes commanding them. I was just too late, however, for even as their shots rang out, amid curses, screams, and the sound of heavy falls, there also came the sound of smashed earthenware from the end of the veranda that faced the outhouses. Then came flashes of fire, dense suffocating fumes of oily smoke, and an unbearable stench as the woodwork burst into flame; whilst the glare from it prevented me from risking my men on the veranda to extinguish the fire. For at least a dozen stink-pots had evidently been thrown successfully from the cookhouse roof at the wooden fraud.

But whilst we were occupied in extinguishing the burning window-frames and venetians to prevent the fire from spreading to the inside of the rooms behind, the beams supporting the veranda were burnt through, and the whole erection collapsed in one enormous blazing heap, which fell against the iron-plated entrance-door. So fierce were the flames that the door rapidly became almost red-hot, and the woodwork, being charred through, caused the hinges and bar-sockets to fall out of the burnt door-frame; whereupon the whole thing collapsed inwards on to the guardroom floor, where buckets of water had to be flung upon it. We were almost suffocated by the clouds of smoke that rose from the débris of the veranda, but these formed a welcome screen from the attention of the snipers. Exultant yells out of the darkness in front, too, showed that this fresh disaster had been witnessed and its significance grasped by our watchful enemies. But almost as quickly as the veranda had burst into flames it suddenly burnt itself out, when much denser volumes of thick black smoke, entering the doorway, completely filled the whole lower storey.

But whilst the débris of the door still sent up hissing clouds of steam, from out of the darkness and the smoke, with fierce yells and curses, poured a stream of men brandishing naked weapons, who rushed across the doorway anticipating an easy victory, not seeing (as indeed was impossible) the strong barrier of ballast-stones and sandbags, or the muzzle of the old nine-pounder, or those of some two dozen Snider carbines, that protruded from it. Suddenly a roar that reverberated like thunder shook the whole building, a long fire-flash pierced the dense smoke, whilst a storm of grape-shot and bullets swept away the front ranks of the stormers. Those in rear immediately bolted, screeching, cursing, and howling even more horribly, though with much more reason, than when they rushed in, my men promptly pitching after them the bodies of those who would never yell more.

This seemed for a little while to have called a halt in the progress of the attack, which enabled Gordon, my European subordinate, to attend to the wounded, he having at one time been a medical student. But whilst we were occupied in replacing the warped iron plating and charred teak backing of the entrance-door in its proper position, holding it there with beams and boat-chains, we had to leave my quarters unguarded for the moment, till sounds of the trampling of many feet, followed by the fall of heavy weights on the floor of the rooms, caused me to rush back, just in time to see the heads of wide bamboo ladders appear at each of their four windows, from which the sandbags and stones must have been pushed away by long bamboos.

Fortunately I had been followed by the best of my men, and as the leaders were springing inside from the ladders we rushed through the doorway. Then came the wickedest work of all, a hand-to-hand mêlée with cold steel, each man fighting to kill, quarter being neither asked nor granted. My men kept together by instinct, clubbing their carbines or using their sword-bayonets as occasion served. For a little time

it was pandemonium let loose. Then, finding that fresh stormers continually sprang in from the ladders, I shouted to Gordon to leave the wounded and rush up the boat-gun before things looked any uglier. This was speedily done, it having been first crammed with iron bullets upon an increased powder-charge; and then a dozen powerful arms quickly lifted gun and carriage up the stone stair on to the landing, and ran it along to the doorway of my quarters, to which my men, fighting desperately, still clung.

The smugglers meanwhile, in a closely packed crowd, were pressing them hard. But as the gun was run up we sprang back behind it, and ere our assailants had fairly grasped the situation in the smoke and semi-darkness, a jerk of the lanyard caused the squat little carronade to belch fire, with half-a-dozen pounds of musket-balls, into the thick of them. Before the smoke cleared from my now completely wrecked messroom, or the panic caused by that murderous leaden hail had subsided, my men, cheering shrilly, rushed it, bayoneting all within who failed to reach the ladders, which were then promptly drawn up. The little boat-gun had been dismounted by the overcharge, however, and its loss proved a serious matter, as, under a heavy fire from the snipers, we had again to block the windows and restore the front rooms to some sort of order.

But before I had seen this completed, my gunner called to me to come up to the roof of the tower at once; and when I had reached it, he asked me to stand at one of the embrasures facing the empty house and listen. Sure enough, the building was no longer empty; for, though there were no windows either on the side facing the station or towards the yard, and we could therefore *see* nothing, we could *hear* plainly enough the sound of heavy blows, apparently upon the inside of the wall towards us. I instantly sent word to have the loopholes and window-openings that faced it manned, and then ordered the gunners to depress the muzzles of the brass 'nines' till they would bear on the building. But, to my infinite disgust, we found that the embrasures—which had been partially built up after the last attack, to give more protection to the gunners, or to hide the 'quakers' better, as may be—would not permit of this. Meantime the noises within the house grew louder, that of falling brickwork now being added. Then they ceased for a few minutes, but only to be followed by a rumbling and creaking as if a handcart was being dragged across the floor. After that there was silence again. We listened for another ten minutes; but, as the house still continued to be wrapped in darkness and silence, I was about to leave the roof and go below, when two bright-red flame-flashes shot out from the wall facing us, revealing two ragged apertures in it lined with rice-bags, from which protruded the muzzles of two ship's guns, their discharge being quickly followed by the sound of falling brickwork below us. I guessed immediately the plan that was once more to wipe out all those in the Forlorn Hope, and believed the statement of my informers that the smugglers had joined forces with the banditti of the notorious Li-ah-sun, one of the most daring and successful, as well as the most cruel and blood-thirsty, of the bandit leaders who then terrorised not only the Delta district, but at times even British Koulung. He worked with the pirates usually, and always landed some of their guns to assist in a *tah-nging-foh*, as it was called—that is, a night attack such as I am describing. All this flashed through my mind instantaneously, but I cudgelled my brains in vain for a counter-stroke.

Meantime, however, I ordered the crew of the gun opposite our new enemies to see how close to the building they could drop a spherical shell. A pull of its lanyard quickly answered me, the shell bursting at least fifty yards in rear of it; but, strangely enough, the explosion was instantly followed by another explosion, which left hardly a visible trace of a party of banditti or smugglers amongst whom my gunners' shell had by pure chance exploded.

'Why, these men must have been carrying ammunition to the house!' I said to the Shantung man, who had followed me like a shadow through all the fighting.

'You have catchee that powder. No have got downside now,' he dryly commented.

'No, by the Chinese God of War! it's still *there*, and they don't know it,' I cried. For the idea I had so vainly striven to find suddenly came to me. 'Bird' (short for 'Bird of Ill Omen,' a nickname his saturnine expression and sullen disposition had gained him), 'I would give a bamboo helmet full of "clean Mexicans" [new dollars] to have a lighted joss-stick put to that powder.'

'*My* can do,' grimly asserted my acting orderly.

'But, Bird, it 's certain death for you, and most likely for all of us, as well as for these devils.'

'My can,' was the only answer.

I was still hesitating to sacrifice the 'Bird,' who had served me faithfully before, when I got a message from my petty officer that the wall was being breached by the fire of the two guns opposite. Now, once this breach should be enlarged sufficiently to be rushed, I knew that the back and front of the station would be attacked simultaneously, and our assailants, having such a superiority in numbers, would then overwhelm its greatly reduced garrison.

The 'Bird,' I think, read my thoughts; for, jerking his head toward the guns, he inquired, 'Can do?'

'Hi,' I said reluctantly; and a few minutes afterwards, whilst I was examining the repaired defences in my quarters, a black shadow glided by me, and, looking after it, I saw a powerful

figure, naked but for a dark breechcloth, black as ink, dripping with oil, and quite indistinguishable a few yards away from the surrounding blackness, drop lightly from a charred beam-end at one corner of the burnt veranda on to the ground and almost instantly vanish! These movements were noiseless; but, had they not been, the incessant firing would have screened them. Neither was the 'Bird' likely to be seen as he crawled snake-like across the thirty yards or so dividing that corner of the station from the fish-drying yard where the trap-door was, unless there were scouts out, and not then unless they actually stepped upon him, I thought. I hadn't much doubt about the 'Bird's' reaching his destination; it was the afterwards that troubled me. However, at considerable risk, I had an aperture made in the defences of a window facing the fish-drying yard, and stationed three men at it to drag him in or cover his entry with their fire. I could do little else to assist him in his desperate venture. Then I made sure that all the wounded were in the ground-floor of the tower, afterwards withdrawing my men into it, except, of course, the needful sentries. The frequent and heavier falls of brickwork from the wall facing the two guns, whilst greatly increasing my anxiety, clearly showed that there was little time to spare if the situation was to be saved.

Half-an-hour passed with leaden slowness. It seemed hours since the 'Bird' had disappeared in the darkness! Then another ten minutes went by, and then five more. I held my watch to the light to make sure; but only three-quarters of an hour had really elapsed since then. Gordon had just declared that despite all we had done with sandbags, fenders, and bamboos sharpened into points, the breach in our back walls was practicable were the stormers only determined enough; whilst I dared not sweep the space between with rifle-fire (the boat-gun was useless) till the 'Bird' returned, though the sentries at the loopholes in front had just reported that there were signs of a fresh attack from thence. Then a filthy object, half-caked with dried gray mud, and covered with black grease, slipped into the lanthorn-light as noiselessly as a great cat, with just a sullen 'Have makee do,' and a fierce glance over his shoulder as he showed me that his left arm had stopped a bullet.

I trusted that the dim light didn't give my drawn and set face away, for if both buildings went together, my men's deaths, I rapidly realised, would assuredly lie at my door. I bade the 'Bird' get his wound seen to; but he shook his head as he held up five fingers. But he was wrong; there was no five minutes' grace, for hardly had my men flung themselves down, as they had been warned to do, and scarcely had I jammed myself tightly into an angle opposite a loophole facing the guns, trying to keep cool enough to calculate the relative strength of Chinese and British gunpowder, but wondering instead if being crushed by fallen masonry was a slow and painful death or the reverse, when the solid walls suddenly seemed to tremble and vibrate as a blinding flash was seen and a terrific roar was heard, accompanied by a weird rumbling as of an earthquake, the shattering of every pane of glass, and the smashing of every breakable article. My eyes were fixed in horror on the violently oscillating walls of the house opposite, as, following that awful rumbling roar, violet flames shot from the gun-apertures, and great rents and chasms showed in them, till, with an appalling crash, they fell inwards under the collapsing roof, a curious yellow light and the villainous fumes of saltpetre leaking out from the pile of ruins. Every soul within was buried beneath the solid mass of brickwork that alone showed above-ground, for the explosive force of the powder had been greatly increased by the barrels having been buried under the dead-weight of stones and timber which we had piled on top of them. My men's excited cries found an echo without, where the mad rush of a crowd of smugglers past the station indicated that the panic which had set in as a result of the explosion had ended in a stampede.

So it came about that the Dragon Flag was hoisted as usual on the station next day, which few of us had expected to live to see, and some unfortunately did not. But the battered, breached, and burnt appearance of the building then, I thought, fully justified its sobriquet. However, the spell had been broken, and the Forlorn Hope for many a long day afterwards was left severely alone.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

RACE after race doth seek the Elysian Fields,
O'er which with lavish hand thou cast the seed
Of thy rich thought, whose waving fruitage yields
For these dark days the charm our sorrows need.

Thy tranquil mind, with its abounding joy,
Doth rim the clouds with a horizon fair;
Yea, in the light of heaven without alloy
Thy jewelled words lie all unfolded there.

Master and friend, the hills of Scotland stand,
With the same glory gently overcast,
As when thy feet didst tread the Borderland,
And as thine eyes beheld them at the last.

From thy deep rest, oh, can thy spirit hear
The soft, glad murmur of those waters sweet?
At thy soul's bourne doth Tweed still linger near
To make the bliss of Paradise complete?

The midnight hour around thee sinks no more,
The sunlight sweeps the heights of endless day;
But near thy life God sets an open door
Through which there streams thy fragrant memory.

GILBERT RAE.

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IN OLD FRISCO.

By BART KENNEDY.

IT was a dear, delightful, easy place where no one was ever in a hurry, and where the sun was always brightly shining. Life really went along the lines of least resistance. If you had money, you had money; if you had no money, you had no money. But you lived just the same. People were easy and trusting and careless. They were possessed of none of the mean virtues.

I lived two years and a half in dear old Frisco, and it was the most delightful two years and a half I have ever spent. I first made its acquaintance through deserting a ship in port. And the town was such a delightful sunny town that I did not have the heart to leave it. Indeed, I would never have left it at all but for an uncalled-for lapse into energy.

The time I speak of was nearly thirty years ago, long, long before the great earthquake shook Frisco up. I hear that since the earthquake the town has fallen from the easy grace of restfulness into the throes of hurry and restlessness. But I sincerely trust that this is not so; for I hope to happen along some day to the dear old sunlit town, and I should be shocked were I to find the people rushing along the streets with a New York swiftness.

Why, we could tell the people who had just come from New York by the way they went along. They hurried so fast, and they seemed anxious and grabful. 'There 's a man from the East,' one of us would say, and we would smile the smile of the true knowledge that comes to those who take things easy. But I am glad to say that after a little the climate got in its fine work upon them. They became unhurrying and sensible, and I feel reasonably certain that the climate still exercises a benign influence upon rushful people. There was an earthquake, of course, but there could be no earthquake in the climate. The climate must be there now even as it was there in the year '87, when I was having a fine and easy life in the town. And I 'm inclined to think that the saying that is extant to the effect that Frisco is now a place of rush is a libel of a gross order.

There was the Palace Hotel, where the millionaires used to sit in immense basket chairs and skilfully manipulate their toothpicks after dining. Those were the days when you could tell a millionaire at the first glance. He wore a broad hat and a beard, and had about him a kind of a hayseed, ready-money air. At a glance you could see that borrowing from him would be a task the most herculean. But, as I say, he used to sit with his kind in the Palace Hotel, in the great *patio* or courtyard roofed with glass. Occasionally Napoleoni Galliani and I used to go and sit in those chairs just to feel what it was like to be millionaires. Napoleoni and I sang together in the chorus of the Tivoli Opera House. I was sorry when I heard that the earthquake had been unkind to the Palace Hotel, for well do I remember the sitting in the *patio*, and having the millionaire feeling gradually pervade my being. The hotel was on Market Street, a fine thoroughfare that ran from the Bay right up through the town. At the foot of the street was the Front, where were moored ships of all nations. And Nob Hill, where lived the nobs who had made their pile! Hereon were built great mansions, and many were the legends concerning the people who owned these palatial places. Some were said to have got their first start on the road to wealth by indulging in the highway robber industry in the spacious days of '49. Others were—— But it is not for me to repeat the fearsome legends concerning the nobs of Nob Hill. There are always weird legends anent people who acquire vast wealth.

Often I used to sally forth up Clay Street, with my trusty friend Napoleoni, to explore squalid and picturesque and mysterious Chinatown. It was not always safe to explore the quarter where lived the Celestials; but Napoleoni and I were a somewhat careless pair, and it was our habit now and then to go forth into Chinatown at night when our work at the theatre was over. A strange place it was. A true city of the Dragon lying in the heart of San Francisco. There were joss-houses, and strange-coloured lamps burning, and shops wherein were weird, curiously made-up foods, and fan-tan houses, and a Chinese theatre, and laundries wherein worked the Chinamen with their still, grave faces. In the daytime Chinatown was just as strange-looking as it was at night. Then you could see occasionally Chinese women hobbling along with the little Chinese children. These miniature Chinese were dressed in all respects

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as were dressed the Chinese grown-ups. The difference was that their faces were not grave and still. Children are children, it matters not of what race they belong to.

The Rathskeller! Ah, that was the place! It was on the corner of Eddy Street, and was near to the back of the Baldwin Theatre, where I once saw the great actor Edwin Booth play Hamlet. The Rathskeller was really a great cellar wherein were dispensed the long schooners of foamy lager and all kinds of appetising foreign foods. Many a supper I had there after the theatre with Napoleoni. The food was good and cheap. There were Limburger cheese sandwiches that were delightful, after you got used to them; and there was sauer-kraut, which I must confess I never got quite used to; and delicious potato salad that the Germans alone have the secret of making; and pumpernickel; and delightful sandwiches made out of chopped meat and chopped raw onions; and herrings done in wonderful ways. Here one could get food at once tasty and satisfying. At the Rathskeller one met all kinds of people. There were men from all parts of the world, and there were men of all classes. An air of joviality pervaded the place. I liked the Rathskeller very much indeed.

One night in the Rathskeller there occurred a dramatic scene. A well-dressed man, with blue, restless eyes, was arrested for killing some one in one of the Eastern States. He was sitting by himself at one of the small tables, when two men suddenly came up and grabbed him. He struggled to get his revolver, but with the aid of another man who came up they got him out of the Rathskeller. Rough things occurred in Frisco in those days. I remember—late one night, or, rather, very early one morning—going along Market Street with a friend. We had just passed by the front of the Baldwin Theatre, when two shots rang out on the other side of the wide street. My friend wanted to rush over to see what it was about; but I held him firmly, for the police, when they came up, would naturally be apt to arrest the first men whom they found on the scene. So we waited. And soon there came the sound of running footsteps, and a small crowd gathered; then we went over, and found that a man had been shot dead.

At the corner of Bush Street and Kearney Street the actors who were out of a job used to congregate. Here you could hear tales of the way the ghost walked or did not walk. You could hear legends of how audiences were thrilled and captivated by these sons of Thespis when they were revelling in engagements. Leather-faced comedians told of the way that they made audiences ill with laughter. These actors in nine cases out of ten had been left stranded in Frisco. Indeed, Frisco was a rock upon which many a theatrical venture split. The reason was that too many companies used to come. They were attracted, I suppose, by the glamour of the Golden West. Frisco was, to tell the truth, a very good show-town indeed; but the best show-town can have too many attractions in it at once; and therefore was it that the out-of-work sons of Thespis used to stand on that corner and tell one another tales of the one-time shining of their genius. They were happy, though hard-up. And they somehow managed to live; for occasionally they got small engagements, and they used to help each other out. Besides, at that time living in Frisco was very cheap indeed. If a man had five cents, he could go and get a large glass of beer and eat absolutely all he wanted at the free-lunch counter.

In that gloriously beautiful climate, a man, if he were put to it, could live for a day for ten cents. I can see these lunch-counters now surrounded by a dim sort of halo. They were laden with cheese and ham and corned beef and salads, and all kinds of tasty and satisfying foods. How the saloons were able to afford it I know not. But afford it they did.

Well do I remember the free-lunch counter at the Baldwin Hotel. There they charged ten cents for a drink; but you had this drink to the tune—I might almost say to the symphony—of a magnificent meal. I shall always remember the free-lunch counter of the Baldwin Hotel with deep and affectionate regard. No one needed to starve in Frisco in those halcyon days. For if you did not have the trifle to enable you to get the drink that gave you the free-pass to the free-lunch counter, you could always get it. Some one would be sure to give it to you. Or some one would ask you to have a drink, which was the same thing.

The out-of-work actors who adorned the corner of Bush Street and Kearney Street used often to talk of getting away to far-off New York. But to get to New York cost at least a hundred dollars. And I fear that there was no actor amongst them who would not have considered one hundred dollars too high and foolish a price to pay for leaving such a glorious and delightful and sunlit town as Frisco. Now and then an actor would express a yearning for the far-off Eastern States, but I fear that there was very little real yearn in his yearning. Frisco had got into his blood. And why I myself left Frisco I can never understand. I fear that I must have become foolish.

They did not pay ambassadorial salaries to chorus singers at the Tivoli Opera House. To be exactly truthful, my salary was but eight dollars a week. But eight dollars with the sun of California and the glorious free-lunch counters thrown in was worth the equivalent of eighty dollars in dim, smoky London. And when added to this was the fact that the people were really friendly toward one another, one need hardly point out that Frisco was a place fit for the gods to live in.

Many noted singers sang at the Tivoli. There

was Campobello, the baritone, a fine, big, sturdy Scot; and there was Tetrazzini, who afterwards became world famous. And there were others whose names now escape me. Tetrazzini, I may say, sang after my time in the Tivoli; but I mention her to show that great artists sang there. The audience were not overcharged to hear these artists, for the prices were but fifty cents and twenty-five cents. And you could listen in ease and comfort to the music. You could have your drink and your smoke as you listened to the trills of the soprano or the growls of the deep bass. The Tivoli was a grand place.

Down on the Front there was practised the gentle art of shanghai-ing, for Frisco was such a desirable place that men were not eager to go down to the sea in ships. Therefore it was not advisable at night-time to go on the Front and partake of too much stimulating refreshment; for, if you did, there was a danger of your waking up again with a throbbing head in the forecastle of some ship that had passed through the Golden Gates and was ploughing its way through the peaceful billows of the Pacific. Indeed, it was not always advisable at night-time to take a drink on the Front with a friendly stranger. For there had been cases known where 'knock-out' drops had been used to prepare the way for the landsman's entry into the merry sailor's life. Clerical gentlemen had been known to be shanghaied. All was fish that came to the shanghaier's net. He was a most democratic purveyor of the labour of men. An earl or a duke or a negro labourer was all the same to him. He had a strong belief in the simple and healthy life of the sea—for persons other than himself. Once, I may say, a shanghaier had been shanghaied by a rival shanghaier. A very large piece had been bitten out of the biter. He had been sent to China in a barque, thereby taking a copious dose of his own healthful medicine. The shanghaiers were men who had brought the practical joke into the realms of exact science.

On Sundays the people used to go out to the beautiful Golden Gate Park when the band played in a structure formed like a great shell. This park was some six miles away from the centre of the town, and one Sunday I remember experiencing what might be called a dull adventure. An English faker was doing an act with performing sparrows, and I was so enchanted with the ways of these intellectual sparrows that I gave their guide, philosopher, and friend, the English faker, the only coin I had in my pocket, which was a silver half-dollar piece. How I came to perform this act of idiotic philanthropy has never been quite clear to me, but I suppose I must have come under the domination of the faker's hypnotic eye. Anyway, I had to walk all the way back to my room in Turk Street, because I was unable to pay my fare on the tram; and I also had the dissatisfaction of seeing the English faker passing me as I was wearily plodding down Market Street, seated comfortably on a tram, with his cage of intellectual sparrows upon his knee.

I have heard many kinds of roaring, but the roaring of the sea-lions on the rocks of the Golden Gates was the most unenticing roaring I have ever heard. It sounded like a cross between the bassoon and the voice of a donkey. And there was something menacing about it. To go and hear the sea-lions roar at the Golden Gates was considered quite the thing for the people of Frisco to do. Any one who came to the town and who did not go to hear this entertainment was looked upon as one who had cast a slight upon the chief and most artistic attraction of Frisco. It was in a way something like going to Rome and not calling in at St Peter's. The people of Frisco were proud of their sea-lions.

About that time in Frisco there was a man of unique personality who had come very much to the front. He was an Irish truck-driver, and his name was Denis Kearney. He was a man of genius, and a great natural orator, and he took upon himself the mission of driving the Chinese out of Frisco. He made his speeches in the Sand Lots, and he would always begin his orations thus: 'The Chineeman must go!' And then he would let forth hot and vigorous and eloquent denunciations against him. He was really a most effective orator, and had a fine voice, and he would always end his orations with the phrase, 'The Chineeman must go!' The Chineeman, however, did not go; he stayed, and I doubt if even the earthquake shifted him. In the end, Denis Kearney permitted himself to drop his job of truck-driving.

In Frisco not only could you get free lunches; you could get free entertainments as well. There were little music-halls and music-cellars where artists gave all kinds of performances. All that you were supposed to do in these places was to buy a drink. And if you had no money, and were strong enough to ignore the scowl of the waiter, you could have your entertainment without even going through the formality of buying a drink. I once sang in one of these places for a month, and I was paid, I believe, at the rate of a dollar a night. In these places of entertainment there were often people of first-class talent. (Not that I lay such flattering unction to my own artistic soul.) The artists were mainly recruited from those who had come with companies to Frisco and been stranded, and there are famous artists now in America who have performed in these places, or 'dives,' as they were called. The audience was not a set audience. It was always shifting, coming or going. And whilst this kind of an audience is not exacting, it is the most difficult audience of all to interest. The stage people who did this kind of work got a very thorough training indeed in the art of compelling the attention of their auditors. It was not like a regular theatre.

If the people did not care for what was going on on the stage, they at once left.

The Barbary Coast was perhaps the toughest place in Frisco. It began at the upper end of Kearney Street, after one passed the Bella Union Theatre. Here were congregated hard characters from all over the world; and here was Bottle Kœnig's, the place where a great automatically played organ discoursed sweet music that softened not the savage breasts of the denizens of the Coast. Very often these denizens would add to the gaiety of things and to the chastening of themselves by indulging in knife and revolver play. But the police did not overburden their souls with worry so long as they practised this play upon themselves. If you were going along in that quarter, and the short, sharp, staccato music of the revolver broke in upon your ear, your best plan was not to allow your curiosity to tempt you to go forward and see what was the matter. Your best plan was to get with all the haste you could summon far to the windward of the belligerent music. For people who fight in the street with revolvers are usually too polite to hit each other. Their bullets, when they find billets, find them in the innocent passing stranger. I confess that I have a broad mind in these matters, but I must say that in my opinion street fighters of this kind ought certainly to be locked up. The Barbary Coast was the repository of some of the most untrammelled and venturesome spirits in Europe and America. But they had one shining virtue—they thinned one another out.

I, of course, had my hard times in Frisco. But a hard time in a beautiful place where the sun is always shining is nothing near so hard a hard time as it would be in a place of cold and fog and rain. When one was hard-up in Frisco one was enabled to see the humour of things.

Never will I forget the mutual adventure that I shared with a poet. He was but a spring poet, I admit, but nevertheless his verses had found favour with the Editor of the *Wasp*, and on a certain morning we saw these verses incarcerated in immortal print in the *Wasp* columns. The poet and I shared a room in Turk Street, and things for some time had not been coming our way. I had lost my job in the Tivoli Opera House through fighting with another great chorus artist, and the poet's contributions had in them too original a genius to find their way into print. How this poem had found its way into the *Wasp* on this particular morning was a mystery. But it was a mystery that filled us with jubilation. And we walked swiftly along Market Street, and turned to the left up Kearney Street toward the office where the *Wasp* had its being. My poet comrade was going to touch the Editor for the amount that was due to him through the publication of his immortal poem. I forget what the poem was about, but I remember well the high hopes that we had concerning the ample breakfast we would discuss when the base lucre for the poem was extracted from the Editor. On and on we went like one man, and, lo and behold! we were at the office of the *Wasp*. And the poet advanced in with an invincible expression illuming his poetic face. I waited outside. And I waited and waited. And at last the poet came forth. He did not sally out as he had sallied in. He came out slowly on weak and tottery legs, and in his face was a look that spelt plainer than any letters could spell the dread word defeat. I listened mechanically to his epic of woe, for it was indeed an epic. And it ran to the effect that the Editor could not pay for the poem because it was George Washington's birthday! It was against his principles as a free and independent American citizen to pay for contributions on such a solemn and holy day. Oh, shade of George Washington! It was baseness of the basest kind to use your immortal name in such a connection! We went sadly along Kearney Street, wondering where our breakfast would come from. I met the poet afterwards in New York, and he confided to me that the dread and fearsome episode had cured him of the poetic disease.

A character in Frisco at that time was a man of the name of Schonchin Maloney. Whether his weird front name was a nickname or a Christian name I don't know. But I know that he was a most individual person, and fond of argument. He used to carry a big blackthorn stick with a heavy knob, and you had, when arguing with him, to be careful that this knob did not collide with your head during the argument. For Schonchin had an awkward habit of wildly flourishing it when he was emphasising a point. Schonchin was a square-jawed Irishman, with very red hair that was always cropped close. He had a voice like a bull, and when raised it could be heard for a couple of hundred yards in every direction. He was a great character was Schonchin, and he was mighty in argument. Two or three times I entered the lists against him, but I had to retire very much defeated. His voice was too loud and enveloping, and too much skill was needed to avoid collision with the knob of his stick. Good old Schonchin! He ought to be immortal in the annals of Frisco. I wonder what became of him. I wonder if he is in the land of the living. He was one of the features of the charming town.

There was Chris Buckley. He was a most remarkable man, and he manipulated the politics of the town. He was a boss, and I have often wondered if he were really as black as he was painted. His figure was tall and graceful and erect. He had a fine brow, and his face was mysterious and subtle of expression. It was distinctly a face of great intellectual power.

And it was very pale. In it was nobility and the power of command. With the things that were said against him I have no concern. Rulers of men always have things said against them. I only give my impression of him. He was one of the most remarkable-looking men I have ever seen.

. . . . . .

I have wandered into many towns in my knockabout life. I have seen many, many places. But the place that I liked most of all was dear old Frisco. It was so sunlit and so beautiful, and the people in it were so kindly and friendly! They really had a human attitude towards one another. How it is now, of course, I don't know. The great destroying shock must have altered things. But I have a feeling that the dear old place is essentially the same as it was when I was there over a quarter of a century ago. I have a picture of it in my mind that is still clear and vivid. I see the great wide Market Street, stretching up from the Front miles and miles. And I see the ships in the beautiful bay. I see Oakland lying on the side of it, six miles away. I see Kearney Street and Bush Street, and I see again the actors standing on the corner. I shall never forget it. This place of sunshine! This beautiful isolated town lying on the edge of a vast ocean and a vast continent!

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER II.—OF A MOURNFUL MILLIONAIRE WHO LACKED AN OBJECT.

GEOFFREY RAVENSLEE was tall and pale and very languid, so languid, indeed, that the automobile coat he bore across his arm slipped to the floor ere Mr Brimberly could take it; after which he shed his cap and goggles and dropped them, drew off his gauntlets and dropped them, and, crossing to his favourite lounge-chair, dropped himself into it and lay there staring into the fire.

'Ah, Brimberly!' he sighed gently, 'making a night of it?'

'Why, sir,' bowed his butler—'indeed, sir—to tell the truth, sir'——

'You needn't, Brimberly. Excellent cigars you smoke, judging from the smell. May I have one?'

'Sir!' said Brimberly, his whiskers slightly agitated. 'Cigars, sir?'

'In the cabinet, I think;' and Mr Ravenslee motioned feebly with one white hand toward the tall carved cabinet in an adjacent corner.

Mr Brimberly coughed softly behind plump fingers. 'The—the key, sir?' he suggested.

'Oh, not at all necessary, Brimberly; the lock is faulty, you know.'

'Sir!' said Brimberly, soothing a twitching whisker.

'If you are familiar with the life of the Fourteenth Louis, Brimberly, you will remember that the Grand Monarch hated to be kept waiting; so do I. A cigar—in the cabinet yonder.'

With his whiskers in a high state of agitation, Mr Brimberly laid by the garments he held clutched in one arm, and, coming to the cabinet, opened it, and taking thence a box of cigars very much at random, came back carrying it rather as though it were a box of highly dangerous explosives, and, setting it at his master's elbow, struck a match.

Now, as he watched his master select and light his cigar, it chanced that Young R. raised his eyes and looked at Mr Brimberly, and to be sure those eyes were surprisingly piercing and quick for one so very languid; indeed, Mr Brimberly seemed to think so, for he coughed again, faint and discreetly, behind his hand, while his whiskers quivered slightly, though perceptibly.

'You're 'ome quite—quite unexpected, sir!'

'Brimberly, I'm afraid I am, but I hope I don't intrude?'

'Intrude, sir!' repeated Mr Brimberly. 'Oh, very facetious, sir—very facetious indeed!' and he laughed deferentially and soft.

'I blew the horn, but I see he left his hat behind him!' sighed Young R., nodding languidly toward the headgear of Mr Stevens, which had fallen beneath a chair, and thus escaped notice.

'Why, I—indeed, sir,' said Mr Brimberly, stooping to make a fierce clutch at it, 'I took the liberty of showing a friend of mine your—your picters, sir. No offence, I 'ope, sir?'

'Friend!' murmured his master.

'Name of Stevens, sir; valet to Lord Barberton—a most sooperior person indeed, sir!'

'Barberton! I don't agree with you, Brimberly.'

'Stevens, sir!'

'Ah! And you showed him my—pictures, did you?'

'Yes, sir, I did take that liberty. No offence, sir, I'——

'H'm! Did he like 'em?'

'Like 'em, sir! 'E were fair overpowered, sir! Brandy-and-soda, sir?'

'Thanks! Did he like that too?'

'Why, sir—I—indeed'——

'Oh, never mind—to-night is an occasion, anyway—just a splash of soda! Yes, Brimberly, when the clocks strike midnight I shall be thirty-five years old.'

'Indeed, sir!' exclaimed Brimberly, clapping his plump hands softly and bowing. 'Then

allow me to wish you many, many 'appy returns, sir, with continued 'ealth, wealth, and all 'appiness, sir!'

'Happiness!' repeated Young R., and smiled quite bitterly, as only the truly young can smile. 'Happiness!' said he again. 'Thank you, Brimberly. Now take your friend his hat, and have the extreme goodness to make up the fire. I love a fire, as you know, but especially when I am mournful. And pray hurry, Brimberly!'

Forthwith Mr Brimberly bowed and bustled out, but very soon bustled in again; and now, as he stooped, menial-like, to ply the coal-tongs—though his dome-like brow preserved all its wonted serenity—no words could possibly express all the mute rebellion of those eloquent whiskers. 'Hanything more, sir?' he inquired as he rose from his knee.

'Why, yes,' said Young R., glancing up at him; and beneath the quizzical look in those sleepy gray eyes Mr Brimberly's whiskers wilted slightly. 'You're getting a trifle too—er—portly to hop round on your knees, aren't you, Brimberly? Pray sit down and talk to me.'

Mr Brimberly bowed and took a chair, sitting very upright and attentive while his master frowned into the fire.

'Thirty-five is a ripe age, Brimberly,' said he at last. 'A man should have made something of his life at thirty-five.'

'Certingly, sir.'

'And I'm getting quite into the sere and yellow leaf, am I not, Brimberly?'

Mr Brimberly raised a plump, protesting hand. ''Ardly that, sir—'ardly that!' said he. 'We are hall of us getting on, of course.'

'Where to, Brimberly? On where, Brimberly? On what?'

'Why, sir, since you ask me, I should answer—begging your parding—'eaven knows, sir!'

'Precisely! Anyway, I'm going there fast.'

'Where, sir?'

'Heaven knows, Brimberly.'

'Ah—er—certingly, sir!'

'Now, Brimberly, as a hard-headed, matter-of-fact, common-sense being, what would you suggest for a poor devil who is sick and tired of everything, and, most of all, of himself?'

'Why, sir, I should prescribe for that man change of hair, sir—travel, sir. I should suggest to that man Hafghanistan or Hasia Minor, or both, sir. There's your noo yacht a-laying in the river, sir.'

His master leant his square chin upon his square fist, and, still frowning at the fire, gently shook his head. 'My good Brimberly,' he sighed, 'haven't I travelled in most parts of the world?'

'Why, yes, sir, you've travelled, sir; very much so indeed, sir. You've shot lions and tigers and a helephant or so, and exchanged sentiments with raging 'eathen—as rage in nothing but a string o' beads—but what about your noomerous possessions in Europe, sir?'

'Ah, yes,' nodded Young R., 'I do possess some shanties and things over there, don't I, Brimberly?'

'Shanties, sir!' Mr Brimberly blinked, and his whiskers bristled in horrified reproof. 'Shanties! Oh dear me, sir!' he murmured. 'Shanties! Your magnificent town mansion situate in Saint James's Square, London, as your respected father hacquired from a royal dook, sir! Shanties! Your costly and helegant res-eye-dence in Park Lane, sir!'

'H'm!' said Young R. moodily.

'Then in Scotland, sir, we 'ave your castle of Drumlochie, sir—rocks, turrets, battlements, 'ighly grim and romantic, sir!'

'Ha!' sighed his young master, frowning at his cigar.

'Next, sir, in Italy we find your ancient Roman villa, sir—halabaster pillows and columns, sir—very historical, though a trifle wore with wars and centuries of centoorians, sir; wherefore I would humbly suggest a coat or two of paint, sir, applied beneath your very own eye, sir.'

'No, Brimberly,' murmured Young R., 'paint might have attractions; Italy none.'

'Certingly not, sir—cer-tingly not. Which brings us to your *Schloss* in Germany, sir.'

'Nor Germany. Lord, Brimberly, are there many more?'

'Ho yes, sir, plenty,' nodded Mr Brimberly. 'Your late honoured and respected father, sir, were a rare 'and at buying palaces, sir. 'E collected 'em, as you might say, like some folks collects postage stamps, sir.'

'And a collection of the one is about as useless as a collection of the other, Brimberly.'

'Why, true, sir; one man can't live in a dozen places all at once. But why not work round 'em in turn, beginning, say, at your imposing Venetian *palazzo*—canals, sir, gondoleers—picturesque, though dampish? Or your *shally* in the Tyro-leen Halps, sir, or'——

'Brimberly, have the goodness to—er—shut up!'

'Certingly, sir.'

'To-day is my birthday, Brimberly, and to-night I've reached a kind of "jumping off" place in my life, and—between you and me—I'm seriously thinking of—er—jumping off!'

'I crave parding, sir?'

'I'm thirty-five years old,' continued Young R., his frown growing blacker, 'and I've never done anything really worth while in all my useless life! Have the goodness to look at me, will you?'

'With pleasure, sir!'

'Well, what do I look like?'

'The very hacme of a gentleman, sir!'

'Kind of you, Brimberly, but I know myself for an absolutely useless thing—a purposeless, ambitionless wretch, drifting on to God knows

what. I'm a hopeless wreck, a moral derelict, and it has only occurred to me to-night—— But'—and here the speaker paused to flick the ash from his cigar—'I fear I'm boring you?'

'No, sir—ho no, not at all, indeed, sir!'

'You're very kind, Brimberly. Light a cigarette! Ah no, pardon me, you prefer my cigars, I know.'

'Why—why sir,' stammered Mr Brimberly, laying a soothing hand upon his twitching whisker, 'indeed, I—I'——

'Oh, help yourself, pray!'

Hereupon Mr Brimberly took a cigar very much at random, and, while Young R. watched with lazy interest, proceeded to cut it—though with singularly clumsy fingers.

'A light, Mr Brimberly—allow me!'

So Ravenslee held the light while Mr Brimberly puffed his cigar to a glow, though to be sure he coughed once and choked, as he met Young R.'s calm gray eye.

'Now,' pursued his master, 'if you're quite comfortable, Mr Brimberly, perhaps you'll be good enough to—er—hearken further to my tale of woe?'

Mr Brimberly choked again, and, recovering, smoothed his writhing whiskers and murmured, 'It would be a honour!'

'First, then, Brimberly, have you ever hated yourself—I mean, despised yourself so thoroughly that the bare idea of your existence makes you angry and indignant?'

'Why, no, sir,' answered Mr Brimberly, staring, 'I can't say as I 'ave, sir.'

'No,' said his master with another keen glance, 'and I don't suppose you ever will!'

Now here again, perhaps because of the look or something in Young R.'s tone, Mr Brimberly took occasion to emit a small apologetic cough.

'You have never felt yourself to be a—a cumberer of the earth, Brimberly?'

Mr Brimberly, having thought the matter over, decided that he had not.

'You are not given to introspection, Brimberly?'

'Intro—ahem! No, sir, not precisely—'ardly that, sir, and then only very occasional, sir.'

'Then you've never got on to yourself—got wise to yourself—seen yourself as you really are?'

Mr Brimberly goggled and groped for his whisker.

'I mean,' pursued his master, 'you have never seen all your secret weaknesses and petty meannesses stripped stark naked, have you?'

'N-naked, sir!' faltered Mr Brimberly; 'very distressing indeed, sir—oh dear me!'

'It's a devilish unpleasant thing,' continued Young R., scowling at the fire again; 'yes, it's a devilish unpleasant thing to go serenely on our flowery way pitying and condemning the sins and follies of others and sublimely unconscious of our own until one day—ah yes, one day—we meet ourselves face to face, and see beneath all our pitiful shams and hypocrisies, and know ourselves at last for what we really are—behold the decay of faculties, the degeneration of intellect bred of sloth and inanition, and know ourselves at last—for exactly what we are!'

Mr Brimberly stared at the preoccupation of his master's scowling brow and grim-set mouth, and, clutching a soft handful of whisker, murmured, 'Certingly, sir!'

'When I was a boy,' continued Ravenslee absently, 'I used to dream of the wonderful things I would do when I was a man. By the way, you're quite sure I'm not boring you?'

'No, sir—certingly not, sir, indeed, sir!'

'Take another cigar, Brimberly; oh, put it in your pocket; it will do to—er—to add to your collection! But, as I was saying, as a boy I was full of a godlike ambition; but, as I grew up, ambition and all the noble things it leads to sickened and died—died of a surfeit of dollars! And to-day I am thirty-five, and feel that I can't—that I never shall—do anything worth while.'

'But, sir,' exclaimed Mr Brimberly with a bland and reassuring smile, 'you are one as don't have to do nothing. You're rich!'

Mr Ravenslee started. 'Rich!' he cried, and, turning, he glanced at Mr Brimberly, and his square chin looked so very square and his gray eyes so very piercing that Mr Brimberly, loosing his whisker, coughed again and shifted his gaze to the Persian rug beneath his feet; yet when Young R. spoke again his voice was very soft and sleepy. 'Rich!' he repeated. 'Yes, that's just the unspeakable hell of it—it's money that has crippled all endeavours and made me what I am! Rich! I'm so rich that my friends are all acquaintances; so rich that I might buy anything in the world except what I most desire; so rich that I am tired of life, the world, and everything in the world, and have been seriously considering a—er—a radical change. It is a comfort to know that we may all of us find oblivion when we so desire.'

'Oblivion!' nodded Mr Brimberly, mouthing the word sonorously; 'oblivion, sir, certingly—my own sentiments exactly, sir; for, though not being a marrying man myself, I regard it with a truly reverent heye, and 'umbly suggest that for you such a oblivious change would be'——

'Brimberly,' said Young R., turning to stare in lazy wonder, 'where in the world are you getting to now?'

Mr Brimberly coughed and touched a whisker with dubious finger. 'Wasn't you allooding to—hem—to matrimony, sir?'

'Matrimony! Lord, no! Hardly so desperate a course as that, Brimberly. I was considering the advisability of—er—this!' And, opening a drawer in the escritoire, Young R. held up

a revolver, whereat Mr Brimberly's whiskers showed immediate signs of extreme agitation, and he started to his feet.

'Mr Ravenslee, sir, for the love o' Gawd!' he exclaimed, 'if it's a choice between the two, try matrimony first; it's so much—so much wholesomer, sir!'

'Is it, Brimberly? Let me see. There are about five hundred highly dignified matrons in this—er—great city wholly eager and anxious to wed their daughters to my dollars (and incidentally myself) even if I were the vilest knave or most pitiful piece of doddering antiquity. Faugh! let's hear no more of matrimony.'

'Certingly not, sir!' bowed Mr Brimberly.

'And I'm neither mad, Brimberly, nor drunk, only—speaking colloquially—I'm "on to" myself at last. If my father had only left me a few fewer millions I might have been quite a hard-working, useful member of society, for there's good in me, Brimberly; I am occasionally aware of quite noble impulses, but they need some object to bring 'em out. An object—h'm!' Here Mr Ravenslee put away the revolver. 'An object to work for, live for, be worthy of!' Here he fell to frowning into the fire again, and stared thus so long that at last Mr Brimberly felt impelled to say, 'A hobject, of course, sir! A hobject—certingly, sir!' But here he started and turned to stare toward the windows, as from the darkness beyond two voices were uplifted in song; two voices, these, which sang the same tune and words, but in two different keys; uncertain voices, now shooting up into heights, now dropping into unplumbable deeps; two shaky voices whose inconsequent quaverings suggested four legs in much the same condition.

'Brimberly,' sighed his master, 'what doleful wretches have we here?'

'Why, sir, I—I rather fancy it's William and James—the footmen, sir,' answered Mr Brimberly between bristling whiskers. 'Hexcuse me, sir—I'll go and speak to 'em, sir.'

'Oh, pray don't trouble yourself, Mr Brimberly; sit down and hearken. These sad sounds are inspired by deep potations—beer, I fancy. Be seated, Mr Brimberly.'

Mr Brimberly obeyed, and, being much agitated, dropped his cigar and grovelled for it, and it was to be noted thereafter that as the singers drew nearer he shuffled on his chair with whiskers violently a-twitch, while his eyes goggled more and his dome-like brow grew ever moister. But on came the singing footmen, and passed, full-tongued, wailing out each word with due effect, thus:

'My—sweet'eart's—me mother,
The best—the dearest—of—'em all.'

'H'm!' murmured Young R., 'I admire the sentiment, Brimberly; but the execution leaves something to be desired perhaps.'

'If you'll only let me go out to 'em, sir!' groaned Mr Brimberly, mopping himself with a very large, exceeding white handkerchief; 'if you honly will, sir.'

'No, Brimberly, no—it would only distress you. Besides, hark! their song is ended, and rather abruptly. I rather fancy they have fallen down the terrace steps.'

'And I 'opes,' murmured Mr Brimberly fervently, 'I do 'ope as they've broke their necks!'

'Of course, I ought to have gone out and switched on the lights for them,' sighed Young R.; 'but then, you see, I thought they were safe in bed, Brimberly!'

'Why, sir,' said Mr Brimberly, mopping furiously, 'I—I ventured to give 'em a hour's leave of habsence, sir; I ventured so to do, sir, because, sir'——

'Because you are of rather a venturesome nature, aren't you, Brimberly?'

'No offence, sir, I 'ope?'

'None at all, Mr Brimberly. Pray calm yourself, and—er—take a little brandy.'

'Sir!'

'Your glass is under the chair yonder, or is it your friend's?'

Mr Brimberly goggled toward Mr Stevens's betraying glass, picked it up, and sat staring at it in vague and dreamy fashion until, rousing at his master's second bidding, he proceeded to mix brandy and soda, his gaze still profoundly abstracted and his whiskers drooping with an abnormal meekness.

At this juncture a knock sounded at the door, and a chauffeur appeared, looking very smart in his elegant livery; a thick-set man, mightily deep of chest, whose wide shoulders seemed to fill the doorway, and whose long, gorilla-like arms ended in two powerful hands; his jaw was squarely huge, his nose broad and thick, but beneath his beetling brows blinked two of the mildest blue eyes in the world.

'What is it, Joe?'

'And what time will ye be wantin' the car in the mornin', sir?' he inquired.

'The morning, Joe? Who can say what may happen between now and then?'

'Shall I have her round at eleven, sir, or'——

'Eleven will do as well as any other time; let it go at that.'

'You was to see your broker, Mr Anderson, in the mornin' over them steamship shares, sir.'

'Shares, Joe, are a vanity; they weary me. Mr Brimberly yawns and you look sleepy. Good-night, Joe; pleasant dreams.'

'Good-night, sir!' and, touching his right eyebrow, Joe went out, closing the door behind him.

'And now,' said Mr Ravenslee, puffing languidly at his cigar, 'referring to the necessary object, there is a chance that it may be found even yet, Mr Brimberly!'

'Hobject, sir,' murmured Mr Brimberly; 'found, sir—to be sure, sir.'

'Yes, I intend you shall find it for me, Brimberly.'

Mr Brimberly's abstraction gave place to sudden amaze. 'Find it! Wot! me, sir—hexcuse me, sir—but did you say me?' Mr Brimberly actually gaped.

'You, Brimberly, of course.'

'But—but wot kind of a hobject; and where, sir?'

'Really,' sighed Young R., 'these are quite fool questions for one of your hard-headed common-sense! If I knew exactly "what" and "where" I'd go and find it myself; at least, I might.'

'But 'ow in the world, sir—beggin' your parding I'm sure—but 'ow am I to go a-finding hobjex as I've never seen nor 'eard of?'

'Brimberly, I pass! But if you manage it in, say, a week I'll double your wages, and give you a—er—a bonus into the bargain. Think it over.'

'I—I will, sir; indeed, sir!'

'Very well; you may go.'

'Certingly, sir.' Mr Brimberly bowed and crossed to the door; but, being there, paused. 'Double me wages I think it were, sir, *and* a bonus? Very 'andsome, very 'andsome, indeed, sir; thank you, sir.' Saying which Mr Brimberly bowed himself out, but immediately bowed himself in again. 'Sir,' said he, 'if you could give me some hidea, sir.'

'Some what?'

'A few 'ints, sir, as to the nature of said hobject—whether animal, mineral, or nooter, sir?'

'Well, perhaps "animal" might be the more interesting.'

'Now, as to gender, sir. Masculine shall we say, or shall we make it feminine?'

'Oh, either will do! And yet, since you offer so wide a selection, perhaps—er—feminine.'

'Very good, sir!'

'And you'd better make it singular number, Brimberly.'

'Certingly, sir; much obliged, sir! Will you be wanting me again, sir?'

'Not again, Brimberly.'

'Then good-night, sir; thank you, sir!' And Mr Brimberly went softly forth, and closed the door noiselessly behind him.

Being alone, Mr Ravenslee switched off the lights and sat in the fire-glow. 'Feminine gender, singular number, objective case, governed by the verb to love—I wonder!' And he laughed a little bitterly (and very youthfully) as he stared down into the dying fire.

(Continued on page 34.)

THE PROBLEM OF FUEL.

By E. Fearon.

FOR years past we have been using the world's resources with a lavish prodigality for which posterity will bitterly blame us, and which may handicap future generations very seriously indeed.

Timber, rubber, coal, iron, cotton, and numerous other materials were increasing in price largely because they were consumed in a wasteful manner without any provision being made for the future. Production has increased by leaps and bounds in the last sixty years or so; and as in the case of mineral wealth we are living on capital which cannot be replenished, it is only ordinary common-sense to make that capital last as long as possible, and not squander it recklessly, as we have been doing.

Whatever surprise science may have in store for the future we cannot say. It may be that catalysis will reveal new wonders to our children, or that radio-activity will show how to get our energy more economically than heretofore; but in the meantime we must accept things as they are to-day, and realise that power can be obtained from comparatively few sources—namely, coal, petroleum and kindred substances, wood, peat, &c., alcohol, water, and wind.

At present coal is a very easy first, and may be said to be the only source of power worth consideration. The quantity of petroleum used throughout the world is about 50,000,000 tons per annum—a mere fraction, comparatively speaking, of the world's need, equal to, say, 4 per cent. of the coal consumption. Wood, peat, lignite, &c. are used to some extent on the Continent, but cannot be considered as serious competitors of coal. Alcohol, in the opinion of many authorities, will be the fuel of the future, as it can be readily obtained from vegetable sources, and the supply augmented almost indefinitely; but for many purposes one can hardly conceive it taking the place of coal, and in any case it will be some considerable time before we are in a position to produce, say, 350,000,000,000 gallons of it, which would be the equivalent of the energy locked up in the coal used each year. Except in hilly or mountainous regions, where waterfalls may be used to some extent, water-power need not be discussed; and as the tides have not yet been harnessed, although the idea has been mooted, we can leave that element out of our reckoning. The possibilities of power to be derived from the wind have not, perhaps, been sufficiently exploited, except here and there for pumping water, and so on; but it is quite likely that in the future this source may be used a great deal more than at present, especially in

conjunction with storage-batteries where a constant supply of energy is needed. But, with the vast requirements of modern industry, wind-power is hardly likely to be able to fill the bill.

Hence we come to the outstanding fact that coal, and coal alone, is our only available source of energy; and, as will be seen, we are using it in a terribly wasteful manner, and it behoves the nation to take drastic steps to put an end to the waste at the earliest possible moment, since it can easily be shown that the three countries which lead the way in coal production also lead the way in commerce and importance. These are the United Kingdom, America, and Germany, which, between them, produce 83 per cent. of the total quantity of coal raised throughout the world.

Taking the figures for 1913, America heads the list with 560,000,000 tons, Great Britain comes next with 287,000,000 tons, and Germany is third with 190,000,000 tons—a total of 1,037,000,000 tons, out of a total for the whole world of 1,250,000,000 tons.

The world's coal consumption is rapidly increasing year by year; in 1903 it was 800,000,000 tons; ten years later, 1,250,000,000 tons, an increase of 56 per cent. Taking an average figure of 5 per cent. per annum, and assuming that the increase continues, a simple calculation will show that our reserve cannot last very long, for the latest figures for Great Britain gave some 170,000,000,000 tons available—that is, seams of not less than one foot thick, and not more than four thousand feet below the surface of the ground.

As a matter of fact, the increase for Great Britain has been at the rate of just over 2 per cent. per annum; but, even so, in a little more than thirty years the consumption will have doubled, so that by 1945 it will be 570,000,000 tons; and if this increase is kept up it will be over 2,000,000,000 tons by the end of the century! As the reserve would be correspondingly diminished, we should have come to the end of our resources by 2030—only one hundred and fourteen years hence.

No doubt this is an extreme view; but the often expressed opinion that our coal-supply, *at the present rate of consumption*, will last six hundred years is also illogical, as the evidence is all against its remaining at the present rate. Even at 1 per cent. increase, two hundred years hence we should be raising 2,200,000,000 tons per annum, if any were left to be raised!

Professor W. A. Bone, F.R.S., in a series of interesting lectures on 'The Utilisation of Energy from Coal,' referring to the foregoing, says: 'The serious aspect of the local coal question for Great Britain is not how long can our reserves possibly last, having regard to the probable long continuation of the present upward tendency of our annual output? but how long can we continue to get the available coal at a cost which will not place us as a nation at a disadvantage relative to our nearest competitor? From this point of view, the achievement of all possible economies not only in the getting but also in the transporting and utilisation of coal is of the greatest national importance, especially in view of the heavy burden which war taxation must inevitably impose upon commerce and industry.'

The question then arises, How is this economy to be effected? First of all, the whole subject must be brought home to the general public, who are almost entirely ignorant of the importance of it; secondly, scientific research must be encouraged and brought to bear on our present wasteful method of obtaining the energy available in coal; and, thirdly, power should be distributed from central stations equipped with the latest and best method of power production, instead of numbers of works each producing the power it requires by, in many cases, out-of-date and wasteful plants.

That there is a vast field for economy is shown by the fact that from one pound of an average coal there can be obtained about 13,000 heat units; and as the heat equivalent of a horse-power-hour is 2544 units, it follows that, if all loss could be avoided, it should be possible to obtain one horse-power per hour by the consumption of one-fifth of a pound of coal. But what do we find? According to an investigation undertaken a few years ago, the average consumption of coal per horse-power-hour throughout Great Britain was about five pounds; or, in other words, only 4 per cent. of the available energy was used, and 96 per cent. wasted.

Granted that it is impossible to secure theoretic results, yet it ought to be within the scope of a nation that prides itself on being practical and business-like to get more than a miserable 4 per cent. efficiency. Think what it means if even a humble 10 per cent. efficiency could be obtained. Some 65,000,000 tons of coal are at present used for power purposes in the United Kingdom; with a 10 per cent. efficiency, 26,000,000 would do the same work—a direct saving of 40,000,000 tons! Even with existing plants, some economy may be effected by the addition of superheaters, economisers, feed-water heaters, and so on; but what is needed is a comprehensive scheme to supply power, probably by electricity, to the host of small works that exist in our large industrial centres, and to relegate to their proper place—the scrap-heap—all those inefficient and wasteful low-pressure boilers and non-condensing engines which are swallowing up, year after year, our diminishing stock of coal.

If this were done, the coal could be obtained more cheaply, through being bought in large quantities; it could be gasified, so saving the ammonia at all events; and the resulting gas could be used for heating the boiler, to which would be coupled steam-turbines, with the result that power could be obtained by a consumption

of one pound of coal per horse-power-hour, as is done in a large power-station at Chicago, where a 35,000 horse-power Parsons turbo-alternator is at work. Up to units of about 2000 horse-power, gas-engines could be used economically, where, as at Sheffield, users of over 6,000,000 feet per annum could obtain the gas at tenpence per thousand feet. Take the case of a thousand horse-power engine working, say, ten hours a day for an average of two hundred and seventy days a year; then the cost for gas would be—assuming fifteen feet per horse-power-hour—£1687; using a coal-fired boiler, and assuming an efficiency for the steam plant of one and a half pounds per horse-power-hour, and coal at £1 per ton, the cost for coal only would be £1808, and on top of that would be firemen's wages, handling of the coal, clinker, and ashes, and other charges. For smaller units, where the coal consumption is probably three pounds or more per horse-power-hour, the gas-engine scores even more heavily. In the iron and steel industries, which use over 30,000,000 tons of coal per annum, a saving estimated at, at least, 10,000,000 tons might be effected by following the Continental plan of concentrating coke-ovens, blast-furnaces, steel-works, and rolling-mills into one plant, whereby economies resulting in a saving of ·75 ton of coal per ton of iron produced have been gained.

The domestic fire uses about 40,000,000 tons annually; and since it seems almost hopeless to expect the Briton to give up his open coal-fire, he might be urged to use the most economical grate—in his own interests, at all events—and insist on builders putting them into his 'castle,' especially the kitchen thereof, where it costs a small fortune to get a modicum of hot water and to cook an occasional joint!

That economies *can* be effected is certain, and it remains for the Government to *insist* on their being effected, else, as a nation, we are going the right way to land ourselves in the bankruptcy court; for, deprived of our coal, there is no doubt that is where we shall end.

Another correspondent writes as follows on 'Coal and its Substitutes:' The high price of coal is putting to the test the ingenuity of scientists in various parts of the world. Many experiments have been made to provide a solution. Experiments with oil have proved fairly successful, and water-power is utilised on a considerable scale at Niagara and on the Zambesi. Mr Arnold Lupton says that the tides may be yoked up as a successful competitor with coal when that article reaches £4 per ton. The supplies of oil will most probably be exhausted before those of coal; therefore we must look farther ahead.

All power and heat comes from the sun, and it is undoubtedly to the past and present heat given up by the solar orb that we must look for our future supplies. Locomotives and engines are only the horses of the sun. Solar heat fixed the carbon in the plants which formed the coal; and the heat absorbed in doing that work is now liberated to raise steam, &c.

Only a small part of the heat there contained is used; the rest is wasted. Economy is therefore needed. Future investigators must direct their attention to the sun and the economy of its vast reserves.

The rays of the sun which shone on the primeval world are now liberated and utilised as motive-power, and the vast reserves which the earth has locked up in its bosom can and will be used by mankind for its future benefit. It is, therefore, to the gases which are contained in the minerals of the earth that we look for future supplies of power.

The writer remembers, when a mining student some thirty years ago, giving out this idea to the mining professor. He did not actually laugh at the idea, but could not see its feasibility.

The argument was: since it is possible to obtain salt by boring holes to the salt-beds and bringing out the saline deposits, why then is it not possible (since the heat is contained in the gases) to obtain the necessary gases from the bowels of the earth without coal-mining as it is now known?

It is not an impracticable idea. The chemists of the future will probably find out some ways and means of solving this problem, just as they now produce the by-products. It would undoubtedly mean a great economy, since the wastage of power would be more under control, and used at will. Our huge reserves would therefore last for a long time. Seams of coal only a few inches thick would be utilised, and bituminous shales.

The world will certainly not perish for want of coal; but it is necessary to leave as large a reserve as possible for the use of future generations. The sun is undoubtedly the power of the future, and if our supplies fail us we may witness a migration of civilised people to the lands which are now desert, but where the sun sheds its beneficent light and power more generously than on our land. A novel method of obtaining power by the utilisation of the internal heat of the earth in a volcanic district was recorded in the *Iron and Coal Trades Review*. A thermo-electric power-house is in operation at Larderello, some twelve miles from Volterra, producing about 10,000 horse-power. The idea of using the available heat was first put into practice by Prince Ginori Conti in 1903. At Larderello steam issues from the earth in jets, and the Prince first utilised the steam as a jet impinging on a bucket wheel. Later he used the steam in the ordinary way in a reciprocating engine coupled to a dynamo. Encouraged by the results, he made use of a small part of the steam issuing from one of the largest jets at a

pressure of 75 pounds per square inch, and by this means obtained some 40 horse-power. The steam from this jet issues at a temperature of 160 degrees, and at the rate of 11,000 pounds per hour. The general results obtained were satisfactory, except that it was found that acids present in the steam rapidly corroded the engine. Borings were made to discover new sources of steam, some of which gave good results. In 1912 a turbo-alternator of 300 horse-power was installed, and was used to light the borax-works at Larderello. When the war broke out, the immensely increased cost of coal gave an impetus to further development, and the Prince ordered three steam turbines, two of which, provided with surface condensers, are installed. The natural steam, instead of being used directly in the turbines, is used to heat multitubular boilers giving a pressure of 23 pounds per square inch. The current is transformed up to 36,000 volts, and transmitted along five different lines to the towns in the neighbourhood.

LA SIERPES.

CHAPTER II.

AT the thought of seeing my new friends again, the sun that morning seemed to me to have more brightness, and the scent of the jasmine and the heliotrope as it came through the open window had even a sweeter fragrance than before; but, alas! I saw nothing of them till the evening, when they told me that Señor Vegara might not return for three weeks.

'My watch and Mary's bracelet will hardly tide us over till then,' said Vandermeeren, with a bitter laugh.

Again I told him not to bother about that; and this time, after some hesitation, he took my proffered note for one thousand *pesetas*. He was not a man of many words, but I could see how grateful and relieved he was. While we were talking his daughter came up.

'You know, *capitaine*,' she said after our first greetings, 'my father is passionately fond of music. Alas! I cannot play; but whenever my father is bothered, my brother, who is a fine musician, has only to sit down at the spinet, and all his troubles pass away. Well, you know,' she continued, 'last night father knocked at my door and told me to come, and we heard a man singing who has a most lovely voice, and we sat in the moonlight quite entranced; and, with the smell of the roses and the honeysuckle, it was like being in Paradise. Now, do you know who he is?'

I was quite taken aback with delight at her words, but as I was seated at the back in the shade she could not see my face very well. I do not know what prompted me; perhaps I was in high spirits at the thought that I, so plain and commonplace, could influence her so easily, or it may have been in pure mischief; but, anyway, I determined to mystify her and pique her curiosity.

'Oh yes,' I replied casually, 'you mean a Señor Cosa. He has a fair voice, but he's a conceited puppy.'

'It's more than a fair voice, my friend,' said her father.

'You are jealous,' said the girl; 'but never mind that. Do you know him?'

'Very well indeed,' I replied.

'Will you introduce us to him?'

'Certainly. And what songs did he sing?'

'The "Lament of the Moor" was one; but they were all lovely, and when he sang them I felt so carried away that I could have'—— But with a blush she stopped, though her bright eyes still shone with animation.

'Kissed him?' I put in slyly.

'Oh, I never said that!' she answered decisively. 'I meant I could have thanked him.'

At that moment my uncle came in, to whom I quickly introduced my Dutch friends; and while Mynheer Vandermeeren was telling him of his misfortunes, and begging my uncle to use his influence with the General to permit him to leave the town, I sat talking to his daughter, who, I found to my surprise, had been educated in London; and, with a certain amount of hesitation, she also told me that her mother was English.

'English!' I exclaimed. 'Ah, now I begin to understand!'

'What do you mean?' she inquired uneasily, in a low voice.

'Nothing, *señorita*; but I have always been told, though we French hate the English, that the women of that country are surpassingly beautiful, and now I can believe it. But I have never heard the same of the Dutch.'

Before she could reply, my uncle said he wanted me to copy out some papers; so he helped me upstairs, but not before I had told my fair friend that I would not forget to try to induce Señor Cosa to sing some of the same songs that evening.

'He's a shrewd, clever fellow, that Dutchman,' said my uncle. 'I should say he is rich, too. Naturally he wants me to speak to the General in his favour; but I sha'n't hurry about that. I will give you,' he added with a kindly smile, 'a little more time to make love to his daughter. She is certainly very beautiful, and I should say very charming. What I like about her is her frankness and her unconsciousness of her

beauty. Nine girls out of ten without half her looks would give themselves no end of airs. I don't mind your running after that type of girl; she is pretty, and quite different from La Blonda.'

I was glad to hear his kind words, for I had faith in his judgment, and it filled my heart with pleasure. Apart from his military capacities—he would not have been in the *état major* of General Foy if he had not possessed them—my uncle's shrewdness was only equalled by his kind heart. Besides that, he was a real connoisseur in pictures and works of art, so much so that my uncle Fritz, who was very rich, and was a collector, got him to pick up pictures for him in Spain, and some very good bargains he made for him.

As I had promised, that evening I sang almost the same songs as I had sung before; but to mystify them I sang in quite a different part of the building.

The following morning, as I was waiting for the *médecin-major*, I heard my uncle talking below to Mynheer Vandermeeren and his daughter about the opera. 'You should certainly go,' said my uncle; 'it is worth while for the soprano alone, and the other women are fair; though, as for the baritone, the quality of his voice is not to be compared with that of my nephew.'

'Your nephew!' they both exclaimed. 'Is it your nephew whom we have heard?'

'I suppose so, for there is no one else who sings here.'

'But he said it was a certain Señor Cosa.'

'Did he?' replied my uncle with a smile. 'Then he must have made up that name, just as we French, if we forget a name, often say, "Monsieur Chose."'

'Ah, General,' replied the *señorita* with a laugh, 'you'll see, I will get level with him.'

'Well, I don't think he will mind that. If you want to bring out his voice, get him to sing "*Fincho del Vino*" from *Don Giovanni*.'

But at that moment the surgeon arrived, so I heard no more of their conversation.

When I went down I found *la belle Hollandaise* making a water-colour sketch of the *patio;* but she left her easel on seeing me. 'Ah, *capitaine*,' she said in a merry, quizzing tone, 'and how's Señor Cosa this morning?'

'I believe he's getting on finely,' I answered, falling in with her humour.

'Yes, perhaps you think that father and I did not know who he was all along?'

'I won't speak for your father, but I am certain you did not. I wish it were otherwise, because'—I added slyly—'because I remember how you said you would like to'——

'No, no, no!' she exclaimed with a blush. 'You are not to put words into my mouth! But it was very artful of you, and the only amends that you can make for it is to sing us "*Fincho del Vino*" from *Don Giovanni*, or, say, one of Handel's.'

Just then her father joined us. 'Good-morning, Señor Cosa,' he said with a twinkle in his eye. 'Now we are going to have some good music. We have a spinet upstairs.'

'If you can only get some good music in the place,' I answered.

'We will see about that,' he said; and within a couple of hours he had found in a second-hand book-shop a book that contained a collection of the songs of Gluck, Mozart, and Handel, and among those of the last-named '*Del mio Caro Bacco amabile.*' This, of course, is not one of that great composer's best songs; but as I looked up at Mary's face when I had finished it I knew the lovely girl was half won. Yes, I had fairly sung my way into her heart.

Thus the weeks passed, and I fell more deeply in love with her than ever. I was soon able to hobble about, and in the evening we would stroll in the famous Rambla, and listen to the bands our regiments supplied; and sometimes, too, we, used to take a felucca and sail in the bay. We three generally went alone, but sometimes my uncle and Pierre, who, I may add, was a distant relation, came with us. Alas! the time was fast coming when I could return to my duties, for the *médecin-major* said I should be able to do so in a week.

Now I remembered that General Foy had said that I should not hesitate to ask him a favour; so, without saying a word to Mynheer Vandermeeren, I went to remind him of his promise.

'And what is it I can do for you?' he said in a kindly way.

I told him how my Dutch friend had been detained because he was on an English ship.

'Certainly,' he replied. 'Your friend is lucky to have such a pretty daughter,' he added slyly. 'I know all about it from your uncle; but, as a matter of fact, I shall want to see Mynheer Vandermeeren at six. I have arranged the matter with your uncle.'

Thereupon he had the *laissez-passer* made out, but dated four days later. Inwardly I wondered at this, and, after gratefully thanking him, set off to tell my friends the good news. Armed with this magic paper, I reckoned that from pure gratitude Mynheer Vandermeeren would agree to my marriage with his daughter.

I found him smoking in the *patio*. 'There,' I said, as I placed the order of release in his hand, 'in four days you will be free.'

He sprang from his seat, and for a moment could hardly speak from emotion. 'How can I thank you enough?' he said, still holding my hand. 'How can I show my gratitude?'

'Easily enough,' I answered with some hesitation; 'by allowing me to marry Mary, if she will only have me.'

'You are asking a great deal,' he replied seriously. 'She's the best thing I possess; she's

a jewel, and a beautiful jewel, too; but I will agree on condition that your creed is her creed.'

I was rather taken aback by this. 'My family are Lutherans,' I answered.

'That's good enough for me. Now go and ask her; she is sketching in the summer-house.'

I thanked him, and turned into the *allée* of a small though beautiful garden at the back of the house; but so nervous did I feel that I stood still. I knew she would marry me. I felt perfectly certain of that; and yet, now the time had come, my knees felt shaky, and I feared to go on. I thought I had better postpone the matter. I thought I had better sing to her; while she was under the influence of my singing she would be like wax in my hands. Then I thought of the order of release I had obtained. That would be a good card to play. I felt glad I had remembered it; and, taking my courage in both hands, though still uncommonly nervous, I turned into another path, and saw her in the arbour, which was covered with honeysuckle and jasmine; thus she formed a beautiful picture in a lovely frame.

'I have such news for you, *señorita*. I have seen General Fóy, and I asked him to give me a *laissez-passer* for your father and you, and I have got it. You will be free now,' I said.

'Oh, *capitaine*,' she exclaimed, 'I am glad! Is not father grateful?'

'Oh yes,' I answered, seating myself beside her, 'so much so that he said I might ask you something.'

Taken by surprise, she blushed, then turned pale and edged a little farther from me; but then she came back, and this gave me courage. 'He said, *señorita*,' I blurted out, 'that I might ask if you would marry me.'

Then I saw, as she glanced up timidly, the same light in her bright eyes that I had seen when singing to her.

'*Si, si*,' she answered softly, and my arms in a moment were round her neck.

'Well, Henri, as you two have been here an hour,' said her father, coming up with a happy smile on his face, 'I suppose it is all settled.'

On seeing him Mary sprang to her feet. 'Yes, father,' she cried, kissing him, 'it is all right;' and as we sat round the table that day for *déjeuner*, there were not three happier people in all that great city of Barcelona, or, I imagine, in all the world. Though I had no idea why General Foy wished to see my future father-in-law, the last-named seemed to know, but he gave no reasons.

My uncle was delighted at my engagement. 'You are young, *mon enfant*,' he said. 'You only think of her beautiful face and splendid figure, her gaiety and good-nature; but I am older than you, and I can tell you that she has other qualities than those which appear on the surface. If you were in trouble or danger, I tell you that girl would risk anything for you.'

He was right, as I was to find before we were married. Then I asked why General Foy wished to see Mynheer Vandermeeren.

'Ah, that's another affair. I was obliged to keep silent on that point; but there's no harm in telling you now. Vandermeeren lost his wife in Cadiz nearly two years ago. Being a heretic, according to the law she was not allowed to be buried in the ordinary way; so when the tide was low she was placed in the sands without even any sort of service. This is the real origin of Vandermeeren's visit to General Foy. In this country he keeps his religious opinions to himself; but he has never forgotten his loss. It has eaten into his heart; the memory of it still rankles. You have heard him speak of Vegara the great banker, and also of his son. Rich as the firm may have been, now, owing to the war, it is in difficulties; that is why the father is away trying to get assistance from relations at Madrid. Vegara has a very beautiful ward named Christina Zarlala. She has in her own right an enormous fortune. It is owing to Vegara's foresight that it is so large. His son Antonio is betrothed to her. It is important that they should be married. With only a portion of her money he could keep the bank going till less troublous times come. Vandermeeren, who knows Vegara intimately, has often stayed with him in his beautiful villa outside the town, and on more than one occasion he has driven with him to the convent where Christina was educated. For safety and *pour les convenances*, for his wife is dead, he placed the girl in this convent, which is five leagues from here. Of course, the Mother Superior knows of her wealth.

'Well, about a week ago young Antonio got a letter from his fiancée, who is only seventeen, telling him that she had received a higher call. She saw now all the hollowness of the world and the wickedness of the Flesh and the Devil, and she was going to become a nun. If ever there was a girl who, Vandermeeren says, was full of gaiety and life, it was Christina. Antonio at once showed the letter to Vandermeeren, and begged for his help. I have seen the letter myself; it is in her handwriting, but it is all spelt correctly, which proves it must have been written from a copy. To tell you the truth, I don't think much of this Antonio. He loves her, of course; he is certainly handsome enough to please any girl, but he is a helpless sort of fellow, and in my belief he is an arrant coward. Then all Vandermeeren's bitter memories of how his wife was treated came out. He came to me, and told me that the convent is enormously rich. Moreover, they have a few, but only a few, very fine pictures and some exceedingly valuable plate. The building is in a very inaccessible place, but the Dutchman maintains that he

could take us there; so I spoke to Foy, and that's why he is going to see him. But all the arrangements are made; I am in command, and will have half a squadron of your regiment, and Delnard will have command of that. Vandermeeren and Mary are coming too, as he won't leave her here alone; and also Antonio, though he does not really want to come, because he considers it dangerous. You can come in the carriage with us.'

At six the next morning all was ready, and I saw Antonio Vegara for the first time. He had met Mary before, and he seemed very much surprised that she was coming with us.

'Ah yes,' she said, 'I am looking forward to a very pleasant drive.'

'A pleasant drive!' he exclaimed. 'You won't say so if we meet any *guerillos*.'

I was angry with him for putting such a silly idea in her head, and told her not to believe a word of it.

'Well, Henri, if there are *guerillos*,' said Mary calmly to me, 'I am very glad that I came, because you are not quite fit for service yet, and it is a great thing that I should be able to look after you.'

'*Bonita mia*,' I whispered, keeping down a smile, 'I tell you there's not a word of truth in the suggestion;' and she sat contentedly with her hand in mine, and spoke only of the beauty of the landscape in the early morning, as every now and then for some distance on our way from Barcelona we caught a glimpse of the deep-blue sea through the trees.

'We ought to be getting near,' said my uncle about eight o'clock.

'Yes,' said Mynheer Vandermeeren. 'I am looking out for a stream we have to go through. That stream goes right up to the convent.'

Soon we came to it.

'You see that wood?' he continued. 'The convent is in the middle of it. Now it's the first track to the left.'

'*Premier à la gauche!*' shouted my uncle to Pierre.

The latter galloped on to the vedettes. They may have been one hundred metres in front; anyway, my uncle saw them turn to the left, when we suddenly heard the report of firearms. '*Halte!*' he cried to the driver, and, leaving a few men with us, he rode forward. Mary sat calm; perhaps her little hand held mine a shade tighter, though she showed no fear, but Antonio turned as white as a sheet.

'I was a fool to come!' he cried. 'I shall tell them I was obliged to come.'

But his fears were quickly allayed, for a trooper soon returned. So little had a small band of guerrillas suspected our presence that our vedettes had suddenly come on them all seated on the ground playing cards, with their carbines against the trees. They fled at once, and practically no resistance was made, but we took three prisoners. When we drove up they were bound and placed in a cart we had brought with us to take away the pictures. Following the track, we were soon at the convent door.

In answer to the bell an old nun looked through the grille.

'It is the Señorita Zarlala we want,' said the General.

'There is no one of that name here now,' she told us.

'They have given her some religious name of their own, and they will get her off at the back,' said Mynheer Vandermeeren in a low voice in French.

'*Ma foi!* very likely,' replied my uncle, and he ordered Pierre to take his troopers round the high walls to the rear, while a brigadier with two men would remain with us; and then in a sharp voice he told the nun to let us in, which she did. Having shown us into a long, low room that seemed quite dark after the blaze of the sun, she said she would go and see the Mother Superior.

'We are being fooled,' said Vandermeeren after we had waited some time.

'I think so too,' replied the General. '*Allons*, let us see where the chapel is;' but at that moment the Mother Superior, a small, shrewd-looking woman of about sixty, came in and told us that the Señorita Zarlala was not to be seen, as she was ill.

'Oh, she is here, then?' replied my uncle.

'Yes; that was a mistake of Sister Caterina's,' said the Mother Superior.

'Perhaps it's a mistake about her being ill; anyway, we have a lady here who could verify that if I chose. But, madame, I am not here to talk. Bring her here, I say, at once, or I will order my men to fetch her.'

Turning to her companion in an authoritative way, she ordered her to bring Christina in.

'You will excuse me,' she said to my uncle. 'I have to see my father confessor on important business that your untimely visit has interrupted;' and she left us waiting.

'If you want those pictures,' said Mynheer Vandermeeren after a while, as Christina did not appear, 'you had better make haste; there is something going on. Perhaps she has sent for the guerrillas.'

'Ah, perhaps so,' exclaimed the General hurriedly. 'Let us go; you know the way.'

We had hardly entered the cloister when, at the end, we saw an old gardener and a nun, under the superintendence of the Mother Superior, carrying a picture about three metres in length out of the chapel door. The nun gave a cry on seeing us, and let it drop down.

'*Parbleu*, this is a *trouvaille!*' exclaimed the General, in admiration.

'Yes, that is the Memling triptych. The centre is the "Nativity,"' said Vandermeeren; 'and it has the "Flight into Egypt" and the

"Presentation of the Kings" on each side of it.'

Leaving one of the men to guard the picture, we hurried to the chapel, where, on a short ladder, the Father Confessor was busy at work loosening the supports of a large and very ghastly, but very characteristic, 'Descent from the Cross,' by Ribera. The priest was so intent on his business that he did not look round.

'I shall not be a minute now. Keep those French thieves engaged a little longer.'

'The French thieves are here,' replied my uncle, 'and we will help you to get it down.'

I kept my countenance, but the look of surprise and anger on the man's face was too much for Vandermeeren, and the chapel rang with his loud laughter.

'That makes two,' said the General to the Dutchman. 'Now, what else is there?'

'Well, apart from two Dutch works in the refectory and a fine portrait of the foundress which looks like a Bellini, though I am not sure, there 's nothing else but the plate and some very fine vestments.'

The quantity of plate and vestments was not large, but the quality was superb, especially a small gold chalice studded with jewels of the first water, that for workmanship might have been by Benvenuto Cellini. Then we returned to see about Señorita Zarlala.

'I will bring her in now,' said a pretty nun. With the Mother Superior at her side, Christina was brought in. The girl was strikingly beautiful, and radiant with health and strength; but she certainly looked more than seventeen. Keeping her eyes down, she advanced toward my uncle.

'Señor General,' she began in a low voice, '*Gracios a Dios, y la Santissima Madre de Dios, espontáneamente*'*—— Here she faltered, and looked imploringly at the stern face of the Mother Superior, who kept her eyes fixed on the girl. 'Of my own free-will I give up'—— But at that moment her eyes fell on her fiancé. She hesitated, and then, with a bound, she rushed toward him. 'Save me—oh, save me, Antonio, I implore you!' she cried in a heart-broken voice, and in a moment her arms were round his neck, and she was sobbing on the young fellow's shoulder, while the General gently reassured her, and told her she had nothing more to fear.

'For your sacrilege of this Holy House, Señor General,' said the Mother Superior, 'God will repay you if'——

It seemed as if her words would come true, for at that moment a trooper rushed in, saying our men had been surprised and attacked, and that Delnard had been wounded.

'All right,' replied my uncle calmly; and, warning the brigadier to bind the Father Confessor, and lock him up safely in the chapel as a hostage, he told me to follow him, which I did, after kissing Mary and telling her to have no fear.

(*Continued on page 40.*)

* 'Of my own accord.'

THE PAGEANT THAT I SAW.

WHAT words can tell, what tints display,
The pageant that I saw to-day?

Across wet gorse and wind-swept heath,
Where crouching homesteads lay beneath;
And, farther still, as I looked down,
The rain beat o'er the huddled town,
And gray the chimneys, spires, and mills
Rose from the pockets of the hills.
The murky mistiness, the dim
And brooding scene, seemed sad and grim,
To be a haunt of spring's. So, turning,
I crossed the moor. A track discerning,
I found another road which led
Through grassy valleys. Beech-trees spread
Their tenderness of early leaf,
And blotted out the sullen grief
Of looming cloud and weeping sky.
Curled fronds of bracken bent to spy
The tawny shroud around their roots
Of leaf and nut—the fallen fruits
And pride of autumn's bygone cheer,
Marking the death of yester-year.
Through the dry leaves and sleeping earth
Rose blue-bells, strong with glad young birth
Of pointed spears, whose purple-blue
Pierced the dead past with radiance new.
A blackbird trilled, a thrush sang gay
Clear notes, and cheered me on my way.
Shy rabbits dashed across the green;
A field-mouse darted out between
The maze of bramble, flower, and fern.
But here the path, with sudden turn,
Leaving the quiet wood's thick tangle,
Swept outwards at a mossy angle
Past cottages beside a stream
Where fish rose up with circled gleam,
And hovering flies and gnats made merry
Amongst the snows of gnarled white cherry.
And as along the road I went
The torrents of the rain seemed spent.
A silvery beam the dull haze broke,
And blue peeped through. Like wreaths of smoke
The gray mist drifted o'er the sky,
And great round-bellying clouds raced by;
Akin to galleons proud they rolled
Across the blue, all white and gold.
And golden, too, the chrysoprase
Of the lush grass with sunny rays
Was splashed. At length towards home I strode
Along the sandy ochre road,
Where traceries of purple shade
A broidered patterned carpet made,
And far away the blue of sky
Faded to mauve, in mystery.

Ah, pen and pigments both seem vain
To bring these glories back again!
No words can tell, no tints display,
The pageant that I saw to-day.

MARY F. RAPHAEL.

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PORTUGAL'S COLONIAL EMPIRE.

NOW that Portugal is sending an expeditionary force to join the Allies, a few lines concerning her colonial empire and its military possibilities may be of interest. Four centuries ago, when Britain was a mere cluster of islands in the North Atlantic, Portugal was planting her colonies along the African coasts and away through India to China. No other Power had thought of the colonial question then. In the years afterwards the nation fell on evil days and was merged into Spain, whose plans of acquisition turned toward 'the golden Americas.' The last remnant of these which belonged to Portugal was Brazil, which in 1889 avowed itself an independent republic. Previously the chain connecting the two had been a slender affair, turning on the blood-sympathies of the royal families.

Portugal has been more successful in Africa, though first the Dutch and then the British secured possession of the Cape of Good Hope. More recently various European nations seized much that had been considered within the Portuguese sphere of influence, and at the Berlin Conference of 1884–85 the Powers of Europe decided that the vast Congo territory, which Britain, at any rate, considered should be in the hands of our Ally, should form the neutral Congo State, under the patronage of the king of the Belgians. Still, Portugal's share of the Dark Continent remains extensive, though, according to an American critic, its colonial government may not be brilliantly successful.

The great territory of Mozambique, comprising three hundred thousand square miles, with over three million of a population, is practically governed by British companies, such as the Mozambique Company, the Portuguese Nyassa Company, and the Zambesia Company. These concessionaires control the port of Beira, two or three important railways, and practically the whole navigation of the Zambesi and its tributaries. The companies govern in all three-fourths of the territories, and the natives are more likely to follow the orders of their officials than the national commands, of which, as Africans, they have not the least understanding. The mobilisation of the black population of this dependency would be a difficult matter; nor is it likely that the fighting-man of riverside jungles would make a great European warrior; but some tribes on the higher ground toward the great Lake Nyassa would make fine material for the drill-sergeant even for overseas adventure. However, the end of anti-German warfare on the Dark Continent is in view, and these lower-type peoples are not likely to be called upon even indirectly in the matter.

On the western side of Africa, the territory commonly known as Angola is Portugal's largest colonial possession. So vast is it that four countries the size of the British Isles could be carved out of its ample proportions. Though the low-lying coast strip is barren, extremely hot, and very unhealthy, the highlands of the interior enjoy a temperate climate and possess a good soil, and the great natural riches of the country only await energetic development to make of this colony a really valuable possession. The natives are Congo negroes, and belong to the great Bantu stock. What proportion of the four million inhabitants of Angola would be available for training and fighting in Europe it is impossible to say. Here, again, one has to bear in mind that for centuries the coast and its hinterland were famous as a slave-market—a sure sign that initiative, skill, and learning were alike at a low ebb. No one endeavoured, or wished, to enslave the Zulus or Abyssinians; under no circumstance except conquest could such tribesmen be docile and domestic.

North of British Sierra Leone, and entirely shut in on the landward side by French possessions, is Portuguese Guinea, a comparatively small and little-known colony, fourteen thousand square miles in extent, with a population of about three-quarters of a million. The national value of this colony also changed with the smashing of the slave traffic, and its outside trade is insignificant.

The last of the Portuguese possessions in Africa is practically the first and richest—the Cape Verde Islands. Here there is a coaling-station, which is chiefly utilised by local steamers. The men of the Cape Verde Islands prefer the labour of fishing or fruit-farming to that of coaling a steamer under a tropical sun. This duty, therefore, falls largely on the women, who, negro-like, prefer to carry their loads in baskets on their heads. The pace at which they trot hour after hour from the coal-dump, along the gangways to the hatches, is marvellous. A gang of men with barrows would have to be spry to beat

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some of the records put up. The ten small islands have in all a population of one hundred and fifty thousand.

There are two islands off the Niger coast which must be mentioned. These are San Thomé and Principe, where the growing of cocoa by slave or indentured labour has given rise to much discussion in Britain. One of the effects of Britain's closer alliance with Portugal may be the absolute suppression of pressed labour in any form in these small but extremely wealthy and fertile islands.

The Portuguese trader has long ago taken his flag from the Arabian coast and the Persian Gulf, where on the small island of Ormuz he made the first European settlement in that quarter. Here, as in India, where also he was pioneer, he has been succeeded by the Briton, whose absolute and final command of the Gulf lands is now certain.

Of the old Portuguese possessions in India, three small remnants are left in Goa, Damao, and the Isle of Diu. The total area is about sixteen hundred square miles, of which Goa accounts for nearly fourteen hundred, and the population is about five hundred and fifty thousand. Goa is 'down coast' two hundred and fifty miles from Bombay, but neither the town nor its hinterland is really remarkable. Into the East Indies the Portuguese four hundred years ago sailed the only alien ships; but in time the Dutch ousted them from all possessions except the 'larger half' of the remote island of Timor, the proximity of which to Australia is interesting. Portuguese navigators, indeed, discovered our island-continent; but the north coast, which they touched, is even to-day largely a sterile and uninhabited wilderness. There are five hundred thousand inhabitants on Timor; but the Europeans are mostly of Dutch extraction; and perhaps as a fighting asset the place must be said to be of little importance.

The sailors from the Tagus went east to China, and in the sixteenth century pioneered the first European settlement there, Macao. Their possession has been uninterrupted ever since; but it was only in 1887 that the Chinese Government officially admitted that this island and port were in Portuguese hands. Camoens, the national poet of Portugal, wrote his *Lusiad* there; but Macao seems rather more celebrated to-day as the place where the European can excursionise from Hong-kong, and become mildly interested in fan-tan and other gambling games of Chinese origin. There are some sixty-five thousand inhabitants on the five square miles of island.

With Macao closes the list of Portuguese dominions overseas. They are really extensive, making in all some eight hundred thousand square miles, and populous to the estimated number of nine millions. Portugal stands ninth in the list of colonial Powers for area, and thirteenth in regard to population. Yet these possessions are but a fragment of a noble possession lost in the decadent period of Portuguese history. After a succession of sailor princes had sent out expeditions to conquer and to trade, the country fell on evil political days. There were long minorities in succession, and finally Spain descended upon and conquered the leaderless land. The great overseas dream was forgotten, and the two nations were combined for the exploitation of America, which was a nearer task, and one which offered more immediate profits. The truly Portuguese colonies were neglected, and fell away. When the country regained its independence there was much setting of the house in order; but the lands which had once been under the flag could only be resumed by war, and war in Europe was too expensive a remedy. Besides, Portugal had a vast American possession in Brazil, which provided an outlet for all its colonising energy. It was not until this land declared itself independent and a republic that the hopes of Portugal changed; and in recent years Portugal has itself become a republic—a marvellous republic, for it has not forgotten its ancient friend and ally, Britain.

It was to save Portugal from French domination that Wellington led his troops in the Peninsular war; and since then, in crisis after crisis, Britain has stood as a true friend to the most western country in Europe.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER III.—HOW GEOFFREY RAVENSLEE WENT SEEKING AN OBJECT.

A CLOCK in the hall without struck midnight, but Mr Ravenslee sat there long after the silvery chime had died away, his chin sunk upon his broad chest, his sombre eyes staring blindly at the fading embers, lost in profound and gloomy meditation. But all at once he started and glanced swiftly round toward a certain window, the curtains of which were partially drawn, and his lounging attitude changed instantly to one of watchful alertness.

Now, as he sat thus, broad shoulders stooped, feet drawn up—poised for swift action—he beheld a light that flashed here and there, that vanished and came again, hovering up and down and to and fro outside the window; wherefore he reached out a long arm in the gloom, and silently opened a certain drawer in the escritoire.

Came a soft click, a faint creak, and a breath of cool fragrant air as the window was cautiously opened, and a shapeless Something climbed

through, while Mr Ravenslee sat motionless—waiting.

The flashing light winked again, a small, bright disc that hovered uncertainly and finally steadied upon the carved cabinet in the corner, and the Something crept stealthily thither. A long-drawn, breathless minute, and then the room was flooded with brilliant light, and a figure, kneeling before the cabinet, uttered a strangled cry and leapt up, only to recoil before Mr Ravenslee's levelled revolver.

A pallid-faced, willowy lad this, of perhaps seventeen, who, sinking to his knees, threw up an arm across his face, then raised both hands above his head.

'Ah, don't shoot, mister!' he gasped; 'oh, don't shoot—I got me hands up!'

'Stand up!' said Ravenslee grimly. 'Up with you, and shutter that window. You may have friends outside, and I'm taking no chances! Quick, shutter that window!'

The lad struggled to his feet, and, crossing to the window, fumbled the shutter into place, his ghastly face turning and turning toward the revolver that glittered in such deadly fashion in Mr Ravenslee's steady hand. At length, the shutters barred, the boy turned, and, moistening dry lips, spoke hoarsely and with apparent effort. 'Oh mister, don't go for to croak a guy as—as ain't done nothin'.'

'You broke into my house.'

'But I haven't took nothin'.'

'Because I happened to catch you.'

'But—but—— Oh, sir,' stammered the boy, taking off his cap and fumbling with it while he stared wide-eyed at the threatening revolver, 'I—I ain't a real thief—'cross me heart and hope to die I ain't! Don't croak me, sir!'

'But why in the world not?' inquired Mr Ravenslee. 'Alone and unaided I have captured a desperate criminal, a bloodthirsty villain—caught him in the very act of burgling a cabinet where I keep my cigars of price—and Mr Brimberly's, of course! Consequently to—er—croak you is my privilege as a citizen; it's all quite just and proper; really, I ought to croak you, you know.'

'I ain't desprit, mister,' the boy pleaded. 'I ain't a reg'lar crook; dis is me first try-out, honest it is!'

'But then I prefer to regard you as a deep-dyed desperado. You must be quite—er—sixteen! Consequently it is my duty to croak you on the spot, or hand you over to the police.'

'No, no!' cried the boy, his tremulous hands reached out in a passion of supplication, 'not de cops; don't let th' p'lice get me. Oh, I never took nothin' from nobody. Lemme go! Be a sport, and let me beat it, sir!'

All Mr Ravenslee's chronic languor seemed to have returned, as, leaning back in the deep cushioned chair, he regarded this youthful malefactor with sleepy eyes, yet eyes that missed nothing of the boy's quivering earnestness as he continued, breathlessly, 'Oh, I ain't a real crook. I never done nothin' like this before, an' I never will again if—if you'll only let me chase meself.'

'And now,' sighed Mr Ravenslee, 'I'll trouble you for the 'phone yonder.'

'Are ye goin' to call in de cops?'

'That is my intention. Give me the 'phone.'

'No!' cried the boy, and, springing before the telephone, he stood there, trembling but defiant.

'Give me that telephone!'

'Not much I won't!'

'Then, of course, I must shoot you!'

The boy stood with head up-flung and fists tight-clenched. Mr Ravenslee lounged in his chair with levelled pistol. So they fronted each other; but, all at once, with a sound between a choke and groan, the lad covered his face. 'Go on!' he whispered hoarsely; 'go on—what's keepin' you? If it's th' cops or croaking, I—I'd rather croak.'

'Why?'

''Cause if I was ever sent to prison it 'u'd break her heart, I guess.'

'Her heart?' said Mr Ravenslee, and lowered the pistol.

'Me sister's.'

'Ah, so you have a sister?' and Mr Ravenslee sat up suddenly.

'Lots o' guys has, but there ain't a sister like mine in all N' York, nor nowheres else.'

'Who are you? What's your name?'

'Spike. Me real name's Arthur, but Arthur sounds kinder soft an' sissy; nobody don't call me Arthur 'cept her, an' I don't mind her.'

'And what's her name?'

'Hermy—Hermione, sir.'

'Hermione! Why, that's Greek! It's a very beautiful name.'

'Kind o' fits her too!' nodded Spike, warming to his theme. 'Hermy's ace-high on the face and figure question. Why, there ain't a swell dame on Fift' Av'ner, nor nowheres else, got anythin' on Hermy as a looker!'

'And what of your father and mother?'

'Ain't got none; don't remember havin' none; don't want none. Hermy's good 'nuff for me.'

'Good to you, is she?' inquired Mr Ravenslee.

'Good t' me!' cried Spike. 'Good? Well, say, when I think about it I—I gets watery in me lamps, kinder sloppy in me talk, an' all mushy inside. Good t' me? Well, you can just bet on that!'

'And,' inquired Mr Ravenslee sleepily, 'are you as good to her?'

Hereupon Spike turned his cap inside out, and looked at it thoughtfully. 'I—I dunno, mister.'

'Ah! perhaps you make her cry sometimes?'

Hereupon Spike began to pick at the lining of his cap, and finally answered, 'Sometimes, I guess.'

'Would she cry if she could see you now, I wonder?'

Hereupon Spike began to wring and twist his cap in nervous hands ere he answered, 'I—I guess she might.'

'She must love you a good deal?'

At this Spike twisted his cap into a ball, but spoke nothing. Seeing which, Mr Ravenslee proceeded: 'You are luckier than I; there isn't a soul in the world to do as much for me.'

Spike gulped audibly, and thereafter sniffed.

'Now, suppose,' said Mr Ravenslee—'let us suppose she found out that the brother she loved so much was a—thief?'

Hereupon Spike unrolled his cap and proceeded to rub his eyes with it, and when at last he spoke it was in a voice broken by great sobs: 'Say, cut it out! cut it out! I never meant to—to do it. They got me soused; doped me, I think; else I'd never have done it. I ain't good, but I ain't so rotten bad as—what I seem. I ain't no real crook; but if you wanter croak me for what I done, go ahead! Only don't—don't let de cops get me, 'cause o' Hermy. If you croak me she'll think I got it in a scrap maybe; so if you wanter plug me, go ahead!'

'But what are you shivering for?'

'I—I'm just waitin', sir,' answered Spike, closing his eyes. 'I—I seen a guy shot once.'

Mr Ravenslee sighed and nodded. 'After all,' said he, 'I don't think I'll croak you;' and he slipped the revolver into his pocket, while Spike watched him in sudden tense eagerness.

'Whatcher mean to do wi' me?' he asked.

'That's the question; what shall I do with you? Let me think.'

'Say,' cried the boy eagerly, 'you don't have to do no thinkin'; leave it all to me! It's de winder for mine; I'll chase meself so quick'——

'No, you don't! Sit down—sit down, I say!'

Spike sighed and seated himself on the extreme edge of the chair his captor indicated. 'Won'tcher lemme beat it, sir?' he pleaded.

'No; some one else might catch you next time, and have the pleasure of—er—croaking you, or handing you over to the police.'

'There won't be no next time, sir!' cried Spike eagerly. 'I'll never do it no more. I'll cut de whole gang. I'll give Bud M'Ginnis de throw-down—on de dead level, I will, if you'll only let me'——

'Who's Bud M'Ginnis?'

'Say!' cried the boy, staring, 'don'tcher know that? Why, Bud's de main-squeeze wi' de gang, de whole cheese, he is—an' he kind o' thinks I'm de candy-kid 'cause he's stuck on me sister.'

'Ah!' nodded Mr Ravenslee, frowning a little, 'and is she—er—stuck on him?'

'Not so as you could notice it, she ain't. No, she can't see Bud with a pair of opry-glasses, an' he's a dead-game sport too. Oh, there ain't no flies on Bud, an' nobody can lick him either; but Hermy don't cotton none; she hasn't got no use for him, see? But, say'—— Spike rose tentatively and looked on his captor with eyes big and supplicating.

'Well, what now?'

'Why, I thought if you was tired of me chewin' de rag, and wanted to hit the feathers, I'd just cop a sneak. See, if you'll only lemme go I'll do de square thing, and get a steady job like Hermy wants me to—honest, I will, sir! Ye see, me sister's away to-night—she does needlework for swell folks, an' stops with 'em sometimes; so if you'll only let me beat it, I can shin back an' she'll never know. Ah, lemme go, sir!'

'Well then,' sighed Mr Ravenslee, 'for her sake I will let you go. Wait! I'll let you go, and never speak of your—er—little escapade here, if you will take me with you.'

Now at this Spike gaped and fell back a step in sheer amazement. 'Go wi' me—wi' me?' he stammered. 'You—go wi' me to Hell's Kitchen—to Mulligan's Dump—you! Say, what kind o' song and dance are you givin' me, anyway? Aw, quit yer kiddin', sir!'

'But I mean it.'

'On—on de level?'

'On the level.'

'Holy Gee!' and Spike relapsed into wide-eyed, voiceless wonder.

'Is it a go?' inquired Mr Ravenslee.

'But—but, say,' stammered the boy, glancing from the elegant figure in the chair round the luxurious room and back again—'but you're a—a'——

'Just a poor, disconsolate, lonely—er—guy.'

'What!' cried Spike, staring round him again; 'with all this? Oh yes, you're homeless and starvin', you are—I don't think!'

'Is it a go?'

'But say, whatcher want to go wi' me for? What's yer game? Put me wise.'

'I am filled with desire to breathe awhile the salubrious air of Hell's Kitchen. Will you take me?' Now, as he spoke, beholding the boy's staring amaze, Mr Ravenslee's frowning brows relaxed, his firm, clean-shaven lips quivered, and all at once curved up into a smile of singular sweetness; a smile before which the hopelessness and fear died out of the boy's long-lashed eyes, his whole strained attitude vanished, and he smiled also—though perhaps a little tremulously.

'Will you take me, Spike?'

'You bet I will!' exclaimed the boy, his blue eyes shining; 'and I'll do my best to show you I—I ain't so bad as I—as I seem—an' we'll shake on it if you like.' And Spike advanced with his hand outstretched, then paused, suddenly abashed, and drooping his head, turned away. 'I—I forgot,' he muttered, 'I—I'm—you said I was—a thief.'

'You meant to be,' said Mr Ravenslee, and, rising, he stretched himself and glanced at his watch.

'Are you comin' wi' me, sir?' inquired Spike,

regarding Mr Ravenslee's length and breadth with quick, appraising eyes.

'I surely am.'

'But—but not in them glad rags?' and Spike pointed to Mr Ravenslee's exquisitely tailored garments.

'Ah, to be sure,' nodded their wearer; 'we 'll soon fix that;' and he touched the electric bell.

'Say,' cried Spike, starting forward in sudden terror, 'you—you ain't goin' to give me away?'

'No.'

''Cross your heart—hope to die, you ain't?'

'Across my heart and hope to die I 'm not, and there 's my hand on it, Spike.'

'What!' exclaimed the boy, his eyes suspiciously bright; 'd'you mean you will shake—after—after what I'——

'There 's my hand, Spike.'

So their hands met and gripped, the boy's hot and eagerly tremulous, the man's cool and steady and strong; then of a sudden Spike choked, and, turning his back, brushed away his tears with his cap; also at this moment, with a soft and discreet knock, Mr Brimberly opened the door and bowed himself into the room. His attitude was deferential as always, his smile as respectful; but, beholding Spike, his round eyes grew rounder and his whiskers slightly bristly.

'Ah, Brimberly,' nodded his master, 'you are not in bed yet—good!'

'No, sir,' answered Mr Brimberly, 'I 'm not in bed yet, sir; but when you rang I was in the very hact, sir.'

'First of all,' said Young R., selecting a cigar, 'let me introduce you to—er—my friend Spike.'

Hereupon Mr Brimberly rolled his eyes in Spike's direction, glanced him over, touched either whisker, and bowed, and, lo! these fleecy whiskers were now eloquent of pompous dignity; beholding which, Spike shuffled his feet, averted his eyes, and twisted his cap into a very tight ball indeed.

But now Brimberly turned his eyes (and his whiskers) on his master, who had taken out his watch.

'Brimberly,' said he, 'it is now very nearly two o'clock.'

'Very late, sir—ho, very late, sir. Indeed, I was in the very hact of goin' to bed, sir—I 'd even unbuttoned my waistcoat, sir, when you rang—two o'clock, sir—dear me! a most un'oly hour, sir'——

'Consequently, Brimberly, I am thinking of taking a little outing'——

'Certingly, sir. Oh, certingly!'

'And I want some other clothes'——

'Clothes, sir—yessir. There 's the noo 'Arris tweed, sir'——

'With holes in them, if possible, Brimberly.'

''Oles, sir! Beg parding, sir, but did you say 'oles, sir?'

'Also patches, Brimberly—the bigger the better.'

'Patches!—hexcuse me, sir, but—patches! I beg parding, but'—— Mr Brimberly laid a feeble hand upon a twitching whisker.

'In a word, Brimberly,' pursued his master, seating himself upon the escritoire and swinging his leg, 'I want some old clothes, shabby clothes—moth-eaten, stained, battered, and torn. Also, a muffler and an old hat. Can you find me some?'

'No, sir, I don't—that is, yessir, I do. Hexcuse me, sir—'arf a moment, sir.' Saying which, Mr Brimberly bowed and went from the room with one hand still clutching his whisker very much as though he had taken himself into custody and were leading himself out.

'Say,' exclaimed Spike in a hoarse whisper and edging nearer to Mr Ravenslee, 'who 's His Whiskers—de swell guy with de face trimmings?'

'Why, since you ask, Spike, he is a very worthy person who devotes his life to—er—looking after my welfare, and—other things.'

'Holy Gee!' exclaimed Spike, staring. 'I should have thought you was big 'nuff to do that for yourself, unless'—— and here he broke off suddenly and gazed on Mr Ravenslee's long figure with a new and more particular interest.

'Unless what?'

'Say, you ain't got bats in your belfry, have you? You ain't weak in the think-box, or soft in the nut, are ye?'

'No; at least not more than the average, I believe.'

'I mean His Whiskers don't have to lead you around on a string, or watch out you don't set fire to yourself, does he?'

'Well, strictly speaking, I can't say that his duties are quite so far-reaching.'

'Who are you, anyway?'

'Well, my names are Geoffrey, Guy, Eustace, Hughson, and—er—a few others; but these will do to go on with perhaps?'

'Well, I guess yes!'

'You can take your choice.'

'Well, Guy won't do—no, siree—ye see, every mutt 's a guy down our way—so I guess we 'll make it Geoff. But, say, if you ain't weak on the think-machinery, why d'ye keep a guy like His Whiskers hangin' around?'

'Because he has become a habit, Spike—and habits cling; and speaking of habits, here it is.'

Sure enough, at that moment Brimberly's knuckles made themselves discreetly heard, and Brimberly himself appeared with divers garments across his arm, at sight of whom Spike stood immediately dumb in staring, awe-struck wonder.

'Ah, you 've got them, Brimberly?'

'Yessir! These is the best I can do, sir.'

'Say rather the worst!'

''Ere 's a nice big 'ole in the coat, sir,' said Mr Brimberly, unfolding the garment in question; 'and the weskit, sir, the pocket is tore, you 'll notice, sir.'

'Excellent, Brimberly!'

'As for these trousis, sir'——

'They seem rather superior garments, I'm afraid,' said Mr Ravenslee, shaking his head.

'But you'll notice as they're very much wore round the 'eels, sir.'

'They'll do. Now the hat and muffler.'

'All 'ere, sir; the 'at's got its brim broke, sir.'

'Couldn't be better, Brimberly.' So saying, Mr Ravenslee took up the clothes and turned toward the door. 'Now I'll trouble you to keep an eye on—er—young America here while I get into these.'

'Sir,' said Mr Brimberly, turning his whiskers full upon Spike, who immediately fell to shuffling and wringing at his cap—'sir, I will, certingly, sir.'

Now, when the door had shut after his master, Mr Brimberly raised eyes and hands to the ceiling and shook his head until his whiskers quivered. Quoth he, 'Hall I arsks is, wot next?' Thereafter he lowered his eyes and regarded Spike as if he had been that basest of base minions—a boy in buttons. At last he deigned speech: 'And w'en did *you* come in, pray?'

''Bout a hour ago, sir,' answered Spike, dropping his cap in his embarrassment.

'Ah!' nodded Mr Brimberly, 'about a hour ago. Ho! By appointment, I pre-zoom?'

'No, sir; by a winder.'

'A wot?'

'A winder, sir.'

'A—winder? 'Eavens and earth—a winder! 'Ow? Where? Wot for?'

'Say, mister,' said Spike, breaking in upon Mr Brimberly's astounded questioning, 'is 'e nutty?' and he jerked his thumb toward the door through which Mr Ravenslee had gone.

'Nutty!' said Mr Brimberly, staring.

'Yes. I mean, is 'e batty? 'As 'e got wheels?'

'W'eels?' said Mr Brimberly, his eyes rounder than usual.

'Well then, is 'e daffy—off 'is trolley?'

'Off 'is wot?' said Mr Brimberly, fumbling for his whisker.

'Holy Gee!' exclaimed Spike, 'can't you understand English? Say, is your brother as smart as you?'

'The honly brother as ever I 'ad was a infant as died, and—— But wot was you saying about a winder?'

'Nothin'.'

'Come, speak up, you young vagabone,' began Mr Brimberly, his whiskers suddenly fierce and threatening; but just then, fortunately for Spike, the door swung open, and Mr Ravenslee entered.

And, lo, what a change was here! The battered hat, the faded muffler, and shabby clothes seemed only to show off all the hitherto hidden strength and vigour of the powerful limbs below; indeed, it almost seemed that with his elegant garments he had laid aside his lassitude also, and taken on a new air of resolution, for his eyes were sleepy no longer, and his every gesture lithe and quick. So great was the change that Spike stared speechless, and Mr Brimberly gaped with whiskers a-droop.

'Well, shall I do?' inquired Mr Ravenslee, tightening his faded neckerchief.

'Do?' repeated Spike. 'Say—you look all to de mustard, Geoff! You—you look as if you could do things now!'

'Strangely enough, Spike, I rather feel that way too.' So saying, Mr Ravenslee took a pipe from the rack, filled it with quick, energetic fingers, and proceeded to light it, watched in dumb amaze by the gaping Brimberly.

'Brimberly,' said he, 'I shall probably return to-morrow.'

'Yes, sir,' said Mr Brimberly faintly.

'Or the day after.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Or the day after.'

'Yes, sir.'

'Or the day after that. Anyhow, I shall probably return. Should any one call—business or otherwise—tell 'em to call again. Say I'm out of town; you understand?'

'Out of town? Certingly, sir.'

'Referring to—to the matter we talked of to-night, Brimberly'——

'Meanin' the hobject, sir?'

'Precisely. Don't trouble yourself about it.'

'No, sir.'

'No, Brimberly. I'm going to try to find one for myself.'

'Ho, very good, sir!'

'And now,' said the new Mr Ravenslee, laying one white, ringless hand on Spike's shoulder, and pointing toward the open door with the other, 'lead on, young Destiny!'

(*Continued on page 51.*)

AT THE STOR FOSS ON THE TANA RIVER.

By G. Lindesay.

SOME fifty miles up from the bleak Arctic fjord into which it discharges, the Tana, the finest salmon-river in Scandinavia, forms the series of heavy rapids known throughout Norsk Finmarken as the Stor Foss. Below that point, with the exception of one long stream at Saida, where the road from Nyberg, on the Varanger Fjord, comes in, there is no break in the smooth, slow-flowing current of the great river, as it winds northward

in majestic curves between low, birch-clad banks.

At the lower end of the pass, where, in order to ascend the foss, the canoes have to be unloaded, there is a fine, deep, rocky pool, in which it might be expected that salmon would rest after their long journey from salt water. But such does not appear to be the case, at any rate in spring, as not until well on in the season have I ever risen a clean fish in Neskutcheram Savo.

In the foss itself, when the water has run down to summer level, there are some of the best and certainly most sporting casts on the river (which, with its confluents, is ascended by the migratory fish for a distance of about four hundred miles); but in the snow flood these are quite unapproachable.

The passage of the great rapids—which are over a mile in length—must entail considerable additional effort on the part of salmon ascending in spring; nevertheless, the reaches immediately above are of little use for angling at that time of the year, and not until they reach the magnificent pools Biavra Savo, Galgo Guoika, and Ula Savo—about ten miles farther—do the big June fish rest for a space on their way to the upper waters, and display an interest in artistic combinations of fur and feather.

Having learned from experience that even the short and extremely rapid casts in the Stor Foss might run too low, I elected one season to try them for a few days when there was still a fair amount of water in the river, leaving my companion in possession of the lonely little cottage which stands on the Norwegian side of the Ula Savo.

The tent and various adjuncts necessary for a week's camping out have been brought down to the edge of the stream; the rods, a gaff, and a formidable 'priest' have been placed in the long Finmarken canoe which rides buoyantly alongside, and at either end of which stand my two favourite Lapps, stripped to the waist. I take my place amidships, and the next minute the light craft, propelled by vigorous thrusts from the birch poles, shoots rapidly up to the head of our home pool. The hour is 6 P.M., and the July sun is still far too high in the heavens; but before leaving I cannot resist going over Ula Savo just once.

In the neck of the stream, near the Russian side, a salmon comes short at the fly, and after taking out a few yards of line, falls off; then right out in the middle of the main current a good fish swipes the 'Durham Ranger,' and rushes downstream at a tremendous pace. The Lapp in the stern backwaters all he knows with his broad-bladed paddle, the one in the bows with his sculls; and, just as the catastrophe of being run out seems inevitable, the reel ceases screaming, and the situation is saved. When the gallant fish has expended a good deal of its energy, and seems to be fairly under control, I am landed on the rocky ledge that runs down the Norwegian side of the long pool; and ere long the Lapp, with a shout of triumph, gaffs out a magnificent Salar of thirty-eight and a half pounds, with sea-lice decking his silvery coat.

Faithful to its traditions, Ula Savo yields two more fish, a twenty-two and a twenty-six pounder; then we take our impedimenta on board and shoot off down the great rapid called Galgo Guoika.

There being a hopeless glare on the surface of Biavra Savo, we pass by that famous pool; and, without trying any of the other casts on the way, we arrive at the head of the Stor Foss about half-past ten.

As in these parts the midnight hour is of no use for salmon-angling purposes, even when the sun is well above the horizon, there is no time to waste. With the exception of the fishing-gear, everything is put on shore; once more the canoe glides out into the stream; and within five minutes I am fast in a twenty-seven pounder. This fish makes no attempt to go down, but fights out his battle for life among the big submerged boulders at the entrance to the pass. Ultimately, therefore, it is gaffed within twenty yards of where it rose. Stern foremost, and very carefully steered, we now drop down to the next cast, a most attractive-looking spot surrounded by rocky ledges, and with a sharp, rippling current throughout. Evidently the Lapps anticipate sport here, for they guide the canoe so as to disturb the water as little as possible; and they are justified, for with the assistance of a medium-sized Jock Scott I secure, one after another, four salmon, which weigh on an average twenty-three pounds apiece. Each, as it is hooked, is forced or guided downstream into a less contracted area, where it is played, and ultimately gaffed.

It being now past twelve o'clock, there is no use in descending farther. In high good humour at our success, the Lapps drive the canoe upstream at a great pace, and soon we are engaged in arranging the little camp. A few hours before, the thermometer showed a temperature of ninety-two degrees Fahrenheit in the shade; now ice forms on the lines and flies attached to the rods which stand ready for use close by. After a square meal of fresh salmon-steaks, grilled on a birch-wood fire, accompanied by the blackest of black coffee, there is only time for a very short nap. Then, about 1.30, I emerge from the tent. Another long summer day has begun, and under the benign influence of the rising sun, all nature is reviving after a brief period of suspended animation. The mosquitoes are on the war-path in untold millions; the lemmings—of which a great migration was last year in process of development—are everywhere in evidence; up among the birch-woods that

crown the heights on either side of the pass, cock ryper are crowing lustily; on the broad reaches of river away up toward the island, called Fossholmen, filmy wreaths of vapour flit hither and thither; in the shallows and eddies innumerable grayling are rising; a sullen plunge in the mist-shrouded water in front of the tent denotes the presence of a heavy salmon; high aloft in the clear air a mighty eagle is winging its way toward the wastes and tundras of Inner Finmarken; and the only other sound that breaks the silence is the hoarse roar of the Stor Foss.

When we reach the fine pool at Fossholmen, the vapour—held in such abhorrence by Norwegian anglers—has cleared away from the surface of the water; and on a snow fly, after a hard fight—in the course of which nearly one hundred and eighty of the two hundred yards of line on the reel are run off—a handsome female fish of thirty-two pounds is secured. On the way back to camp a small salmon of ten pounds is added to the bag; and after that we once more enter the Foss.

To describe in detail the morning's sport there would be tedious. Suffice it to say that at 7 A.M. we return to the tent with seven salmon weighing together one hundred and sixty-three pounds; and that, after we have been taken down a whole series of boiling rapids by a very heavy fish, it escapes when almost within reach of the outstretched gaff.

For three more days—or, rather, nights—the foss continues to yield good bags; but on the fourth there is a marked falling off, and so we return to Galgo Guoika and Ula Savo, having added several hundreds of pounds to the season's catch.

LA SIERPES.

CHAPTER III.

THE thick walls had prevented us from hearing the firing, but now we could hear the crackle of the carbines as we hurried out. We had really only three men with us, but my uncle, as soon as he came in sight and hearing of the Spaniards, turned and beckoned as if we had plenty, and shouted in Spanish, that they might understand, 'This way, my lads; now we have got them!' The enemy, seeing this—to our surprise we saw that there were not only guerrillas, but a few regulars among them—faltered. Rushing forward, I shot one with my pistol, and our men wounded two more. This decided the guerrillas to retreat, and the General and I and Pierre soon rallied our troopers, and drove them out of the buildings, but not before one of them had been set on fire. Unfortunately several horses had broken loose or had been captured. However, with our wounded, we got safely within the walls of the convent. The whole affair had been so sudden that Pierre, whose wound luckily was only a slight one, could give no very succinct account of how it had happened. He had placed the guards; but the guerrillas, approaching under cover of the woods, had shot one sentry, and the others, having fired their carbines, retreated to give the alarm to their comrades, who were calmly preparing their meal or looking to their horses; and the next moment the Spaniards were among them. Luckily, from a loft where they had rushed in their panic, some of our men had picked off two of the leaders; but it was only our arrival and the General's ruse that had turned the scale. Though we were safe within the high walls of the convent, our position was anything but pleasant. The presence of the regulars was a mystery, and the fact that we had no knowledge of how many of them there were made the situation worse; and the more we thought of the trap we were in the less we liked it.

What worried me was the danger to my darling Mary. I shuddered to think of what her fate would be if these ruffians fought their way into the building. The very size of it, too, made it all the more difficult, with our small numbers, to defend. We were aware that the news of our situation would spread like wildfire; and as wolves in a forest are attracted by the howling of others, so guerrillas—ay, and peasants—would come from afar, urged on by their priests and monks, whose very natural bitter hatred against the despoilers of their churches was ever smouldering.

'Now, Henri,' said my uncle to me, 'I admit we are nearly *au pied du mur;* but we have got that priest as a hostage, and we will string him up if the worst comes to the worst. I will make him tell them so; but there's only one thing to be done—we must get help, and as Delnard is wounded, you must go to Barcelona. Tell Foy how we are placed; tell him what valuable pictures, plate, and vestments we have got. Take one man, or two if you like, and choose your own horses. I give you *carte-blanche.*'

I knew the extreme danger of my mission. I knew the cruel torture that awaited me, perhaps even crucifixion, if I were caught; but the danger my darling Mary was in overruled everything, so I did not hesitate a moment. There was a man in the squadron named Bernon; he was born on our side of the Pyrenees, but I fancy his parents came from the other. Till he joined the army he had been a *contrabandista,* and spoke French or Spanish as it suited him. He was a bold, unscrupulous, and ready-witted rogue. He might have been promoted over and

over again, for he had no sense of fear, and seemed to court danger for the sake of it; but, perhaps from his early wild training, he could not bear discipline. It was only his love of plunder, the proceeds of which he soon threw away on dissipation, that kept him from deserting; but he was so useful in many ways that his superiors dealt lightly with escapades that would have been severely punished if committed by any one else. I sought him out, and his bright and merry dark eyes twinkled at the prospect. Besides, my uncle had instructed me to tell him he should have two hundred *pesetas* if we succeeded.

The first thing was for both to be thoroughly disguised, and for this purpose I changed clothes with young Vegara, who was highly pleased with himself in my sky-blue uniform; while Bernon used those of the old gardener and Vandermeeren.

'I understand the whole affair,' said Bernon. 'You, *mon capitaine*, will be an English officer come from Blake, and you want to know why your general has not heard from La Sierpes, who was sent to Barcelona some time ago. You follow me?'

'Oh, quite,' I answered, as I gazed in admiration at the ready-witted liar; 'but I know very little English.'

'Well, in that case you have come from Lord Wellington to act under Blake, and you belong to the German Legion.'

'*Mon Dieu! vous êtes rusé*,' I could not help exclaiming, as, of course, being an Alsatian, I spoke German.

'As regards the rest,' he continued, 'you leave everything to me. The great thing is to get out of this infernal place.'

The convent was a singularly flat building, and was so surrounded by woods that even from a small belfry one could not see the surrounding country; but we knew that Barcelona was due south, and the farm to the north of the building. We could see the Spaniards on this latter side near it, and also among the trees immediately opposite the entrance. My uncle resolved to make a feint in the direction of the farm to draw off their attention, while we slipped out to the south. After I had kissed Mary, and told her to keep up her courage, Bernon and I led our steeds to a little gate as soon as the firing began. Quietly leading our horses, we kept in the thickest part of the forest for what seemed to us an interminable distance; but at last we came to the edge of it and took our bearings. Though it was a longer route, we thought it safer to bear away to the west and make a detour.

All went well at first. We had got into fairly open country with hardly a dwelling to be seen, and had turned to the south again, and reckoned we were within two leagues of the city, when we saw a fellow with a long rifle. What's more, he had seen us, for he was frantically waving to some one whom we could not see.

'*C'est de l'audace, seulement de l'audace*, that will save us now, *mon capitaine*,' said Bernon.

'You are right; I know that; but remember I will leave most of the talking to you;' and, waving my arm to the guerrilla, and about six others who had now come into view, I rode straight toward them, followed by Bernon.

'*Tenga usted cuidado, gavachos*' ('Take care; there are Frenchmen about'), I shouted as I got near them, and I pointed away to the north. The bulk of them had their guns and blunderbusses levelled at us; but on hearing these words a very handsome, gaudily dressed, sturdy young fellow came toward us. We afterwards found out he was Diego Laraja, a well-known chief, better known as Cara Ancha ('Broad Face'), though I could not see, considering his good looks, why he should have got that sobriquet.

'Who are you? Where do you come from?' he asked sharply.

I met his gaze steadily and brusquely, as one who was used to being obeyed, and beckoned to Bernon.

'This is a distinguished officer on the staff of General Blake,' said Bernon. 'Nearly a month ago La Sierpes was to have brought us papers from Barcelona. The General has neither seen nor heard of him, nor got any answer. We have heard rumours that he is dead, but he would be a clever man who could kill "the Serpent." It is most likely, so we have been told, that he has spread that news himself. They say some girl has bewitched him, and that he is dallying and wasting his time with her; so the General has sent *el Señor Capitan* to find out for himself.'

In a moment the guerrilla changed his tone on learning who I was and whence I came.

'But, alas! it is only too true, *Señor Capitan*,' he said, addressing me. 'La Sierpes is dead.'

'Dead!' I replied. '*Que lastima!*' ('Oh, what a pity!').

'Yes, he is dead; but, *gracios á Dios, el garvoche* who killed him is also dead. We know that for a fact, though those French tried to keep it dark.'

It was not an easy matter for me to hear of my death in this way without betraying myself.

'But we must have the papers,' continued Bernon. 'I must act as guide, and take the captain to an address of an old woman named Corvalez, *numero* 16 *en el calle abajo*.'

'Oh, you have got to go there, have you?' replied Cara Ancha suspiciously. 'Now listen to me, my friend,' he said in a voice that showed he was not too well pleased. 'That old witch is the grandmother of La Blonda; she was the magnet that drew La Sierpes to Barcelona on any excuse he could get, and no wonder, for she is the most beautiful girl in the world. Have you seen her? Do you know her?'

'No, I don't,' replied Bernon.

'Well, I do, and this is what she told me: "Now that my beloved is dead, for one year I will listen to no man." I wanted her to keep this token,' and as he spoke the guerrilla held up a beautiful and valuable gold watch; 'but she would not take it. But remember La Blonda is mine, so you are not to go "plucking the turkey."* You had better not get making love to her, unless you want a taste of this,' he said, significantly tapping his dagger.

'Bah!' replied Bernon, 'she may be pretty, for all I know; but I have a far prettier bird in my cage. Why, Conchita—Conchita'——

In a second the fellow's bright *navajo* flashed out.

'Hold!' I exclaimed authoritatively; 'I have not come here for this sort of thing! Have no fear, my good man, that I shall allow any love-making on his part. Time is too precious, the game is too dangerous, for that. Give us the watchword and the countersign, and look out for us to-morrow. Trust me that I will, to please you, tell La Blonda that if there is any man who is worthy of her love, when her mourning has ceased, it is Cara Ancha.'

The guerrilla's eyes sparkled with pleasure and gratitude at this piece of flattery. Stepping forward, he wrung my hand. 'You will hardly require them,' he said, 'for from that hill you will see the sea and Barcelona before you; but "*Santissima Trinidad*" is the watchword, and "*La Venganza*" ("Vengeance") the countersign.'

Wishing him *con Dios*, I and my companion rode safely out of the trap we had fallen into. What pleased and very much surprised me was that the guerrillas seemed not to have known of the skirmish we had had that very morning with their comrades, or that the convent was actually in danger; and I put it down to Cara Ancha's thoughts being completely taken up by his beautiful friend in the city. The heat was overpowering; but we pressed on, and, entering the town, made straight for the *quartier-général*, where an aide-de-camp, on hearing the urgency of our mission, at once took us to General Foy.

The danger my uncle was in, and the value of the pictures and the plate, were quite enough for him, and he gave me an order to my colonel to start at once with all the men he could gather together. The colonel saw that time was everything, and without any delay he, a *chef d'escadron*, a lieutenant, and one hundred and twenty men were on their way.

(*Continued on page 57.*)

* To serenade. Though a common and ordinary expression, the origin of this phrase is obscure.

SOME ANCIENT ETRUSCAN AND GALLIC TOMBS.

By J. B. Underwood.

CHANCE has often been the friend of history and its students. In 1840, for instance, about eleven miles from Rome, on the site of the ancient town of Veio (according to Holstein, Nardini, and Ariodante Fabretti), a tomb was discovered called the Scaletta, in consequence of heavy rains having carried away the earth which covered it. In 1823 Avvolta discovered at Corneto, amongst the mounds called I Monti Rossi, a tomb through the enlargement of an opening due to some unexplained cause. Examining it, he saw the remains of a warrior stretched out in a sarcophagus, who at the contact of the air vanished under his eyes. About 1860, on an estate belonging to Count Baglioni, at Ponte San Giovanni, near Perugia, a man ploughing saw an ox disappear suddenly from sight. Hurrying to rescue it, with the help of some others, from the pit into which it had fallen, he descended, and found there the richest Etruscan tomb yet discovered, afterwards called the Voluni, the name of those who had there found eternal rest. The tombs of Chiusi saw the light of day partly through works of improvement, and partly through the mysterious gifts of a diviner.

It was not before the nineteenth century, however, that systematic investigations began to be made by private citizens and by the Italian Government to unearth these precious records of ancient history. Especial praise is due to Prince di Canino, son of Lucien Bonaparte, who, from 1829 to 1832 almost uninterruptedly, made excavations and researches at Vulci; also to the Duchess di Sermoneta, who, at her own expense, did the same at Santa Marinella and at Castel d'Asso in 1838. Prince Torlonia, in 1835, saw the unearthing of a grotto which took his name; and the Marquis Campana consecrated part of his life to the same work, and was instrumental in revealing a part of the most important necropolis of Veio and the truly marvellous grotto of the Rilievi.

By this we do not mean to say that excavations before that time were not made, or brought forth lesser results; for even as far back as 1507 we know of attempts which revealed various tombs at Castellina, in Chianti; but it is well to remember that only too often the fruits of these labours were lost during the flight of years.

Veio gives us a typical proof of this, as it was accorded the first place amongst Etruscan towns, and was for centuries the rival of Rome in war, and her mistress in arts and civilisation; indeed, the intimacy was so close that it is difficult to separate the two cities in the mind of the

historian. Notwithstanding so much grandeur and magnificence, which would have carried her to the heights of power if the wisdom of Camillus and his eloquence had not saved her Latin rival from her hate, in the time of Augustus Veio became the prey of most pitiful desolation, and hardly a century later was so forgotten that the annalists confess to ignorance of her position. Recolonised in times nearer to the Empire, Veio quickly returned to a decadence which was to cancel her for ever from the geographical map of Italy; and only in these last years has some memory of her excited the admiration of the world for what was once so grand and imposing a city.

Less known, but just as instructive, is the history of some tombs found at Sutri, discovered very early, in which the Romans had laid their dead both in pagan and Christian times. The turbulent epoch which followed the Empire saw these tombs inhabited by bandits, and to-day they are used as stables or cellars, and the sarcophagi found there are used for troughs and mangers.

We have always believed, as the school histories teach, that the Gauls were barbarians whose only pursuits were war and rapine. Modern excavations, however, have shown that, on the contrary, they were capable of civilisation, and that they preserved in their tombs, as if for a testimony to a distant future, all the precious bronzes of which they were proud, the taste for which they had acquired from the civilised nations with whom they came into contact. Some months ago, as the result of excavations under the direction of Professor Dall' Osso of the Archæological Museum at Ancona, at Montefiore dell' Aso, in the Marches, an archaic necropolis was unearthed, which has clearly proved that a hitherto unknown civilisation existed in the territory extending from the river Foglia to the Trento. A century before this district was conquered by the Romans its population was mixed with a Gallic element. The tombs discovered, especially in the valley of the Musone, between Osimo and Filottrano, which are nearest to the necropolis of Piceno (Picenum), show that the Gauls finally established themselves there, and lived and laboured in peace with the natives, with whom they had previously been at war. Many rich gold ornaments have been found near Montefortino and Filottrano, and scientific studies and observations must infallibly lead to others.

At San Filippo, near Osimo, in a recently discovered tomb of a young man, the most interesting objects found were some dice. A few weeks later a still more interesting discovery was made in the same district, of the splendid tomb of a Gallic matron, rich in magnificent objects. The skeleton was well preserved, the forehead low, and it was remarkable that there were traces of a wreath which must have encircled the whole head. Judging from the whiteness of her teeth, all nearly perfect, it is presumed that the lady died young. She must have been the wife of a patrician, and perhaps she traversed the streets of Rome, riding beside her victorious spouse, whilst the burning city resounded with the despairing cries of the fugitives. In this tomb were many articles for toilet use, and objects of gold, necklaces, brooches, and rings, amongst them a ring with a seal engraved with a flying Pegasus. There were also vases of terra-cotta and a mirror on which were to be seen vestiges of textile fabric covering it, possibly to protect its clearness from dust. All these objects are now in the Ancona Museum.

Another interesting tomb discovered in this district contained the panoply of a warrior and other objects of funeral equipment, more or less in a fragmentary state. The iron weapons consist of four lances, two daggers, a bludgeon, and several spears. The armour is formed of two great discs of bronze metal plates mounted on strong iron sheets, with traces of the rings through which passed the strips of leather which, crossing over the shoulders, kept it in place. Remains of the helmet and the leggings were also found. Amongst the funeral trappings are the personal ornaments in bronze and iron, consisting for the most part of buckles, an armlet, and a ring, in which is set an incised figure. There are also kitchen utensils, many articles in terra-cotta, cups and goblets with the characteristic horn handle, a large concave plate, and a number of very small vases of perhaps a religious or symbolic signification.

Another tomb of the same character has the remains of the war chariot placed above the skeleton, but little of it remains except the hoops of the wheels, the plates which strengthened them, the rundlets and the pegs of the yoke. Unfortunately this tomb, through having been comparatively near the surface, had been injured by agricultural labourers, and part of the objects brought to light by the plough had been thrown into a corner as so much old iron.

The tomb of a young girl shows the skeleton covered with a mantle made almost entirely of thousands of ivory, glass, and amber rings, and adorned with little necklaces. In this tomb were also found clasps made of large lumps of amber, bracelets, rings, and a quantity of pendent amulets of the most varied and graceful patterns. The perfect condition of these articles is such as to form a precious relic which may enable archæologists to reconstruct the ancient dress of the women of Piceno, and is a further proof of the truth in the words: 'Tombs speak where history is mute.'

THE OFF-CHANCE.

By TAFFRAIL, Author of *Pincher Martin, O.D.*, &c.

I.

IT had been a pretty little show, quite the sort of business they had all been longing for for months, but it had ended rather disastrously for the poor old *Dragonfly;* and Parr, her lieutenant-commander, was cursing himself bitterly for a reckless fool. His left arm hung in an improvised sling, for during the affair he had managed, somehow, to get in the way of a machine-gun bullet. It had drilled a neat hole through the fleshy part of his forearm; a stupid, silly-looking little puncture which throbbed and smarted abominably.

But it was not the pain of the wound which irritated him. It was the damage to his destroyer. She lay motionless like a log on the water, her stern practically level with the sea. She had an unholy list to starboard, and every man on board knew, from the sluggish feel of her as she lifted to the slight swell, that she was badly, if not fatally, holed.

The affair had begun at six o'clock in the morning, when a squadron of British light cruisers and a flotilla of destroyers had approached the hostile coast with the intention of making a sudden onslaught on a German destroyer flotilla reported to be in the vicinity. The enemy had been duly encountered, and the resulting engagement had been more or less of a mêlée, in which single British craft had found themselves in close action with single Germans. Several of the latter had been sunk, and the others, badly mauled, sent scurrying back to their base as fast as their engines could drive them; but when Parr had succeeded in reducing his immediate opponent to little more than a wreck, and had suffered a certain amount of damage to himself and his ship in the process, he was suddenly brought to his senses by a heavy burst of fire from another direction.

Then it was that he realised that his valour had outrun his discretion. He had chased his quarry too far, for on looking round he saw that the rest of the British squadron farther to seaward was hidden behind a wall of fog rolling in from the North Sea. Shoreward, the weather was still clear; but there, barely three miles away, a long, four-funnelled hostile light cruiser, a venomous-looking beast, with a great white wave at her bow, dense volumes of black smoke pouring from her funnels, and sparkling gun-flashes breaking out from her gray sides, was racing at full speed in his direction. She had evidently been sent out from Heligoland to support the German destroyers, and at the comparatively short range her shooting rapidly became too accurate to be pleasant.

Parr, firing his own guns in a valiant endeavour to keep her off, promptly turned seaward, and made off at full speed. He had about thirty knots at his disposal, and once he managed to get behind the bank of fog out at sea he would be safe.

But it was not to be. The German was going fully thirty-two knots, and before the mist closed down her gunners were doing excellent work. Spray fountain after spray fountain leapt into the air round the flying destroyer, and at last a shell, bursting aft, flung the after 4-inch gun clean into the sea, and killed every man who served it. The after-funnel, torn and perforated by high-explosive shell splinters, soon resembled a gigantic nutmeg-grater. A whaler suspended in her davits amidships was set on fire and utterly demolished; the topmast was cut through by a ricochet, and came down with a crash, bringing the aerial of the wireless telegraphy with it; while the canvas screens on the bridge, already torn and punctured in all directions by the stream of bullets from the hostile destroyer, were freshly perforated by splinters.

The loss in men had been heavy, for one officer and twelve bluejackets or stokers had been killed, and a round dozen wounded; a total of twenty-five out of a ship's company of about eighty all told. As a fitting climax, a 4·1-inch shell had penetrated into the engine-room just before the *Dragonfly* slid out of sight of her pursuer behind the friendly fog. The engine-room was instantly flooded, and both condensers had been damaged so badly that they could not be repaired. As a consequence the little ship had been brought to an absolute standstill.

They had had their revenge, it is true; for, when the cruiser came careering into the pall to finish off her work, the torpedo gunner, Mr Bowles, had fired a couple of torpedoes in her direction without waiting for orders from the bridge, and, more by good luck than by management, one of them had gone home. There had come the dull roar of a heavy explosion, and then the shrieking of escaping steam and an uproar of voices. The noise had died away, and a quarter of an hour later the creaking of blocks and more shouted orders showed that boats were being lowered. Then there were muffled reports from bursting bulkheads, and ominous-looking ripples travelled out of the fog toward the destroyer. Then dead silence.

The torpedo had done its work; but the *Dragonfly* was helpless. She could neither steam nor work her steam-pumps for expelling the water from her perforated hull. She was unable to summon help on account of damage to the dynamo and to the wireless, while

she lay within fifteen miles of a hostile coast, in waters which, when the fog lifted, would be swarming with German torpedo craft. It was not a joyful prospect; and though every man on board was fully determined to fight the ship until she went down with her colours flying, the best they could hope for was the inside of a German prison until the end of the war.

No wonder her skipper cursed his luck. It certainly was the limit!

II.

'You think you can keep her afloat—what?' Parr queried, pausing between the bites of a corned-beef sandwich, the first food he had tasted since the previous evening.

Thompson, the engineer lieutenant-commander, nodded. 'Yes, provided we have good weather,' he said, stooping down and squeezing oily water out of the legs of his overalls. 'We've managed to plug most of the bad holes—the job's been more like a bally bathing picnic than anything else—and so long as the sea doesn't get up she'll float. What d'you make of the weather, sir?' he asked anxiously. 'If any decent-sized seas come slopping in over the upper deck we're a goner.'

'The glass is pretty steady, and I don't think we'll have wind,' Parr returned, looking overhead. 'There's no chance of using the engines, I suppose?'

'Engines!' sniffed the other. 'You might just as well expect us to steam her with the inside of the wardroom clock! There's not a dog's chance of getting a kick out of 'em this side of about three months' dishing up in a dockyard. You've seen the mess-up yourself; everything's'——

'Yes, I quite understand,' the lieutenant-commander put in hastily. 'The only thing we can do is to sail the bally old ship home; but how the deuce can we do that in a flat calm, eh?' he laughed grimly.

'Sail her?' echoed Thompson, opening his eyes. 'How'——

'No, chief, I wasn't really speaking seriously. I'm afraid—though I hate to say it—that our goose is properly cooked this time. If it comes on to blow hard we shall sink. If the fog clears the "strafers" will spot us for a dead cert., and sink us after a bit of a scrap.' Parr sighed deeply and shrugged his shoulders.

'In fact,' supplemented the engineer, 'we're practically certain of being collared by the Huns unless something happens—what?'

'Quite so,' Parr nodded. 'Either killed or collared. You see, we're within fifteen miles of their coast, and what current there is is carrying us towards it. What can happen?'

'Perhaps some of our own chaps will come back to look for us?'

The skipper instantly scouted the idea. 'I'll lay you a hundred to one in half-crowns they won't,' he said with decision. 'They don't know we're here, for one thing. That wireless of ours has gone to blazes. We might, of course, abandon ship, and take to what boats we've got left. We'd have a chance of getting home, perhaps, but'—— He hesitated.

'But what?'

'I don't fancy leaving her till there's no other alternative.'

'I agree,' Thompson murmured sadly, thinking of his wife and children at home in England. 'We're done in properly, and all we can do is to make up our minds to being shoved into a Hun prison till the end of the war. Curse that rotten shell!' he concluded savagely. 'It might have hit us in fifty other places without doing all this damage!'

Parr smiled. 'Cheer up, chief! While there's life there's hope!' He knew that there was precious little hope, but he felt bound to say something consoling.

Thompson merely snorted as he walked away.

By some peculiar and most unusual hazard of the weather, the fog had continued throughout the morning and afternoon, till now, at 4 P.M., it was, if anything, thicker than ever. The swell had slightly increased, but the surfaces of the smooth-bosomed undulations were not marred by the least ruffle of wind. It seemed utterly improbable that the murk would thin itself and clear away until a breeze sprang up, and at present there were no signs of such a thing happening. The clerk of the weather seemed to have shut up shop and retired to bed.

Parr felt very irritable and depressed. He hated the suspense of waiting and of not knowing what was going to happen. It got on his nerves, but even he cherished a fervent hope that the fog would last till dark. When the night once fell the *Dragonfly* would probably remain undetected until the following dawn, even if the weather did clear after sunset. That would give, say, another twelve hours' grace, and during that time some merciful Providence might intervene on his behalf and cause something to happen to save the ship, the men, and himself. It did not seem the least likely, he was bound to admit.

The hours passed slowly—five o'clock, six o'clock, seven o'clock—and then at last a slight reddish glow overhead showed that the sun was nearing the horizon. Half-an-hour later Parr was standing on deck talking to Thompson and the sub-lieutenant, when Mr Bowles suddenly clattered up the steep ladder leading from his cabin. The worthy gunner, as there had been nothing else to do, had spent the latter part of the afternoon asleep on his bunk; but from his extreme haste it was obvious that he had been roused in a hurry. His fat, good-natured face was still rosy with sleep; his attire was distinctly *décolleté;* while he himself was panting with excitement.

'What on earth 's the matter now, Mr Bowles?' the skipper queried, smiling in spite of his anxiety.

The gunner drew a deep breath. 'I was asleep on my bunk just now, sir,' he explained hastily, 'and I distinctly heard the noise of a propeller in the water. It 's pretty close, and seems to be coming our way.'

Parr did not wait to answer, but scuttered down the ladder, entered the gunner's cabin, and pressed his ear to the still warm pillow on the bunk. Thompson and Mr Bowles followed him.

'D' you hear it, sir?' the gunner queried in a hoarse whisper.

The skipper motioned him to be quiet.

The ship, with her engines stopped and no machinery of any kind moving, was unusually still; and presently, after accustoming himself to the silence, Parr could hear a faint, rhythmic, but quite unmistakable *chug-chug—chug-chug—chug-chug*. Now water, as he well knew, is an excellent medium for the transmission of sound, and he had often noticed when lying on his bunk in his cabin, with the ship in harbour and his head on the pillow close to the vessel's side, that it was possible to hear the thudding of a propeller at quite a respectable distance. The sound he now heard was precisely similar, and was, without a doubt, caused by the propeller of a ship with reciprocating engines; a single-screw vessel, from the regularity of the thuds. If it had been a turbine-driven craft, where the screws revolve very fast for even a slow speed, the noise would almost have amounted to a *whir-r-r-r-r*. What type of ship she was he had no means of knowing for certain; but the chances were she was not a man-of-war, for very few of them have single screws. She might be a steam tramp or a trawler, he thought, something small and inoffensive; but guessing was not the least use, and he raised his head from the pillow.

'You 're right, Mr Bowles,' he remarked with a nod. 'I can hear it quite plainly, and she 's certainly getting closer.'

'I knew it, sir,' answered the gunner with a happy grin, rather pleased at his own perspicuity.

Mr Bowles's habitat was on the port side of the ship; and as the noise of the propeller-beats was inaudible from the starboard cabins, it followed that the vessel was approaching from port—that is, from the direction of the German coast. They all verified this, and then returned to the deck and listened anxiously for any sounds. They could hear nothing.

Without any definite idea as to what he intended to do, Parr ordered the last serviceable boat, a five-oared gig, to be lowered and brought alongside. This was accomplished in silence, the oars were muffled, and many men, armed with revolvers and cutlasses, under the orders of the sub-lieutenant, tumbled into her. Travers, the first lieutenant, whose job it really should have been, had been wounded during the engagement, and now lay in his cabin.

The guns, meanwhile, were loaded and manned in case the new-comer should turn out to be a man-of-war.

The night fell and rapidly grew darker. Eight o'clock came; but still they could hear nothing on deck. Down below, however, the *chug-chug* sounded louder than ever, and it was quite evident that the ship was groping her way slowly toward them through the fog.

The acoustic properties of fog are always very peculiar, probably on account of the moisture in the atmosphere. At times, for instance, the powerful compressed-air fog-siren of a lightship or lighthouse can be heard everywhere for many miles, but at others there are areas of complete silence in which it will not be heard at a thousand yards, even though there may be no wind. It was so on this occasion, for quite suddenly, at 8.10 P.M., they heard the thudding of a screw and the swish and tinkle of a ship's passage through the water. The sounds were so close as to be almost deafening after the long silence, and a second or two later they could hear men talking in German.

'We are on the spot, Hans,' somebody said in a loud, guttural voice.

'*Ja;* that is so,' another man agreed. 'I will stop the ship and blow the whistle, so that if any of them are still afloat they may call out.'

'Great Scott!' the lieutenant-commander gasped in astonishment—realising what it all meant as the raucous bellow of a steam-whistle boomed out until the very air seemed to vibrate—'that cruiser we torpedoed must have got off a wireless signal before she sank. This chap has come out to rescue her survivors.—Mr Bowles,' he added, suddenly making up his mind, 'I 'm going away in the whaler. She 's evidently something small, and I shall try to get on board and capture her.'

'But your arm!' protested the gunner and Thompson together in a whisper.

'Damn the arm!' said Parr in an excited undertone, clambering down into the boat with difficulty.—'Oars ready, men! Shove off!—Mr Bowles!'

'Sir?'

'You look out for the ship, and if you hear me sing out for help, send across all the men you can spare in the dinghy. D' you understand?'

'Yes, sir,' came a rather depressed answer from somewhere overhead in the fog. Mr Bowles, though a married man, was bitterly disappointed; he was dearly longing for another 'scrap.'

The bowman was bearing the boat off with

his boat-hook, when another figure dropped down the ladder into the stern-sheets.

'Who the devil are you?' Parr demanded angrily. 'I can't take you all!—Give way together!'

'It's all right, sir,' answered Thompson, relapsing on to the stern benches. 'It's only me. I've come to look after you.'

Parr laughed. 'Right you are, chief! Glad to have you. You might take that thing off my knee-cap, though. What is it?'

'Mauser pistol,' said the other. 'I've been longing to use him for ages.'

The skipper sniggered, for Thompson's ideas of 'looking after' people seemed rather original. It appeared, indeed, as if he intended to carry out a little 'frightfulness' on his own account. He was armed to the teeth.

III.

It was not for nothing that Parr had spent a couple of years in Germany; and, trusting to his excellent knowledge of the language, and being alive to the fact that the stranger might possibly be expecting to meet boats with the cruiser's survivors, he hoped to have no difficulty in getting on board. He realised, however, that when once he was there he was bound to be discovered, so he made his arrangements accordingly.

Thompson, with two armed engine-room ratings and a seaman, was immediately to go below to the engine-room to prevent the Germans there from wrecking the machinery or trying to sink the ship by interfering with valves; while another couple of men were detailed for the boiler-room for a similar object. The sub-lieutenant, with the coxswain and one A.B., was to make or fight his way to the bridge and take charge of the vessel; and another small party was told off to rush the wireless telegraphy office, if there was such a thing, to prevent any signal from being sent off asking for assistance. The instruments themselves, however, were not to be damaged. Parr himself, with the remainder of the men, was to account for all the Germans on deck.

No shouting was to take place, and as little noise as possible made, owing to the chance of other hostile vessels being in the vicinity; while, if possible, cutlasses were to be used instead of revolvers for the same reason. The main object, he concluded by pointing out, was to capture the ship in a serviceable condition. She was then to be taken alongside the *Dragonfly*, and, granted reasonable luck and fine weather, was to tow the damaged destroyer back to the British coast.

At first things happened exactly as Parr had imagined they would, and after leaving the destroyer astern they paddled gently in the direction whence they could hear the voices in the fog. Very soon they saw the glow of a light shining through the murk, and in another instant or two the dark bulk of a small vessel loomed up out of the black haze. It was so thick that they were practically alongside before they spotted her.

There came a gruff hail from overhead. 'Boat ahoy!' sang out a surprised voice in German. 'What boat is that?'

Parr evaded the question. 'What ship is that?' he asked in the same language, putting the helm over as they scraped alongside, and the bowman reached up with his boathook.

'This is the Government naval trawler *Nachtigal*,' came the reply. 'Are you from the *Dortmund*?'

The *Dortmund* was evidently the name of the light cruiser they had sunk; and, realising that everything depended upon a ready answer, the Englishman replied, 'Yes.' His heart was in his mouth; but as he and all his men were purposely wearing oilskins, and were without caps, there was not much danger in the darkness of the boat or her crew being recognised as British. 'Who is in command of the trawler?' he asked gruffly, preparing to leave the boat.

'Reserve Sub-Lieutenant Otto Fuchs, who is speaking,' came back the unsuspecting answer.

'I am Ober-Leutnant von Hagen,' Parr volunteered, selecting a name utterly at random. 'There are other survivors in the vicinity, so I will take charge. My men will come on board.'

The boat was now alongside, and he could see the heads of four men silhouetted against the lantern-light behind; and, realising that hesitation would give the whole affair away, he motioned his men to follow, and tried to clamber up. The sub and half-a-dozen bluejackets actually got on board; but Parr himself had forgotten his wounded arm, and his first attempt was unsuccessful.

'Give me a leg up, chief,' he whispered in Thompson's ear.

The engineer did so, and in another instant he was on deck, with the German sub-lieutenant solemnly clicking his sea-booted heels, his hand to his cap. Parr gravely returned the salute.

The *Nachtigal* was not heavily manned, for, with the exception of the officer and three men standing close to Parr, another couple on the small bridge close to the funnel, and a group of three more busy about something on the forecastle, there was nobody else visible on deck.

'What are your orders?' asked Parr in a peremptory voice, seeing out of the corner of his eye that most of his men were on board and going to their appointed places.

'I am to search'—— The German never got any further, for at that moment there came a loud shout, and the sounds of a scuffle on the

bridge. These were followed by a resounding thud as some one went down.

The British sub, a well-known Rugby footballer, had acted. He had collared one of his opponents low, hurled him to the deck, and was now calmly sitting on his chest, telling him to be quiet. The men with him were tying up the second fellow, and the whole thing had been accomplished without the least difficulty or danger.

The German sub-lieutenant, however, sized up the situation at a glance. Unarmed as he was, he sprang straight at Parr; and before the latter, encumbered by his oilskin, could draw his pistol, he was rolling on the deck, with his enemy on top of him. Parr, handicapped by his wounded arm, could not shake off his assailant, and in another moment he felt the grip of powerful fingers round his windpipe. He tried to shout, but merely gasped for breath. The stars began to dance before his eyes as the pressure increased.

'Ere!' suddenly came a loud voice in his ears; 'not so much o' it, my son!' The grip on his neck died away, and he felt the weight of his adversary whisked off his chest.

It was one of the *Dragonfly's* A.B.'s, who, seeing his commanding officer's plight, had seized the German by the scruff of the neck, swung him bodily through the air, and dashed him to the deck like a sack of potatoes.

The skipper scrambled to his feet, breathless, but safe.

On deck, meanwhile, the remainder of the enemy were being hunted like rats by isolated bluejackets, flourishing their cutlasses; but from the very first the Germans had no chance. Not one of them was armed. They were terrified at the sight of the cold steel, and fell on their knees, praying for the mercy they did not expect. They got it, but it is to be feared that some few of them were also rather badly bruised by the flat of the cutlass-blades. In the boiler-room, engine-room, wireless telegraphy cabin, the surprise had been equally complete; and within five minutes of Parr and his men stepping on board, the *Nachtigal* was in British hands, and her late crew were being lashed hand and foot.

Thompson's nose was bleeding badly from violent contact with something in the engine-room; but except for this and a few scrapes and bruises, the victory had been quite bloodless for the conquerors.

IV.

Of how the trawler was taken alongside the *Dragonfly*, of how she took the destroyer in tow, and of how they set out together across the North Sea at a gait which nearly brought the tears to Thompson's eyes, we cannot tell here. The waterlogged *Dragonfly* was a fiendish thing to tow, and progress was terribly slow; but luckily the weather remained fine. The fog cleared away, and many were the anxious glances cast astern toward the eastern horizon for the first signs of a hostile man-of-war. They fully expected to see a great gray hull looming up over the edge of the sea; but—nothing came.

On the second day out, Banks, the *Dragonfly's* petty officer telegraphist, succeeded in getting into communication with a British light cruiser by means of the trawler's wireless.

Parr and his ship had been given up for lost, and there was no small jubilation when he made his signal saying that the *Dragonfly* was safe; that he desired accommodation for eighteen fine, fat, healthy, but rather obstreperous German prisoners; and would some kind person kindly give him orders as to the disposal of a very excellent steam-trawler he had captured?

'Well!' exclaimed the cruiser's captain when the battered *Dragonfly* was safely in tow astern of his powerful little ship, the prisoners had been transferred and were in safe keeping, and the *Nachtigal* was back to an English port in charge of the destroyer's sub-lieutenant—'well! that fellow Parr has the luck of the very devil!'

I am inclined to think that he has.

. . . . . .

Parr's first care on getting back to civilisation was to visit a jeweller's, and there he purchased the most expensive silver tobacco-box he could find. He felt it was a trumpery gift; but Mr Bowles values it very highly, for outside it is simply inscribed, 'E. C. B., from P. P.,' with a date. Inside, however, where it cannot be seen, for the gunner is of a modest and retiring disposition, is another inscription. 'In memory of a very eventful day,' it runs, 'when your afternoon caulk undoubtedly saved the *Dragonfly* from loss or capture, and her officers and men from a German prison.'

A HIGHLAND LAMENT.

By Lady Skerrington.

No more will he tramp o'er the heather
Where the grouse and the curlew cry,
And never again in the gloaming
Shall I watch while he casts his fly.

The roedeer may browse in the copsewood,
And the hare in the clover grass;
They never again will be startled
By hearing his light step pass.

His rod still lies where he left it,
His gun still rests on the rack;
But never again shall I see him
Return o'er the moorland track.

The birds in the heather are calling,
The river winds down to the sea;
But never, alas! will my dear one
Come back from the past to me.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE STRANGER-CHILD ON DARTMOOR.

By BEATRICE CHASE, Author of *The Heart of the Moor*, *Through a Dartmoor Window*.

OF the native child I have written more than once. During the past nine months it has been my privilege to watch the effect of the moor upon strange children, gentle and humble—one a boy from the sea, the other a girl from the East End of London. These psychological observations have further confirmed one of my favourite theories—that thoroughly to understand beauty we must first have experienced ugliness, and thoroughly to enjoy happiness we must previously have known sorrow.

I first met the boy one Sunday morning in April while I was meandering up between the bogs to the nearest tor. Cold though it was, and late though the spring comes to us on Dartmoor, there were signs of new life, chiefly in the sheets of golden gorse-buds and the tiny flecks of white among the bog-bean leaves in the emerald splashes of the bogs. Upward I went, rejoicing, when suddenly, almost under the shelter of the great gray tor, I saw a child in the charge of a lady. One rarely meets humanity there. If one does, it is moorland etiquette to speak. I greeted them, and fell in love with the child on the spot. He was dressed in a pretty blue-and-white striped jersey and cap, and though I was a stranger, he sprang to the salute like a man. He is not yet six years old. Finding him utterly self-possessed, I stayed 'to tell,' and then discovered that I knew his mother. I asked if he would go on to the tor with me, and he agreed joyfully. When we reached the height, the moor lay unrolled, a vast enchanted land guarded by tor castles. It was a dark, gray day, without a ripple of wind. Earth and sky were steeped in a dove-like peace. Right in the very centre of the great scene stood Bellever, the heart of the moor. Three 'swaling' fires had been lighted on the rim of moor before him—fires whose opaque pearl-white smoke ascended in three straight columns to heaven. If any artist could have painted that picture worthily, he would have made his name and his fortune.

I turned to my small new friend. He stood absorbed. Hesitatingly I asked if he liked the moor. It is not, speaking generally, popular with children, because there is practically no occupation for them; and this child, I knew, had come from the sea, with its alluring tides and sands, and bathing and paddlings. He answered warmly in the affirmative. Yes, he loved the moor—loved it with much emphasis. At first I thought he was being polite, but it soon appeared that Dartmoor had got at his very heart-strings. To my amazement, he pointed out every tor by name. There was not one he did not know, and he never once made a mistake. He had been five days on the moor then. I watched and listened. He was obviously in an ecstasy of happiness. At last I asked, 'Can you tell me why you love it so?'

He answered, almost pale with emotion, 'It is so wonderful.'

I returned home pondering. It was new and heavenly, this swift, unerring response from a child-soul. He came, he saw, he loved, and that love will influence all his life. He is to be envied. Any child who comes so young to Dartmoor and understands her is to be envied. This is a very delicate child. His delicacy is, indeed, the reason why he has been brought here from the more relaxing sea. A few days later his mother brought him to see me. She became absorbed in conversation with my mother, the Rainbow-Maker. The small boy lost no time in cultivating me.

'Please,' he began with his usual politeness, but in a firm tone, 'will you show me your chapel?'

I hesitated. Again I thought he was only being polite. It does not occur to one, off-hand, that a boy of under six can possibly be interested in a chapel. However, I found I was wrong again. I took him in. He stood murmuring, 'Oh, what a dear little chapel!' and had not finished speaking when I was suddenly called away. A little later he came to me, evidently much absorbed, and said, 'Thank you very much for letting me see your chapel.' Then, after a pause, he added, 'Who preaches there?' I tried to explain that the owner of a private chapel is in the blissful position of not hearing a sermon from one year's end to another. He considered that for some time. Clearly his main idea about church-going was that you heard sermons. 'Then what do you do in your chapel?' he asked at last.

'I pray, for one thing,' I answered promptly. 'That is, I go there when I want to speak to God.'

He nodded portentously. 'I see.'

And I believe he did.

In due course his parents had to return to

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their seaside home, and the child was brought to say good-bye. He was steeped in sadness. He came up, put a little hand in mine, and said, 'Good-bye! I shall never see you again.'

I was shocked, and urged on him that three months would soon pass.

'No! no! It's such a long time away.'

It was pathetic to see how sorely he felt the coming exile. He said good-bye again, and went off down the hall. Just as he reached the door he turned, ran back, opened his arms wide, and reached up for a kiss. Then he stepped outside, and stood looking in at the open door of the chapel. He did not know I could hear, but I heard him murmur, 'Good-bye, little chapel; good-bye.' He stood silent for a time, gazing in. Then slowly he kissed his left hand twice, and said again, 'Good-bye, little chapel; good-bye.'

If he had been on the stage exactly as he was, there would not have been a dry eye in the house. And to this day he does not know he was seen or heard.

The other little alien arrived from the East End of London at a time when air-raids were very frequent. She is a highly nervous child, and had been frightened almost out of her senses night after night by the noise and confusion.

She and her mother, a widow, came to reside in a tiny, old, sunny, thatched cottage all to themselves, instead of living in rooms in the same house with other people. This in itself was delightful; and besides this, the child found Paradise. She is eight years old, and knew nothing of the country. One mild winter afternoon, when not a flower was yet open, she joined me on the bridge above the clear, brown stream, and began to talk. Did I know what daisy-chains were like? Were they long chains, long enough to go round her neck? Did I think there would ever be enough daisies out to make a whole chain with? She had heard, too, of buttercups, and she longed to see them, because 'they said' they were bright yellow. Could you make buttercup-chains as well as daisy-chains, because, if so, they would be gold chains, wouldn't they? And did buttercups grow in the fields; and, if so, would she be allowed to go in to pick them if she promised to be very careful about not treading on the grass? When I had successfully conquered a sudden desire to weep, I explained what she would see and feel like in hay-time. I told her of the sheets of white and gold all up and down the land. I told her of the walls on the way to school—walls mauve with wild violets, draped with pink roses, guarded by regiments of royal red-purple foxgloves. She listened spell-bound, but obviously could not even imagine a place where you could roll on grass and pick more flowers than you could ever carry home. We sat on for a time in silence. Then, sidling nearer to me, she waved her hand to the lines of tors above us, and said, 'Isn't it like living in a great fairy-ring to live on Dartmoor? Look at the ring of the hills right round us!'

Wise, wise child! It is indeed like living in a great fairy-ring to live on Dartmoor, and you, from the East End of London, perhaps know the enchantment of this magic circle better even than we who have never lived in a city slum.

Once, upon a golden afternoon, I took this little alien for a drive to Bellever bridge. She was lifted out of herself all the way. Coming home, she said, after a long silence, 'Well, I have seen the river Dart at last.' I agreed, delighted that she had grasped the truth. 'And that is the river,' she went on thoughtfully, 'which asks every year for a heart.'

'What do you know about that?' I asked.

'I read it in one of your books,' she answered, a trifle patronisingly. 'Don't you remember it? It is poetry:

> River of Dart, River of Dart,
> Every year thou demandest a heart.'

I maintained a reverent silence for the rest of the drive, feeling, as I often do feel in the presence of children, that they are beyond me.

That evening, after her tea, she sat beside the fire, very thoughtful.

'Mother, who made the Dart?' she asked at last.

'God,' replied her mother.

'And why did God make the Dart want a heart?'

'Perhaps some day you will know. I don't.'

I wonder, child, if you will experience that universal craving for love which flows from every heart, beginning with the Heart of God, echoing through the hearts of mankind and re-echoing even in that mysterious river from which our enchanted moorland takes her very name?

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER IV.—TELLING HOW HE CAME TO HELL'S KITCHEN AT PEEP OF DAY.

IT was past three o'clock and dawn was at hand as, by devious ways, Spike piloted his companion through that section of New York City which is known to the initiated as Hell's Kitchen. By dismal streets they went, past silent, squalid houses and tall tenements looming grim and ghostly in the faint light; crossing broad avenues very silent and deserted at this hour; on and on until, dark and vague and mysterious, the great river flowed before them, only to be lost again as they plunged into a gloomy court where tall buildings rose on every hand, huge and very silent, teeming with life, but life just now wrapped in that profound quietude of

sleep which is so much akin to death. Into one of these tall tenement buildings—its ugliness rendered more ugly by the network of iron fire-escape ladders that writhed up the face of it—Spike led the way, first into a dark hallway, and thence up many stairs that echoed to their light-treading feet. On and up they went, past dim-lit landings where were doors each of which shut in its own little world, a world distinct and separate, wherein youth and age, good and evil, joy and misery, lived and moved and had their being. Behind these dingy panels were smiling hope and black despair, blooming health and pallid sickness, and all those sins and virtues that go to make up the sum-total of humanity.

Something of all this was in Geoffrey Ravenslee's mind as he climbed the dingy, interminable stair behind Spike, who presently halted to get his wind and whisper, 'It ain't much farther now, Geoff; only another two flights and'—— He stopped suddenly to listen, and from the landing above a sound reached them, a sound soft but unmistakable—a woman's muffled sobbing.

Slowly, cautiously, they mounted the stair, until in the dim light of a certain landing they beheld a slim figure bowed upon its knees in an agony of abasement before a scarred and dingy door. Even as they stared, the slender, girlish figure sobbed again, and, with a sudden, yearning gesture, lifted a face, pale in the half-light, and kissed that battered door; then, weeping still, she rose to her feet and turned; but, seeing Spike, stood very still all at once and with hands clasped tight together.

'Holy Gee!' exclaimed Spike beneath his breath; then, in a hoarse whisper, 'Is that Maggie—Maggie Finlay?'

'Oh! is that you, Arthur?' she whispered back. 'Arthur—oh, Arthur!—I—I'm going away; but I couldn't go without coming to—to kiss dear mother good-bye; and now I'm here I daren't knock for fear of—father. I've been up to your door and knocked, but Hermy's away, I guess. Anyway, you—you'll say I came to thank her and kiss her for the last time, won't you, Arthur?'

'Sure I will; but where ye goin', Maggie?'

'A long way, Arthur. I don't s'pose I shall ever see this place any more—or you. So, Arthur, will you—kiss me good-bye—just once?'

Spike hesitated; but she, quick and light-treading, came down to him and caught his hand and would have kissed that; but he snatched it away, and, leaning forward, kissed her tear-stained cheek, and blushed thereafter despite the dark.

'Good-bye, Arthur,' she whispered; 'and thank you—and dear Hermy. Oh, good-bye!'

So saying, she hurried on past Ravenslee, down the dark stairway; while Spike leaned over the balustrade to whisper, 'Good-bye, Maggie; an' good luck, kid!' At this she paused to look up at him with great sad eyes, a long wistful look; then, speaking no more, hurried on down the stair—down, down into the shadows, and was gone.

'We used to go to school together, Geoff,' the boy explained a little self-consciously. 'She never kissed me before; she ain't the kissin' sort. I wonder why she did it to-night! I wonder'——

Spike turned and led the way on again until they reached the landing above, across which two doors, dark and unlovely, seemed to scowl upon each other. One of these Spike proceeded to open with a latchkey, and so led Ravenslee into the dark void beyond.

Spike struck a match and lighted the gas; and, looking about him, Ravenslee stared.

A little, cramped room, sparsely furnished, yet dainty and home-like, for the small deal table hid its bare nakedness beneath a dainty cloth; the two rickety arm-chairs veiled their faded tapestry under chintz covers cunningly contrived and delicately tinted to match the cheap but soft-toned drugget on the floor and the self-coloured paper on the walls, where hung two or three inexpensive reproductions of famous paintings; and in all things there breathed an air of refinement wholly unexpected in Hell's Kitchen. Wherefore Mr Ravenslee, observing all things with his quick glance, felt an ever-growing wonder. But now Spike, who had been clattering plates and dishes in the kitchen hard by, thrust his head round the door to say, 'Oh Geoff! I don't feel like doin' the shut-eye business; d'you? How about a cup of coffee? An' I dare say I might dig out some eats. What d'ye say?'

'Is this your sister?' inquired Mr Ravenslee, taking up a photograph from the little sideboard.

'Yep, that's Hermy all right, taken las' year. Does her hair different now. How about some coffee, Geoff?'

'Coffee!' said Mr Ravenslee, staring at the photo; 'coffee—certainly—er—thanks! She has light hair, Spike?'

'Gold,' said Spike, and vanished; whereupon Mr Ravenslee laid the photo on the table, and, sitting down, fell to viewing it intently.

A wonderful face, low-browed, deep-eyed, full-lipped. Here was none of smiling prettiness, for these eyes were grave and thoughtful; these lips, despite their soft, voluptuous curves, were firmly modelled, like the rounded chin below; and in all the face, despite its vivid youth, was a vague and wistful sadness.

'Oh Geoff!' called Spike, 'd'ye mind havin' yer coffee *à la* milko condenso?'

'Milk!' exclaimed Mr Ravenslee, starting. 'Oh—yes—anything will do!'

'Why, hallo!' exclaimed Spike, reappearing with a cup and saucer, 'still piping off Hermy's photo, Geoff?'

'I'm wondering why she looks so—sad!'

'Sad!' repeated Spike, setting down the crockery with a rattle. 'Hermy ain't sad; she always looks like that. Ye see, she ain't much on

the giggle, Geoff, but she's most always singing, 'cept when her kids is sick or Mulligan calls.'

'What do you mean?'

'Oh, Hermy mothers all the kids around here when they're sick, an' lots o' kids is always gettin' sick. An' when Mulligan comes it's rent day, an' sometimes Hermy's a bit shy on the money.'

'Is she?' said Mr Ravenslee, frowning.

'You bet she is, Geoff! An' Mulligan's an Irishman, an' mean. Say, he's the meanest mutt you ever see. A Jew's mean, so's a Chink, but a mean Harp's got 'em both skinned 'way to Frisco an' back again! Why, Mulligan's that mean he wouldn't cough up a nickel to see the Statue o' Liberty do a Salomy dance in de bay. So when the mazuma's shy Hermy worries some.'

'Don't you help her?' demanded Mr Ravenslee.

'Help her? Why, ye see Geoff, I—I ain't in a steady job yet. But I do my best, an'—— Why, there's de kettle boilin' at last;' saying which, Spike turned and vanished again, leaving Mr Ravenslee still staring down at the photo.

Presently Geoff sank back in his chair, and, lolling thus, looked sleepily at the opposite wall, but saw it not, nor heard the clatter of cups and saucers from the kitchen, accompanied by Spike's windy whistling; and, as he lounged thus, he spoke softly and to himself. 'An object!' he murmured.

'Hey, Geoff,' Spike called, 'this ain't goin' to be no *à la carte* hock an' claret feedin' match, nor yet no table-de-hoty eat-fest; but if you can do in some bacon an' eggs you're on.'

'Why, then,' said Mr Ravenslee, rising and yawning, 'count me decidedly "on."'

'D'you mind givin' me a hand wid de coffee?'

'Delighted!' and forthwith Mr Ravenslee stepped out into the kitchen; and there, in a while, upon a rickety table covered with a greasy newspaper, they ate and drank with great relish and gusto, insomuch that Mr Ravenslee marvelled at his own appetite.

'Say, Geoff,' inquired Spike, 'how long are you stoppin' at Mulligan's? A week?'

'A week—a month—six months,' replied his guest sleepily—'it's all according'——

'Accordin' to what?'

'Well—er—circumstances.'

'What circumstances?'

'Circumstances over which I have no control—yet!'

'You don't mean—me?' queried Spike anxiously.

'Lord, no!'

'And you'll never tell nobody that I'——

'Meant to be—a thief?' drawled Mr Ravenslee. 'Not a word!'

Spike flushed, took a gulp of coffee, choked, and fell to sulky silence; while Mr Ravenslee filled his pipe and yawned.

'Say,' demanded Spike at last, 'where'll you live while you're here?'

'Oh, somewhere, I suppose. I haven't bothered about where yet.'

'Well, I been thinkin' I know where I can fix you up—perhaps.'

'Very kind of you, Spike.'

'There's Mrs Trapes 'cross de landin', she lost her lodger last week—she might take you.'

'Across the landing? She'll do,' nodded Mr Ravenslee.

'But I'm wonderin' if *you'll* do; she's a holy terror when she likes, Geoff.'

'Across the landing. I'll put up with her,' murmured Mr Ravenslee.

'But say, you don't know Mrs Trapes.'

'Not yet, Spike.'

'Well, she ain't no easy mark, Geoff! Most everybody in Mulligan's is scared of her when she cuts loose; she can talk ye deaf, dumb, an' paralysed; she can so. She sure is aces up on de chin-music, Geoff.'

'But then she lives just opposite, and that circumstance, methinks, doth cover a multitude of'—— Mr Ravenslee yawned again.

'Anyway, it's a sure thing she won't take you if she don't like ye, Geoff.'

'Why, then, she must like me!' said Mr Ravenslee, and proceeded to light his pipe.

Whereupon Spike produced a box of cigarettes, but in the act of lighting one paused, and, sighing, put it away again. 'I promised de Spider I wouldn't, Geoff,' he explained. 'Ye see, I'm sort of in trainin', and Spider says smoke's bad for de wind, and de Spider knows.'

'Spider!' said Mr Ravenslee, glancing up. 'Do you mean Spider Connolly the light-weight?'

'That's de guy!' nodded Spike.

'Is he a friend of yours?'

'Sure! Him an' Bud M'Ginnis is goin' to get me some good matches soon.'

'Boxing matches?'

'That's what they call 'em, Geoff. But there ain't much boxin' to it; real boxin' don't go down wid de sports; it's de punch they wanter see—good stiff wallops as jars a guy an' makes his knees get wobbly, swings an' jolts as makes a guy blind an' deaf an' sick. Oh, I been like that, an' I know; an' it ain't all candy t' hear everybody yellin' to the other guy to go in an' finish ye!'

'Does your sister know you fight?'

'Not much, she don't! I guess she'd like me to be a mommer's pet in lace collars an' a velvet suit, an' soft an' pretty in me talk. She's made me promise t' cut out de tough-spiel, an' so I'm tryin' to.'

'Are you really, Spike?'

'Well, when she's around I do, Geoff.'

'And she doesn't like you to fight, eh?'

'Nope! But, ye see, she's only a girl, Geoff.'

'And that's the wonder of it,' nodded Mr Ravenslee.

'Wonder! What d'mean?'

'I mean that all these years she has managed

to feed you, and clothe you, and keep a comfortable home for you, and she 's—only a girl!'

'Well, an' ain't I tryin' to make good?' cried the boy eagerly.

'Are you really, Spike?'

'Sure! There 's lots o' money in de fightin' game, an' I 'm fightin' all for Hermy. If ever I get a champ I 'll have money to burn, an' then she 'll never be shy on de dollar question no more, you bet. There 'll be no more needlework or Mulligan's for Hermy; it 'll be a farm in de country, wid roses climbin' around, an' chickens, an'—an' automobiles, an' servants to come when she pushes de button—you bet!'

'Is she so fond of the country?'

'Well, I guess, yes! An' flowers—gee, she nearly eats 'em!'

'On the other hand,' said Mr Ravenslee, watching the smoke from his pipe with a dreamy eye—'on the other hand, I gather she does not like Mr M'Ginnis. I wonder why?'

'You can search me!' answered Spike; 'but it 's a sure thing she ain't got no use for Bud.'

'And yet you go around with him, Spike.'

'But don't I tell ye he 's been good t' me! He 's goin' t' match me with some top-liners; he says if I can stick it I 'll be a champion sure.'

'Yes,' nodded Mr Ravenslee, 'but when?'

'Oh, Bud 's got it all doped out. But say'——

'And in the meantime your sister will go on feeding you, and clothing you, and'——

'Cheese it, Geoff,' cried the boy, flushing; 'you make a guy feel like a two-spot in the discard! I told you I 'd try to get a steady job, an' so I will; but I ain't goin' to quit the fightin' game for nobody! 'N' say, I 'm sleepy. How about it? You can have my bed, or the couch here, or you can get in Hermy's.'

'Thanks; the couch will do, Spike.'

'Then I guess it 's me for the feathers!' said Spike, rising and stretching. 'So long, Geoff!'

And in a while, having finished his pipe and knocked out the ashes, Mr Ravenslee stretched his long limbs upon the chintz-covered sofa, and, *mirabile dictu*, immediately fell asleep.

CHAPTER V.—HOW MRS TRAPES ACQUIRED A NEW LODGER, DESPITE HER ELBOWS.

HE awoke suddenly, and sat up to find the room full of sunshine, and Spike standing beside him, a bright-faced, merry-eyed Spike, very spruce and neat as to person.

'Say, Geoff,' said he, 'I 've seen Mrs Trapes, an' she wants you to go over so 's she can pipe you off. 'N' say, you 're sure up against a catty proposition in her; if you don't hit it off on the spot as soon as she gets her lamps on to you it 'll be nix for you, Geoff, an' nothin' doin'.'

'Lucid!' said Ravenslee, yawning, 'and sounds promising.'

'Why, ye see, Geoff, she 's got a grouch on because I was out last night; so, if she gives you the gimlet eye at first, just josh her along a bit. Now, slick yourself up an' come on.'

Obediently Mr Ravenslee arose, and, having tightened his neckerchief and smoothed his curly hair, crossed the landing and followed Spike into the opposite flat, a place of startling cleanliness as to floors and walls, and everything therein; uncomfortably trim of aspect, and ornate as to rugs and carpet and sofa cushions.

Mrs Trapes herself was elderly; she was also a woman of points, being bony and sharp-featured, particularly at the elbows, which were generally bare—indeed, they might be said to be her most salient and obtrusive features; but her shrewd, sharp eyes held an elusive kindliness at times, and when she smiled, which was rarely, her elbows and her general sharpness were forgotten. She was awaiting them in her parlour, enthroned in her best easy-chair, a chair of green velvet where purple flowers bloomed riotously, her feet firm-planted upon a hearthrug cunningly enwrought with salmon-pink sunflowers. Bolt-upright and stiff of back she sat, making the very utmost of her elbows, for her sleeves being rolled high (as was their wont) and her arms being folded within her apron, they projected themselves to left and right in highly threatening fashion. Sphinx-like she sat, very silent and very still, while her sharp eyes roved over Mr Ravenslee's person from the toes of his boots to the dark hair that curled short and crisp above his brow. Thus she looked him up and down, viewing each garment in turn; lastly, she lifted her gaze to his face and stared at him eye to eye.

And eye to eye Mr Ravenslee, serene and calm as ever, met her look; while Spike, observing her granite-like expression and the fierce jut of her elbows, shuffled, and glanced toward the door. But still Mrs Trapes glared up at Mr Ravenslee, and still Mr Ravenslee glanced down at Mrs Trapes wholly unabashed; nay, he actually smiled, and, bowing his dark head, spoke in his easy, pleasant voice: 'A beautiful afternoon, Mrs Trapes.'

Mrs Trapes snorted.

'This room will suit me—er—admirably.'

Mrs Trapes started slightly, opened her grim lips, shut them again, and—wriggled her elbows.

'Yes, indeed,' continued Mr Ravenslee pleasantly, 'I like this room—so nice and bright, like the rug and wall-paper—especially the rug. Yes, I like the rug and the—er—stuffed owl in the corner!' and he nodded to a shapeless, moth-eaten something under a glass case.

Mrs Trapes wriggled her elbows again, spake harsh-voiced: 'Young feller, that owl 's a parrot!'

'A parrot—of course,' assented Mr Ravenslee gently; 'and a very fine parrot, too. Then the wax flowers and the antimacassars! What would a home be without them?' said he, dreamy-eyed and grave. 'I think I shall be very bright and cheerful here, my dear Mrs Trapes.'

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OXFORD IN THE SEVENTIES.

By C. L. G.

PART I.

THERE is no college at Oxford of such outstanding superiority in numbers as Trinity at Cambridge. The nearest approach to it is, or was, Christ Church; and when I went up to 'the House' in October 1875 there were about two hundred and thirty undergraduates in residence, as compared with one hundred and eighty or so at the next largest college. But the difference was one in kind as well as in degree. By a curious anomaly, Christ Church, the most ecclesiastical of all the Oxford foundations, attracted a larger number of rich and fashionable young men than any other college. The Cathedral is also the chapel, the Head of the House is the Dean, and so it came about that the canons and theological professors lived in close proximity to undergraduates who did not exactly diffuse an odour of sanctity. For example, the house occupied by the saintly Canon Bright was a sort of annex of Peckwater, home of the gayest of the gay.

Again, at no other Oxford college was the cleavage between reading and non-reading men so marked. It was inevitable when one considers the sources from which the House drew its undergraduates. There were on the one side the open and Westminster scholars, the exhibitioners, and a limited number of commoners who read for honours. But the great majority were young aristocrats or plutocrats, Etonians predominating, who came to Oxford to have a good time and take a pass degree. The main end of their undergraduate career was conviviality. To a limited extent cricket and the river provided a common ground where they mixed with the reading men; but the most athletic of these affluent public school men went to other colleges, while the intellectual *élite* of Eton were to be found at Balliol. At the House the young 'bloods' or 'dogs,' as we called them forty years ago, found their most congenial sphere of activity in hunting and in the various dining or social clubs. Of these the largest and the most renowned was the Bullingdon Club, chiefly recruited from Christ Church, but including a certain number of members drawn from other colleges. The Bullingdon Club had a cricket-ground of its own, as well as a barge on the river. The members were distinguished from the common herd by wearing a blue stripe on their flannel trousers. They had also a special uniform for their dinners; but this habit was common at other wine and dining clubs. All these facts, however, serve to indicate the sumptuary basis on which the social cleavage in the House was founded. The days of gentlemen commoners who wore a special tassel on their caps were long past, but the principle was there still. There were a few rare exceptions who belonged to both worlds, but such an achievement bordered on the miraculous. The most notable example in my time was a strangely gifted youth, of winning manners, with no family influence or wealth to help him, who consorted with the fastest set in Bullingdon, of which he was a member, raced and hunted, and was never seen to do a stroke of work in term-time. But he was reported to slave at his books in the vacations, and anyhow he took a Double First and gained a Fellowship. His undergraduate life reminded one of the types of Admirable Crichton familiar in the novels of Ouida or the author of *Guy Livingstone*, and his subsequent career was hardly less romantic or meteoric. But he stood alone, as the nightingale sings.

There was no hostility between the reading and the non-reading classes. We simply went our several ways. We seldom met, or very rarely in the lecture-room, though we had rooms in the same quad or on the same staircase; but those of us who had to work derived no little amusement from the detached contemplation of these gilded youths, as they sallied forth in pink, or woke the midnight echoes with hunting-horns, or broke up each other's furniture in moments of hilarious expansion. Efforts at fraternisation were not always successful. A spectacled scholar was once invited to dine at one of the most fashionable of the clubs already alluded to by a member who knew him at home. But he felt like a fish out of water during the revels, and his discomfort was not allayed when one of the company remarked in a loud voice during a pause in the conversation, 'Who is that d—d fellow in gig-lamps sitting next to Sandy?' The speaker was more renowned for his wealth than his breeding, and was probably the only member of the club capable of such discourtesy to a guest; but his resentment was not altogether unnatural. The d—d fellow in gig-lamps *was* out of his element. Personally I have met several of my gilded college contemporaries in after-life, and found them very much like other people, and not less friendly. One cannot help feeling, however, that the fusion of classes brought about by the upheaval of the last two years, and in particular by the altered conditions of military service, has broken down the social barriers which undoubtedly existed forty years ago, and probably a good deal later. A type of undergraduate a good deal in evidence of late years at Oxford was quite unknown in my time —the 'intellectual blood,' who combines ambition

for academic honours with a deliberate cultivation of dissipated habits and a contempt for weaker vessels, mental and physical. But this complex type has been probably humanised or simplified by the ordeal of the war. It was at worst a rather ugly pose, and there is no room for pose nowadays:

In dubiis hominem spectare periclis
Convenit, adversisque in rebus noscere qui sit.
Nam veræ voces tum demum pectore ab imo
Ejiciuntur et eripitur persona, manet res.

It must not be supposed, however, that the life of the reading man at a non-reading college was a drab and uneventful existence, devoted to unremitting study, and only relieved by watching the extravagances of the 'dogs.' We rowed, or ran with the beagles, or played cricket or rackets. The rinking mania was in full swing, and three hard winters in succession gave us opportunities for skating such as were rare before the age of Swiss winter sports. In one of these winters we had seven weeks' frost; the river was frozen over, and I remember skating, for several days after the thaw had set in, on the flooded meadows beyond the farthest end of Norham Gardens. The floods were shallow, nearly all the water had drained off, and the ice practically rested on the grass. An Oxford skating club was founded. Monier-Williams and Pidgeon of Christ Church, Musgrave of Balliol, and Arthur Johnson of All Souls were, as well as I remember, the outstanding experts, and our badge was a little gilt orange; but the club did not maintain an independent existence for long, and was dissolved by a cycle of mild winters. Golf had not yet arrived, though Horace Hutchinson was in residence before I went down. But in one respect Oxford in the seventies was better equipped than the Oxford of to-day. The racket-courts at Holywell were extensively patronised, and players of the second best of court games were not put to the expense of running up to London to keep their hand in. The running-path was another resource; and, though the standard of performance has been raised in several departments by Rhodes scholars and others, Brooks's 'varsity record for the high jump, made in my time, still stands. W. Bruce and M. R. Portal, both of Balliol, were a singularly handsome pair of quarter-milers. Other heroes of the running-track were Montague Shearman—now a Judge—a speedy sprinter and resolute finisher; Arnold Hills, afterwards director of the Thames Ironworks, a miler; and Stanley Weyman the novelist, who represented Oxford in the three miles. Metcalfe, the South African railway engineer, shone in the half-mile; and Rochfort Maguire, another South African magnate, combined a taste for running with his other activities, social and intellectual. Grenfell of Balliol, now Lord Desborough, was a double Blue, for he began as a long-distance runner before concentrating on the river. Other rowing celebrities were Edwards-Moss and H. P. Marriott, Bankes (another Judge), and W. Ellison.

Heads of Houses forty years ago were, in the unthinking judgment of undergraduates, more distinguished for their longevity than for any other quality. But there were notable exceptions. Liddell at Christ Church was a majestic and commanding figure, and, apart from his fame as a lexicographer, held in high repute in council. In his relations with undergraduates he never seemed at his ease, but his brusque manner was the result of a shyness which he never overcame. The first time I went to breakfast at the Deanery, with a batch of other freshmen, we were shown into the morning-room. Mrs Liddell came in, and asked us our names, and when the Dean appeared introduced us to him, a curious but characteristic inversion of the normal rôles. In Collections—the periodical college examinations—the Dean presided at the *vivâ voce*, which was held in Hall. It was rather a formidable ordeal, at least for those who were expected to do well, and I remember the gruff rebuke which I earned when, stumbling into a pitfall which had entrapped others before me, I translated μύλος ὀνικός in a divinity paper as 'a colt the foal of an ass' instead of a 'millstone.' But the Dean did not always reserve his rebukes for scholars, or junior students, as we were then called. On one occasion, when a large, florid, and overdressed commoner was before him, and had made some unusually silly answer, he greatly diverted the other examiners by observing in a stage whisper, 'Great oaf!' Another Head was famous for his wit, but I can only remember his happy description of a notorious play of Aristophanes, of which he said that it was 'as broad as it was long.' A third, who presided over a college more renowned in those days for athletics than intellect, was credited with excessive leniency in dealing with promising oarsmen and cricketers when they came up for matriculation. On one occasion, so the story goes, the captain of the Eton Boats presented himself without letting his qualifications be known to the authorities, and was ignominiously ploughed. He had already returned to Eton when the Principal heard of the tragedy, and was much upset by the news. But he at once rose to the occasion, and is reported in the legend to have despatched a telegram to the rejected candidate: 'Your case is being reconsidered. Please telegraph the perfect of τύπτω.' With the most celebrated of all the Heads of Houses in my time, Jowett, I was only acquainted by sight and through the medium of anecdotes until the close of my undergraduate days. Most of these anecdotes depended chiefly on the imitation of the Master's high, incisive utterance. His sayings were chiefly of the nature of truisms—inspired truisms, undoubtedly—and reflected his habit of thinking

aloud. Thus, when Professor Blackie had been rendering himself conspicuous in some controversy or other, and on meeting Jowett asked him, 'Well, Dr Jowett, what are they saying about me in Oxford just now?' the Master is said to have briskly chirped in reply, 'Nothing.' He could be really witty though, if the story is true of his comment on some undergraduates who stayed up during the Long Vacation, when the Master was in residence and wished to be undisturbed. So he first of all insisted on their regularly attending chapel, and, when that failed to dislodge them, had their battels cut off at the buttery. As the last of the discomfited crew was driving to the station from the college gates Jowett is reported to have observed, 'This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.' But these stories give a wholly erroneous impression of the Master's generosity and kindness of heart. Of his hospitality my own experience may serve as an illustration which might be indefinitely multiplied. It was in Commemoration time, and my father, who was to receive a D.C.L., and many years before had been in official relations with Jowett, left a card on the Master at Balliol. The next morning Jowett walked out to the Iffley Road, where my father was staying with a married daughter, and invited all the members of the family to dinner, including myself. It was a large and interesting gathering, and it fell to my lot to sit between George Eliot and George Henry Lewes. Lewes was vivacious and communicative. I remember his telling me that although George Eliot had written the *Spanish Gypsy* before she travelled in Spain, she had only to make one or two trifling corrections in the poem as the result of her visit. Some story that I told him tickled his fancy, and he said, 'You must tell that to my wife;' and I was introduced to the Sibyl, and had to repeat it. Any alarm that I felt was immediately dispelled by her suave and gracious manner. I remember distinctly her telling me that she read very little fiction by her English contemporaries except the books of her friend Miss Thackeray; and when I made bold to express the difficulty I had always felt in tracing a family resemblance in the writings of father and daughter, she demurred, but admitted that landscape counted for little with Thackeray—'a hedgerow and a spire were enough for him.' Sir James Lacaita was also of the company, and after dinner told us some curious stories of Louis Napoleon, whom he had visited in exile at Chislehurst. The Emperor was dying of a mortal complaint, but during their interview talked the whole time of Cæsar's campaigns.

Of professors and dons outside my own college I saw little except of Henry Nettleship, whose lectures I attended, and whose friendship lasted throughout his lifetime. Underneath a shy manner he concealed a very warm heart, and he was not merely interested in scholars. I remember his telling me once of a Latin epitaph which seemed to him the perfection of laconic eulogy—'*Neminem tristem fecit;*' and it might well have been applied to himself. Walter Pater, who was then in residence at Brasenose, was a familiar figure. They used to tell a story of his examining for scholarships at Brasenose; as there was some doubt as to the award, the examiners looked through the papers again. When Pater was asked for his verdict, all he had to say was that there was a candidate called Sanctuary. 'I liked his name.' The lean, gaunt figure of Robinson Ellis, the editor of Catullus, is still fresh in my memory. Early in the seventies a French officer who had been in the *débâcle* at Sedan visited Oxford, and at some gathering at which they were both present Robinson Ellis showed an unexpected interest in the stranger. But it turned out that it was solely due to the fact that one of the best manuscripts of Catullus was discovered at Sedan. It used to be told of him that on one occasion, when he had gone to Paris to collate manuscripts, after leaving his baggage at the hotel he rushed off to the library, worked there all day, and then found that he had completely forgotten the name of his hotel. The authorities called in the aid of the police, who solved the problem by tracing the driver who had taken him from the station, Robinson Ellis having fortunately remembered that he was a one-eyed man. When reading for Greats I attended a couple of lectures of a series given by T. H. Green, then at the height of his fame. The lectures were crowded mostly by Balliol men, but they were far over my head, and I retired in respectful discomfiture. It brought me nearer to the philosopher to learn afterwards from a Balliol friend that Green's favourite hymn was Baxter's

> Lord, it belongs not to my care
> Whether I die or live;

especially the last verse:

> My knowledge of that life is small,
> The eye of faith is dim;
> It is enough that Christ knows all,
> And I shall be with Him.

Ruskin was in residence as Art Professor during my undergraduate days, but, with a lamentable lack of enterprise, I failed to attend his lectures; nor was I one of the band of devoted admirers who at his instigation, and to the amusement of the Philistines, showed their adhesion to the gospel of manual labour by making a road at Hinksey. Ruskin was an honorary student of Christ Church, and used to attend the services in the Cathedral. I can see him now walking along the west side of Tom Quad with Sir Henry Acland, who used periodically to stop and hitch up Ruskin's hood as it kept slipping from his sloping shoulders. Pusey was in residence as one of the canons, and I heard him preach once—a weighty discourse, but with nothing in it to explain the fierce

controversies that had made his name anathema to the extreme Evangelicals. Another of the canons was King, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, who looked the saint that he was; and another was Liddon, on the whole the greatest preacher that I ever heard, alike for matter, incisiveness of delivery, eloquence, and perfect articulateness.

(*Continued on page 72.*)

LA SIERPES.

CHAPTER IV.

AS a convalescent I had not been outside a saddle for a month, and I had ridden more than six leagues over the parched ground under a Spanish sun in August, and Bernon had ridden both ways; so the colonel, of his own accord, had told us we must drive. This we did in advance of the squadron, only halting when we knew that we were getting near the convent.

'Now, Brellinger,' said the colonel as a halt was called, 'you know the country, and I don't, so to a certain extent we are in your hands. I want to make a *coup*. I want to give these rogues a lesson; but what I don't understand is the presence of the regulars. Where in the devil's name do they come from? Because their presence makes a great difference.'

'Yes, that was what surprised General Foy, *mon colonel*,' I answered; 'but they might, after all, be only a few stragglers.'

So, leaving the others under the lieutenant at the foot of a slight incline, he and I and the major entered a wood with two or three men. Advancing cautiously, we got within sight of the building, with the open ground in front of it. Right opposite the entrance, which had a highly carved projecting window over it, was a tree-trunk; and, what's more, two or three bodies were lying near. This proved that the guerrillas had tried to ram the door in, but had been driven back.

'What fools they must be!' I said. 'There is a farm on the other side, and they might have run along under the wall with trusses of straw.'

'Bundles of faggots would have been better,' suggested the major.

At that moment several shots came from the window. Evidently some of the Spaniards had been seen too near the edge of the wood, and they answered by an irregular fire at the window from the wood.

'It's not safe for us to go any farther this way,' said the colonel; 'we might meet some of them, and that would spoil everything. I will tell you what we will do. You, Flammart and Brellinger,' he continued, 'will take eighty men and go right round well in their rear. You can leave a few to keep up communications. When you, Flammart, think you are opposite the entrance, halt with thirty. You, Brellinger, go on with the rest, and when you think you have gone far enough, fire two shots. That will be the signal for Flammart to begin to drive them out into the open. If they bolt to the north, you must issue from the wood and drive them my way. The long wall of the convent compels them to come toward me. I will have a man in a tree who will signal to us, and then we will gallop up and give them something to remember.'

Accordingly the major and I set off, making a long detour, for we knew the forest was swarming with guerrillas, and we should have to be very careful; if we came unexpectedly on any of them, of course, the alarm would be given, and the whole of the colonel's plan would be frustrated. The chances were that if we only encountered guerrillas they would soon run; but if there were regulars a rather better stand would be made.

There was one thing in our favour. On account of the heat our enemies would probably prolong their siesta. Flammart was very stout; he was not one who was used to or cared for much walking.

'There, Brellinger,' he said, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, 'I reckon I have got round far enough, and we will rest a little to give you time to get on; and then I will advance cautiously, and do nothing till you fire, and then we will push on.'

So with about thirty odd men I continued my way, and was thinking of turning to the left, when we found that the country before us to the right was rather more open and broken. We were going very carefully and silently in single file, and I was leading, when suddenly I saw a couple of fellows with guns slung on their backs coming at a fair pace toward us with a heavily laden donkey. Not far behind was another man hurrying after them.

They saw me as soon as I saw them. '*Couchez-vous! couchez-vous!*' ('Lie down!') I cried in a loud whisper to those behind me, for I saw in a second the fix I was in. If I retreated I must have excited their suspicions at once. But for the presence of the one behind I might have allowed them to come up close and shot both with my pistol; but that would probably have resulted in the third man firing at me; and the major, hearing that, would have advanced too soon and upset everything. But by pure good luck I had one advantage. I had had no chance of changing my uniform, and was still wearing the clothes of young Vegara. So I boldly made straight for them.

'Tell me, my good fellows, and I will give you some *reales*, where is the Convent del Espiritu

Santo? I want to see the Reverend Mother Superior.'

'*Hombre, señor,*' said the elder of the two, 'you cannot do that; those thieving *gavoches* are actually in the convent at this moment. We have lost our captain, but luckily have got the Father Confessor to help.'

'The Father Confessor!' I exclaimed.

'Yes,' he continued with a laugh. 'They bound him and left him in the chapel for a moment; but they did not know there was a nun in the sacristy, or that there was an underground passage from his house. She released him, and they both escaped. But we will settle those French thieves; we will bring those rats out of their holes! We ran short of powder, but now we have got some more,' pointing to several small kegs about as large as olive-barrels slung on the mule. 'We are going to have bundles of faggots, and, protected by them, we shall run across the open space and place the faggots and powder against the door. That will settle them.'

'Yes, that ought to,' I replied dryly. 'And how many men have you got?'

'Nearly two hundred and fifty, and a dozen regulars who have been wandering about for weeks, and are not in a hurry to find their regiments.'

'I think I had better stay here,' I said; and I gave them a little money and advised them to hurry on, which they did in company of the third man, who had come up. With a sigh of relief I saw them disappear, and, carefully noting the direction they took, we set off once more.

My position was far more risky than that of the major, as I had to get as close to the road as I could, and I halted after a while and listened intently, but not a sound did I hear. So thick were the trees that I might be four or one hundred hundred metres from the road for all I could tell. I had brought Bernon with me, for since I had seen the way he had fooled the guerrilla chief I had great faith in his sagacity. Suddenly he touched my sleeve, made a significant nod, and pointed to the left. The practised ears of the smuggler had heard something unperceived by us. After listening intently for a moment, he threw himself on the ground; then, getting up, he indicated in dumb show that it would be better for us to edge away to the right.

'They are not far off, and they are chopping wood,' he said to me in a low voice when we were at a safe distance.

Then I remembered what I had been told about the faggots, and realised his cleverness more than ever, for I had not said a word to him about them. But it was necessary for me to press on; so in perfect confidence I left him with ten men, and took the rest with me.

We had hardly gone any distance when I saw the gardener's cottage and the priest's house right in front of me; in fact, I could not have emerged from the wood at a better place. To the left I saw the convent. Little did Mary know how near I was! Very, very silently, and with the utmost caution, we now bore away to the left. Then we distinctly heard voices, and in a whisper I told the men to look to their carbines.

We had got within one hundred metres, when we suddenly saw a fellow dart from the wood with a bundle of faggots in front of him. A volley came from the window, but that made no difference; quickly, and one by one, others followed him. At once I ordered two men to fire at them. That was the signal for Flammart.

'Now, *mes enfants*, fire low. Cover your man and fire slowly;' but for all that, with one exception, not a single bullet seemed to find its billet. The one that did take effect must have penetrated a keg of powder, for there was a bright-red flame, a cloud of smoke, and a fearful explosion. Never in all my experience had I seen a similar case; the man and the faggots disappeared in every direction. The next moment I heard firing to the rear, and knew that the major was at work; and soon Bernon had joined in. Like rats when ferrets are put in a stack, the guerrillas rushed from the wood.

'*Allons, mes enfants, suivez-moi!*' I cried as I ran into the open to prevent them from getting into the farm buildings or away to the north. Stimulated by the explosion, which had excited them, my men needed no urging. Our enemies, seeing us, and little knowing how small our numbers were, turned away to the left; while from the convent window our comrades picked them off as fast as they could. I succeeded in hitting two, but we never got right in amongst them, as they rushed panic-stricken in the colonel's direction. As we passed the convent we heard the encouraging cheers of those within, and in a short time the great door was opened and Pierre and some others rushed out and joined us.

Quite out of breath, I was leaning up against the wall loading my pistols.

'The colonel's waiting for them. As soon as they see him they will all come back,' I shouted to Pierre; 'so keep your carbines loaded!'

I had hardly spoken when we heard the bugle sounding in the distance, and then he saw the force of my words. The bullets, however, from the major's men were now our chief danger, as the guerrillas in the wood were between him and us. In a cloud of dust, leaning low over their saddles, our men came on, headed by their colonel, sabring right and left. Some guerrillas undoubtedly may have escaped, but seldom have I known a *coup* more complete, for the bodies lay thick in all directions.

Tired and worn out, the men threw themselves on the ground, and I hurried into the convent; and in another moment Mary was in my arms,

returning my ardent kisses. The poor girl, from what she had gone through, looked tired and worn, but in her happiness she made light of it. After we had attended to our wounded, and the men had had some wine and a short rest, we were ready to return.

'Well,' said my uncle, 'all's well that ends well. We have got the pictures, and we have given the poor girl her liberty, and the sooner we get back the better.' And ere the sun had begun to sink we had left the convent behind us. Like many another, it was one of those that were burnt to the ground by the infuriated peasantry some twenty years afterwards owing to the greed and wickedness of the inmates.

To celebrate the success of the expedition, my uncle gave a dinner-party the following day. General Foy himself honoured it with his presence. Young Vegaro and his beautiful fiancée also were invited. As for Mary and me, we were happy; only our coming separation hung like a shadow upon us, so we had not quite the exuberantly high spirits of those around us.

Alas, the hour for our parting came! I went down to the ship that was sailing to Genoa, and saw them off. As I was kissing Mary for the last time, her father placed a sealed letter in my hand, telling me that I was not to open it till the next day. I paid little heed to it, for I thought it only referred to some of the money I had advanced him.

The next day I opened the packet, which contained not only a letter from Mynheer Vandermeeren, but one from Mary herself. His letter nearly took my breath away, for in it he said that, from a hatred of deception, he felt bound to tell me that, to all intents and purposes, he was a pure Englishman. His ancestors had come over with William the Third, and they, like him, had married English women; and as for himself, he did not know a word of Dutch, and had only once been in Holland for a short time on business. He reminded me that when the ship was captured and he was brought to Barcelona, owing to our two nations being at war, for Mary's sake and his own he was compelled to take refuge under his Dutch name. This and a good deal more he told me, and I had to admit that in similar circumstances I should have done the same. As for Mary, she reiterated her love, and told me she would never love any one else, even if I was so angry that I would not keep my troth because of the deception she had been obliged to practise.

Now that I knew the truth, many little incidents came to my remembrance. Still, I must own that for a time I was quite overwhelmed by these revelations. Not that I would swerve one millimetre from my devotion to her; but I saw the difficulties I was in with regard to my parents and relations. And not only that; I thought of my uncle and General Foy. I kept the news to myself for a time, but at last I told my uncle and asked his advice. Of course, his surprise was as great as mine had been.

'Whether Mary is English or not,' he said, 'she is one of the most charming and beautiful girls I ever met, so don't let her nationality make any difference; but as for the General, I think it would be best to hold your tongue. But he is so pleased with the *coup* that he made, thanks to Vandermeeren, that I think even he, though he has been deceived, would not say much.'

It was some eighteen months afterwards that Mary and I were united, and it would not in the ordinary way have been so soon as that but for my having escaped from Leipzig after the battle. Catching a smuggling-ship on the coast that sailed for Rotterdam, I was driven in a terrible storm on to the English coast; and then I found myself in exactly the same plight, in an enemy's country without a *peseta*, as she and her father had been in Spain. Then it was, when I was a fugitive and in danger of my life, that the pluck and courage, and all the sterling qualities she possessed, hidden as they might have been under her beauty and girlish high spirits in Spain, came out. True it is that in spite of all her courage, ingenuity, and money —for it turned out that her father was very wealthy—I was eventually caught; but the abdication of the Emperor in 1814 came in time for me to have but a very short acquaintance with an English jail.

Thus it came to pass that our wedding took place in London; and not in all that great city, where the beauty of the women is so extraordinary, so noticeable to every foreigner, was there one more beautiful than my own dear Mary; and not one, as I had good reason to know, with a truer or braver heart, as perhaps I shall prove some day.

THE END.

PRUSSIA'S LAND OF PROMISE.

By G. E. Thomson.

WHEN the partition of Africa was first in question Germany looked on with eager eyes and twitching fingers; but her day was not yet.

About the year 1900 Morocco was little more than a name to the rest of the world, a semi-mythical land, a far-off mirage of sandy waste and barren palm-trees. The terror of the Barbary

pirates had grown legendary, and Ismail the Terrible was but a lay figure for the historian. Then there shot across the startled sky of international politics the comet Raisuli, a practical jester in brown *jelab*, red fez, and yellow *babuches*. Swiftly followed the Anglo-French Treaty, the dramatic appearance of the Kaiser at Tangier, and the thunder of bombardment at the very doors of Europe.

Morocco had not vanished, then, with the Baghdad of Haroun-el-Rashid? Something must be done! The something was the Algeciras Conference of 1905, when Europe tied the peevish foundling to her apron-strings. Great Britain was busy elsewhere, and Germany was becomingly modest; so that to the eagerly willing hand of France fell the task of immediate correction and future guidance.

Almost touching the finger-tips of Europe across the narrow Strait of Gibraltar, Morocco was nearly the last of the world's prizes to elude her grasp; although the Frank, having fairly comfortably established himself to east and west of the prize, had proceeded some time before to snip little bits off, first at the south-eastern boundary, and later on the north-western coast. France had said nothing about it, for fear of interesting other potential competitors; but she had long had a shrewd suspicion of the value of this hilly country, fertile and full of promise, rich in grain-lands, and honeycombed with precious minerals. Her original policy was that of territorial acquisition throughout Africa, from Lake Nyasa to the Strait of Gibraltar—more than two-thirds of the whole continent—but particularly the acquisition of the Mediterranean coastline. The scheme had been evolved with great foresight, and worked out well with regard to the preparation of the way. French influence was promulgated gracefully and unostentatiously by missionaries, at great sacrifice of life and health, through the sun-scorched sands of the Sudanese Sahara and the miasmic, malaria-infested jungles of Central Africa to Nyanza, Tanganyika, and Nyasa. Egypt presented a more difficult problem; but the French missionary talked smoothly to the natives, and in his wake came the French explorer, the trader, and the soldier, and their combined efforts established French influence over the regions from beyond Lake Chad to the boundaries of the French Congo. Britain had been too much occupied to pay much attention to her neighbour up to this point; and Germany, watching eagerly in delighted anticipation of friction, said nothing.

The French operations reached the valley of the White Nile without serious friction with any European Power; but when Colonel Marchand started with an expedition from the French Congo to effect a junction with the Marquis de Bonchamp, who was advancing from Abyssinia to meet him in the Upper Nile basin, they came into direct conflict with the British scheme of an Anglo-Saxon Empire stretching from the Cape to Cairo. At Fashoda, in 1898, the two schemes crossed, and Europe, awakened to the fact that great things were toward, waited to see which side would give way.

General Kitchener, newly laurel-crowned after his victory at Omdurman, appeared suddenly at Fashoda, with the intention, as he politely informed the French commandant, of admiring the artistic effects of the Union-Jack and the Egyptian flag floating above the town. Colonel Marchand, indicating the tricolour in the post of honour, was desolated to inform General Kitchener that he was too late. General Kitchener, with a confidential air, was sure that Colonel Marchand would be glad to hear that the necessity for Britain's withdrawal from the Sudan had been only temporary. He would be delighted to assure the commandant and his men a safe passage down the Nile. The French commandant smilingly regretted that he did not see his way clear to accepting the kind offer.

Things seemed at a deadlock, when General Kitchener indicated the forces with him. 'What can one man do against these?'

'*Qu'il mourut*,' said the commandant.

But General Kitchener saw a better way out of the difficulty. 'Your Government sent you here; your Government will call you back. Have a whisky-and-soda?'

Delcassé stood at the helm of French foreign policy; the matter was settled at the respective Embassies, and Colonel Marchand withdrew. The Union-Jack floated unchallenged above Fashoda; and France reluctantly tore up her plans for an outlet in this direction, and turned with redoubled efforts to the other side. But if Egypt were necessary to Great Britain to control the Suez Canal, the strategic value to her of the coastline of Morocco commanding the Strait of Gibraltar was hardly less great. However, Egypt claimed all her attention and resources for the moment. Morocco must wait.

Meanwhile France was busy weaving her schemes in Morocco: inclining native sentiment toward her rule, extending her schools and 'protection' system, Government loans, and, incidentally, the boundary-line of Algeria, whenever opportunity offered. The revolution of the Moroccan Pretender (1902–4) left the country in such a state of lawlessness that some system of foreign protection was absolutely imperative to secure the safety of Europeans of every nation. Spain was not in a position to press her claims; and, fuming at her impotence, Germany was forced to confess that neither was she. The claimants, therefore, dwindled to Great Britain and France. Great Britain had realised more fully the magnitude of the task which she had undertaken in Egypt; so there followed the amazing Anglo-French treaty of 1904, which settled the outstanding territorial questions upon

which the two countries differed, and was to be of incalculable importance in its geographical and political significance. It shattered at one blow all Germany's hopes of aggrandisement at the expense of Great Britain or France, or possibly both, at a not very far distant date when they should be weakened by a struggle with each other. The Teuton must have been stupefied at the *entente* between the Latin and the Anglo-Saxon, whom he had regarded as separated by an unbridgable gulf of racial antipathy.

The terms of the treaty were, in fact, little less surprising to the world at large. Great Britain, in return for certain concessions in Egypt, agreed to waive all claims to political supremacy in Morocco. France was not only to be left unmolested to carry out all administrative, economic, financial, and military reforms requisite for the pacification of Morocco, provided that British treaty rights were left intact; but Article IX. went further: 'The two Governments agree to accord to one another their diplomatic support in order to obtain the execution of the clauses of the present declaration regarding Egypt and Morocco.'

Two of the secret articles added to the original treaty throw further light on the objects of the two Powers, and also admit a certain amount of justifiable annoyance on the part of Germany. The first clause provided both Great Britain and France with a loophole for departing from the other terms of the agreement by stating that either 'might be constrained by force of circumstances to modify this policy in respect to Morocco or Egypt.' The other secret article limited the Spanish sphere of influence to the Mediterranean area of Morocco, and this was confirmed in the Franco-Spanish agreement of October 1904, with which vanished Germany's last hope of getting some one else to do her work for her.

Germany's awakening had been gradual; but it must have been complete by the autumn of 1904. The question then arises: Why did she take no action until March 1905?

There were several reasons, connected with Great Britain, Russia, and internal questions; but the chief was the need to dispose of the principal driver of spokes in her wheels. Delcassé must go. He was a masterful personality, determined to push France to the forefront of world-politics; and that according to his own way, uninfluenced by the opinions of others. Feeling in France ran high against Britain after the Fashoda incident and during the South African war; but Delcassé saw a potential ally in Britain and a certain enemy in Germany. In 1900 he undermined the Triple Alliance by promising Italy a free hand in Tripoli for non-interference in Morocco. In 1901–2 he attempted to make a secret bargain with Spain by ceding to her certain districts in the north of Morocco in return for unquestioned authority in the remainder. (The Franco-Spanish agreement of 1904 was very similar in character, but clinched under different circumstances.)

Great Britain objected to this secret bargain, and Delcassé's earlier impression was confirmed. France must definitely ally herself with Germany or Great Britain. He chose the latter, and set to work to achieve his object. By April 1904 King Edward, Lord Lansdowne, and Delcassé had settled the question of the West African boundaries, Madagascar, the New Hebrides, the Newfoundland fisheries, and, above all, the Egyptian question in a series of agreements which ultimately became the Anglo-French Entente. Delcassé, then, had done what he set out to do, in spite of fierce opposition. Russia was already a friend, and he had won over Spain, Italy, and Great Britain to recognise France as paramount in Morocco. If he still had any fears of Germany's intervention, they were lulled to rest by the speech of Prince Bülow in the Reichstag on 12th April 1904, in which he stated that German interests in Morocco were 'purely economic,' and that, on the whole, he welcomed the understanding between Great Britain and France as making for the greater stability of the peace of the world.

Delcassé had underestimated his enemy, and overestimated one, at least, of his friends. Germany was silent at the end of 1904, because she knew that in the spring of 1905 she would have completed the naval programme planned in 1898, and largely augmented during the Boer war. It would be a weighty argument to oppose to an unmalleable France. Fortune favoured her.

In March 1905 Russia sustained the terrible defeat at Mukden, which sensibly diminished, for the time at least, her value as an ally to France. The moment for Germany's *coup* had arrived. On 31st March the Kaiser landed at Tangier, and, with his usual vulgar love of theatricality, made overtures to the Sultan's representative. He professed to wish to save the Sultan from undue subordination, to uphold the integrity of the country, and to insist upon the equality of European economic and commercial interests. This ignored the claim which Great Britain and Spain had acknowledged, that France should exercise a certain amount of administrative control over the country, especially in the districts bordering on Algeria. It also implied that the Sultan's Government was in no need of European assistance, and should resent the assumption. Then he continued his yachting cruise.

The incident had a far wider significance than would appear on the surface. William the Second's desire to possess Morocco would not have blinded him to the futility of trying to achieve his object by stirring up internal trouble and annoying France by the pin-pricks of tribal

insurrection. France was quite strong enough, and fully prepared to deal with such incidents. His object was to separate France and Britain, which would be the opportunity for Germany to step in and annex Morocco, and possibly Egypt as well. It was a gauntlet thrown down. The *entente* was still very recent, and uncemented. Would it stand the shock? Would Britain uphold France's action as mirrored in the eyes of Germany, whose policy had the beautiful appearance of being quite disinterested? Germany's interests in Morocco were purely commercial, and they were guaranteed. Had not her Chancellor admitted as much?

The Anglo-French understanding withstood the shock, while the statesmen of both countries looked around for Germany's ulterior motive. When they had found it, the *entente* was sensibly strengthened. Germany needed coaling-stations for that new navy of hers. From Heligoland to Togoland or the Kameruns was a very far cry. Mogador or Agadir, at the western end of the Moorish coastline, would be invaluable. If the Entente Powers could be made to quarrel, and eventually partition Morocco, Germany could with some justice demand a port as compensation for restricted trading-rights, and, possibly, as a bribe for non-interference. Her plan was subtle, but not subtle enough. Not only Britain, France, and Spain, but the United States as well, looked askance at the gigantic growth of Germany's navy and her unquenchable thirst for coaling-stations. The Powers did not fall out among themselves, but neither did they show any inclination to make France's quarrel theirs. And France, as Germany had foreseen, was not ready for war.

The results in Morocco of the Kaiser's intervention were soon apparent. Abd-el-Aziz refused the French scheme of reform, and demanded that the matter should be referred to a conference of the Powers. Delcassé refused. Prince Bülow insisted, and ended with a denunciation of the *entente*, and more particularly of Delcassé. France had allowed her Foreign Minister to lead her into this morass, he insinuated to many who had a grievance against Delcassé. France must give up this troublesome Minister, or Germany would be most regretfully compelled to take some further action.

The arguments disclosed Germany's object; but France was between the devil and the deep sea. The *entente* held, but slackly, and for the moment Germany had to be conciliated; so Delcassé must be sacrificed. He resigned in June 1905, and the immediate victory was Germany's.

France ground her teeth at the humiliation of being dictated to by her enemy, and anticipated the sweetness of revenge; Great Britain perceived the blow aimed at herself through France; and Russia felt, with renewed bitterness, the effects of her reverses in Manchuria. All three began to make preparations for the future, and Germany by her present victory had turned three watchful neighbours into forewarned and wary antagonists. The efficient reorganisation of Russia's army and the strength of Britain's navy are only now apparent, and were obviously unappreciated by Berlin; but France's precautions were obvious, and Germany countered them. At the end of 1905 France voted more than one million pounds for the construction of strategic railways, and sixty million pounds for the reorganisation of her army. Germany retorted by laying down strategic railways, with Cologne as the centre, from the Rhine to the Belgian frontier, and by paying yet more feverish attention to her fleet.

The resignation of M. Delcassé removed the chief obstacle to the Moroccan Conference, which was called at Algeciras (January–March 1906). Germany's success had gone to her head, and she overreached herself. The position of dictator which she sought to assume not only increased the ill-feeling between herself and the Entente Powers, but drove two ancient enemies, Russia and Britain, into each other's arms, and alienated all the other Powers. Italy, Russia, Spain, and even Austria and the United States, were against her, and she bowed to the inevitable in accepting the compromise proposed by France.

The Act was completed on the 7th of April, accepted by the Sultan on the 18th of June, and, having been ratified by the other Powers, was deposited at the Spanish Foreign Office on the 31st of December.

Spain wisely, but doubtless reluctantly, cooperated with France all through the crisis; and Germany, having gained less than she expected from her interference, awaited her opportunity to strike again.

The most important result of the Algeciras Conference, and the last thing desired by Germany, was the Anglo-Russian Entente. In 1907 the two Powers came to an agreement with regard to certain causes of friction in Persia, Thibet, and Afghanistan.

Germany was rapidly putting herself into the position of isolation which she accused Britain of trying to compass.

Morocco itself was in a very disturbed state, and the impish action of the Kaiser had destroyed, if it ever existed, any hope of a peaceful settlement of the country by France.

The French had already taken steps to check the nuisance by occupying Ujda with Algerian troops in March 1907; but the disaffection was widespread, and on 30th July 1907 nine European workmen — French, Spanish, and Italian—were murdered by tribesmen at Casablanca. Afterwards the rebels swept through the town, massacring the townsfolk and the Jews, and the handful of Europeans was powerless to check them. A French warship arrived and bombarded the town, and a party of

soldiers occupied the ruins. By June 1908 the Chaouyia district was subdued.

In the meantime a revolution took place in the southern capital. Abd-el-Aziz had committed the crime of being too friendly with the foreigner and too familiar with such cursed inventions as photography and bicycles; so his loving subjects declared his brother, Mulai Hafid, Sultan at Marrakesh in August 1907, and the new Sultan thought it advisable to assist the insurgents against the French in order to substantiate his claim to being a better patriot than his brother. In January 1908 Hafid was acknowledged in Fez, the northern capital, and he entered Meknas in June. Abd-el-Aziz's feeble efforts to regain his throne were foredoomed to failure, and on 23rd August Tangier, the last town to capitulate, acknowledged the new Sultan, and Europe had to acquiesce in the change.

Germany was the first to approve the new Sultan, in spite of her ruler's protestations to the old at Tangier. France and Spain were more cautious.

Germany's action in 1908 in protecting six deserters from the Foreign Legion was referred to the Hague Arbitration Court, which decided substantially in favour of France, who wisely closed the incident by pardoning the deserters. Relations between the Powers seemed to be smoother during the next few years, and the rather vague and surprising Franco-German agreement on the Moroccan question which was signed at Berlin might have had better results if the condition of Morocco itself had been more hopeful.

In 1909 Mulai Hafid guaranteed the terms of the Algeciras Act, but he was powerless to enforce order. The Riffians, in the Spanish sphere of influence, were the next natives to cause trouble, and Spain landed troops. At the same time the Sultan partially redeemed his authority by quelling the pretender, Bou Hamara, and the Concert of Europe for once found itself in harmony in its protests against the tortures inflicted upon the offenders.

In 1911 the trouble began again. Tribal outbreaks round Fez brought to that point a French military expedition on punitive measures bent. France definitely occupied the capital, reorganised the native army, and started various public works.

Germany grew restive. Here was the opportunity for which she had been waiting since her set-back at Algeciras. France had taken too much upon herself, and meanwhile Spain had occupied the points allotted to her in the secret clauses of the agreement of 1904. Germany professed to see her trading interests threatened, and despatched the gunboat *Panther* to the coveted Agadir in order to protect German subjects in that district. Incidentally, Agadir was a closed port, and there could not by any possibility be trading interests there. Had she chosen Mogador, the excuse would have been more plausible; but her obvious object was to provoke a crisis. She demanded all south-west Morocco as compensation, and for several weeks the tension between the Powers was very great. The German Secretary of State, Kiderlen-Wächter, was strongly opposed to compromise; but Britain's protest was unexpectedly firm. Germany's financial resources, at least, were not equal to a war, and the Kaiser himself seems to have been personally opposed to it at that time, possibly because his dream of the Kiel Canal as a passage for his Dreadnoughts was not yet an accomplished fact. Had he so desired it, Morocco would undoubtedly have served as the pretext for a quarrel in 1911, as Serbia did in 1914; but whatever his motive, he desired peace. As a result, Germany consented to acknowledge France's Protectorate in Morocco in return for one hundred and two thousand three hundred square miles of the French Congo adjoining the German Kameruns, with a population of seven hundred thousand to one million.

But Germany had not ceased to desire this rich and delectable country, although when at last a *casus belli* was wanted she did not seek it here.

LIFE IN THE TROPICS.

By F. Nicolls.

AT a time when the life of every British soldier was of the utmost importance to his country, after nearly two years of a war unprecedented in its violence and brutality on the part of our foes, and unparalleled in its slaughter and disregard of human life on the part of Germany, a most deplorable and preventable mortality amongst newly arrived Territorials was reported on the railway line between Karachi and the Punjab. It seems to have been thought necessary to send a detachment of over a hundred men in the height of the hot season by train, with the result that, in a three days' journey through a peaceful country, this small band was more than decimated by heat-stroke, and this although we are told the train was not overcrowded, and there were three medical officers and plenty of ice available. As this melancholy event has been the subject of discussion in Parliament, it is probable that the Indian military authorities will refrain in future from moving troops unnecessarily during the hot

weather between stations where the thermometer often exceeds one hundred and ten degrees in the shade. Emergencies may, of course, occur at any time, quite independent of the state of the thermometer, and British soldiers have shown often enough in India, and now in Mesopotamia, that, where there is real work or fighting to be done, mere heat will not deter them from taking all risks and successfully undertaking whatever there is to do. There is all the more reason, then, for not working a willing horse to death or putting young soldiers to quite unnecessary climatic risks during a time of profound peace, such as at present exists in western and northern India. Ignorance of climatic conditions in India, no doubt, is far too prevalent amongst young British soldiers. It is inexcusable when exhibited in high military officers, or in Government offices which direct the movements of troops. Fresh arrivals from England are often disinclined to guard the head from a tropical sun, especially in the early mornings and evenings. But exposure even for a few minutes is dangerous in India, and is especially so to those who indulge in beer or spirits, even in the strictest moderation. With a good head-covering, a temperate man can stand a good deal of sun with impunity. Yet how many of our young soldiers or civilians on their first arriving in the country are warned against exposing their heads unprotected to the sun? In a recent Life of a retired lieutenant-governor I read how he, on his first arriving in India, was left to find this out for himself, and he attributes his first attack of fever to his neglect of the most ordinary precautions which any old stager might have made him acquainted with. When I first arrived in India over fifty years ago I was told that beer-drinking was absolutely necessary for a European if he would keep his health. I drank a quart steadily at dinner for some years, and occasionally on Sundays and holidays had another for breakfast. I found that it caused me heaviness and drowsiness, and for forty years I have been a teetotaler, to the advantage of both health and pocket. A bottle of beer a day and two on Sundays during forty years would have cost over eight thousand rupees. What has been saved in medicine through my being a teetotaler probably far exceeds that sum. Life in the tropics is not so cheerful and pleasant as an ordinary life in temperate climates. But so far as health is concerned it is probably as healthy as life in England to many constitutions. I have just read of an instance of a member of a Roman Catholic sisterhood at Moulmein, in whose honour an entertainment was given recently on her eightieth birthday, when the Catholic bishop stated that this good lady had been teaching in her convent uninterruptedly for sixty-four years. This must surely be a 'record' teacher's life, not for the East only, but for the whole world. And this teaching, be it remembered, was all done in the tropics. One of my oldest friends, who is seventy-seven years of age, passed his young days as a soldier in the 60th Rifles, and has told me that when the King of Delhi was captured in the Mutiny of 1857, and transported to Rangoon, he remembers doing 'sentry go' over him at the Rangoon Main Guard on several occasions. This is another instance showing that 'life in the tropics' is not the deadly sort of thing people at home often suppose it to be. My friend has spent over sixty years in Burma without once going to Europe, and is still to the fore. I know of another instance, a Hampshire man, who is a year or two younger, and who has also been sixty years in the tropics without once leaving the East for change of air. Needless to say, such examples of longevity as I have come across in the tropics are all total abstainers. But they have not all in their young days been amongst those who have taken special care of themselves or led inactive lives. One must be cautious not to expose one's head without covering, even to the early morning or any sun, and the nearer one approaches to total abstinence the better for one's health. With these exceptions, life in the tropics, with moderation in all things, may be as healthy, I think, and last as long, as life in temperate climates.

When I came out to India in 1862, if I remember right, my passage to Madras cost one hundred and seven pounds, about treble the present rate. The fare, however, included unlimited liquor at meals, a provision hardly likely to encourage temperance, considering that many of the passengers were youths of eighteen or twenty, leaving their homes perhaps for the first time. I do not remember any trouble arising from this system of free drinks; but I know that some of the youngsters took their liquor not because they particularly wanted it, but because they said they had paid for it. The system was wisely altered after the Suez Canal was opened in 1870, I think, and rates of passage-money were largely reduced.

AT THE LOANIN' MOU'.

THE tears were drappin' frae baith her een
When I was sayin' good-bye yestreen;
An' we baith were wae, as we weel micht be—
The wife, at the mou' o' the loan, an' me.

Yet what could I do at a time like this
But lift her chin for a pairtin' kiss,
An' leave her to look to the bairns an' kye,
An' warsle her lane till the war was by?

Wi' the country cryin' for mair to come,
What man could bide at the lug o' the lum,
Or sleep upon feathers or cauf for shame
To think he was lyin' sae saft at hame?

What scaith may come man canna foresee,
But naething waur can a mortal dree
Than leavin' a wife at a time like noo,
Greetin' her lane at the loanin' mou'.

CHARLES MURRAY.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

IT may be that this year will be of right the happiest and most blessed of all the years since the birth of Him who came to bring peace to earth and goodwill among men. Blood must run in rivers in this new 1917; depths of anguish must be touched that were thought to be beyond the possibilities of human suffering, by such as have been sadly tortured. But yet before this young year darkens to its aged end, it is hoped with straining fervency that at last the guns will have lapsed to silence, and exhausted Europe will be at peace again. It may not be, but the omens are of fair account. There will have been filled the full span of the three years that were prophesied for the duration of the war by the great commander who has gone, and who, as we know, in his last days felt that his forecast might perhaps have erred a trifle on the side of length. Now, however, we work on facts and not on forecasts, and we see the magnitude of the task to be performed in this new year, when the greatest and hardest and most testing effort has yet to be put forth. Still, it may reach to peace. And if it does, then, despite all the suffering and the loss, notwithstanding all the sacrifice and the heart-aching that will never cease, and though we know that untold trials must still be borne, this will be the gladdest year that ever mankind has known. The volume of human happiness, the joy of millions in relief, will be infinitely greater than anything that has been known in the world before. Nations that have been in the sorest anguish will look back in wonder and amazement at the burnt-out fires in which they were nearly consumed; the joy of their relief will be an emotion that is at this stage beyond the comprehension of humanity. This peace, come when it may, will not be as others in history. It will be peace and really so much more than peace, the beginning of the new time in the life of the world. Men and women now sometimes attempt to imagine the quality of that future emotion. All that has happened since 1914 has been so overwhelming, the changes in life and thought, circumstances and outlook, have been so vast, the future has assumed such an entirely new shape, that the life that was so placidly led in the old time can hardly be invoked in the memory now, even by hard effort of remembrance. We shall not return to that placidity, but to a new state of life quite unknown to us now, with new emotions, new experiences, and new strivings. So it is wondered how we shall meet this exultation and this sudden change. Can we take it calmly, remembering the sorrows and the burden? How will sound the ringing of the bells? The streets of towns and cities will look strange in their new brilliancy; but will they be lighted up? Shall we throw our arms wide open, and shout in frantic joy? Peace! peace! peace! Surely at the least we shall fall to the knees and give thanks from the soul with a sincerity such as the most honest among us has never felt before. Most of us are of an age to remember clearly the last peacemaking in which our country was concerned. It appeared a gigantic thing, you will reflect. Mountains of oppression seemed to be lifted off our minds. Yet the measure of that peace and of the war that it ended—grave war as it was—was made by the mood of the people then, by the distractions, the light celebrations, the exuberance. It was a somewhat showy peace. This one will be very different. So each of us, thinking of the possibilities of this new year, tries to recall our emotions at the last peacemaking. How were we situated? How did we receive it? What was the feeling of peace, the emotional exultation? I remember it well, and was fortunate in a situation that made for a full effect. We had been five days at sea, away from all sight and knowledge of land and the mighty affairs that were progressing upon it, and there were no Marconis then to spread news upon the surface of the sea. On a glorious Monday morning, which broke in a dazzling blue and gold, the prow of our ship went creaming through the Pillars of Hercules, and we anchored in the shadow of the Rock that stands more than anything else abroad as an emblem of the might and the means of the British Empire. Presently from the Gibraltar shore the doctor's boat came splashing along. Questions were asked and answered, papers examined, and then the officer stood up with a foot upon the gunwale of his craft

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dancing on the waves below us, and shouted aloud that peace had been declared the previous day. It meant much to the ship's company. The scene and the situation were impressive. Heads were bared, and the assembly on the deck sang the anthem of their native land. And then the world went on again; the problems of life and work were much as they had been before. But this next time they will not be the same.

* * *

To-day I have witnessed a touching thing, not for the first time in this war. The early afternoon was bright with the pale yellow sunlight of the season, the air was crisp, and the streets full of that strange new war bustle to which we have become accustomed. In it the chief figures appear to be the young soldiers from our splendid colonies—the gaily feathered bonnets of the Nova Scotians conspicuous among them—and the younger girls who, in the numbers of an army, have come out from unknown recesses to do a sort of men's work in the great emergency, and now make a new mark upon the life of the town and its appearance. These chattering, lively little misses smile and scamper everywhere. And now, no less than in the time of Dr Johnson, who so remarked upon it, the full tide of human existence is at Charing Cross. There the crowds are continually denser than at any other place in London during the war; there is more bustle and movement there; life somehow seems a little stronger; in many colours the placards of the newspapers announce new tidings of battles, giving fresh hope again. But for another and greater reason, Charing Cross is at this time the heart of our London things. Always it is as the gate of the Continent; from here, chiefly, the British, and those who sojourn among them, depart for Continental places by way of the Channel. So is it the same Charing Cross that we see first when we come home from Europe. That simple circumstance, much meaning for some of us as it may have had at other times, is highly intensified now, for this Charing Cross has become the gate of the war. It seems to stand for the entrance to the battlefields, the place of effort and of sacrifice. And we see lines of troops come down the Strand—that matchless thoroughfare where Charles Lamb said he often shed tears for fullness of joy from so much of life that he felt thereat—or up from Trafalgar Square, and through the iron gates we see them filing into the troop-trains that are waiting. And the heartiness, the boldness, the jauntiness of their steps!—they hold the breath of the people who crush together at the corners by the gates and give them the last cheer from London till they return. And every afternoon there is a quite different scene. Soldiers come out into London again through those iron gates. They march no more with their swinging tread. Some of them are laid in those great covered carriages that bear the almost holy Red Cross mark upon them; others can sit up, with their bandages and their dressings, in the private motor-cars that are placed at their disposal. Ambulances, carriages, little cars and big ones, make in these wintry afternoons a regular procession, from Europe, as it seems, through into Charing Cross, of the heroes on whom the war has made its mark. The arrival of the wounded is one of the high moments in the daily life of London now. It is then we feel something more of the war than we had felt before; something in our native patriotism is touched as it is not at other times. Here is the living sacrifice; here are those who offer themselves and suffer; here is Britain at the test, and the men who bear her trial. At such moments impulses come hot from the hearts of men and women who stand by and see. They do not cheer as they would in loyalty cheer a king. Instead they often cry aloud, and they shout their love, or they look it in a compelling silence. At this corner there are some poor English women and girls who sell nosegays to the passers-by. The flowers are mostly roses, bright-yellow roses and roses red like those that stand for England. And now, when the big, open motor-car moves through the yard of the railway station, and comes to the gates that lead to Charing Cross, the heroes, pale and worn of feature, seated in it with a happy smile, the flower-sellers press close to it and tumble on to the laps and at the feet of the wounded soldiers the roses they had sought to sell. To the next car another gift, and soon there are no roses left. These humble British women have made their tribute; it could not have been better done. The soldiers felt the love of England when it was being made to them. And lately another incident occurred that may be mentioned at this time. Again the little crowd was watching and whispering at the gates of Charing Cross as the ambulances came slowly, carefully, humming through with their dear and precious burdens. They turned the corner, and passed the sellers of the newspapers to whose placards I have already referred. There is one of these venders who has been a sad cripple from his birth. This cripple is British too. Now, as one of the ambulance-cars, laden with wounded laid out on their stretchers, turned down the Strand, he ceased his call of the latest news, struggled lamely forward to the back of the ambulance, and held on to it for a moment. He dropped his bundle of newspapers, all the newest and latest, between the stretchers at the feet of the wounded, and then he lurched away again from the ambulance-car, nearly falling in so doing. It was hardly noticed; nothing was said. The newsboy had made his humble tribute. These are but little things in a world of most mighty

occurrences. Yet they bear a great and splendid meaning.

* * *

There are many things to consider keenly when the world moves on again in the time of peace. Britain in many ways has to consider her new situation. Among the things she needs to consider most are the thoughts that spring to contemplative minds upon witnessing such a tribute of roses, such a tribute of newspapers. These were British acts done by British people, and they were for Britain. They were not subscriptions of a thousand guineas, yet they were more British and more worthy than many of such subscriptions. When the war broke out I was at an hotel in which there was an Austrian of the Hebrew race, and he did not speak our language perfectly. He had been a dealer in diamonds, and was very rich. I have little doubt that he was a good and kindly man, and when the first war subscription list was opened he made his mark upon it for a most handsome sum. He was proud of his contribution. He mentioned it. At the same time, he declared that he was 'more British than the British.' That is a thing that has often been said by the people of other races when they mix with ours. But in this case some of the British who heard were inclined to look a little coldly upon the well-meaning Austrian who said he was more British than the British, and in his own way had tried to prove it. Now, when the war is over, there will be thousands and hundreds of thousands of those who will say and pretend that if not more British than the British they are as much so, and will seek for a full advantage of being British accordingly. This, as one is well aware, is an old theme now; but it can never be worn out, and the moral bearing of it must be urged with vigour by all who have the power to urge it as the great peace draws towards us. It is not desirable that there shall be so many among us who lay claim to be more British than the British. Circumstances will be changed in many respects; life will be different. The British with their friends of France and Russia and Belgium and other noble states will have fought and won this war, and they will desire that their own land shall be reserved for themselves and their own blood-friends. There are some who already say, and urge most strangely, that this cannot and should not be. They say we cannot boycott a people, however wicked it may be. The commercial and economic system of the world is said to demand the admission to our affairs again of those who have been such enemies. We must forgive them and be friends again. Think of Belgium, of northern France, of the deportations into slavery of the people from thence, of the shattering of the cathedral of Rheims, of the murder at some of our coastwise places of our own innocent women and little children sleeping peacefully in their beds; think of the *Lusitania* and Nurse Cavell; think of the thousands of other horrors—some of them far too terrible to mention in print—and then, if you can, unglove your hand in friendship to a German immediately the treaty of peace is signed in Madrid, or wherever it may be signed. Others say—they say it everywhere and all the time—that the British are soft-hearted and a little silly, and that as soon as the war is over we shall forget all the injuries we have sustained. They tell us to remember how soon we forgot our grievances against the Boers when the war with them was over. But that was a different affair. Kruger's men, with all their cleverness, were a human and a simple set, and they had much fine honesty and worth in their burly, manly frames. We knew it then, and we know it now. They were people to forgive, and to ask for their forgiveness. But the case of the Germans is different. As we are fighting this war not for selfish interests, but for the good of the world and of the human life that exists upon it, so for the same good cause must we hold the Germans far apart when the war is done. The thousands in this country now who declare that after the war we shall all be for a quick forgetfulness of the wrongs we have suffered from the Teuton brutes forget surely that hardly a home in this land of ours will be without its own special sorrow of the war. Homes like these will not be quick to forget. It will be seen that the Germans, who have calculated so very badly in regard to many affairs leading up to this cataclysm, and in their conduct of the operations since it began, have reckoned wrongly again in regard to this softness of ours. Those who urge that a full measure of trade with Germany, and no restrictions upon her whatsoever, are necessary for the commerce and well-being of the world after the war, cause difficult thoughts in the minds of others, who would see that our enemies pay to the full, and do not come back to peace with the full privileges of an honest people. These questions may be examined in two ways—a complicated way and a simple way. By the complicated system of examination we may be carried into a labyrinth of figures and tariffs, schedules, and all the wonderful machinery of chancellors and financial experts, and it will be shown how a thing is good or bad just as it was shown in the case of the quondam tariff-reform debates and worry, when nobody on simple figuring was or could ever be convinced, since the same figures could always be made to support opposite causes. By the system of simplicity, the plain question is set: What would the world do if the North Sea, which once was called the German Ocean, were to rise in wrath, and by some shock of earth's surface, such as has happened in bygone ages, its waters were to spread widely and deeply over the whole of this sad Germany so that she should perish? Could the world bear such a loss?

Would it suffer for ever afterwards because the Germans, who make cheap things and sell them cheaply, could not come among us and live with us without hindrance or restriction, and by every Teuton trick and craft be enabled to get advantage over us? Are we, then, helpless without Germany, as some would have us believe? If the North Sea laid her under deluge, should we wither and die? We do not understand the reasoning of the complicated system, but we understand the argument of simplicity.

* * *

It is necessary to be careful. The band of blue water round our islands no longer counts for all it did. Conditions and circumstances become more difficult. We have heard much in the past of what we call our birthright. Let us be jealous of our birthright now. It is something to be British, and there is no man who is or can ever be 'more British than the British.' The historic phrase that was uttered in the opening hour of the war by the German Chancellor about the 'scrap of paper' applies at least to the papers of naturalisation. They, anyhow, are scraps of paper; we have good reason to know it. Love of country, and the rights of it, are made by birth and blood, and not by pens and ink. And they are made, also, not by the residence of a generation, but by many centuries of history. The British race has been made by painful as well as glorious things. The Barons' War, Bannockburn, the Wars of the Roses, the Civil War, and other stern struggles have welded this people together, and made them truly and cohesively British. And a far greater war has fastened together again all these people who have been scattered over the earth. No scrap of paper is needed to make them British. The process of naturalisation is just a commercial convenience; it is nothing more. It does not change the blood, and heart, and conscience. It creates no love of country. Again, let us be jealous of our birthright. While some in Britain have been babbling about being friendly to the Germans very soon, our good Allies, the French —who have a great birthright, too, forged through centuries of tremendous struggle—have been busily engaged in a very different affair. They have been examining most carefully the old methods of naturalisation, and casting a new law. They have been making it infinitely more difficult than ever it was before for a person who is not of the blood of France ever to call himself a Frenchman. They have been tightening the rules and qualifications, and insisting that he who would be, in name, of the French people must pass through long processes of trial, and in heart and fine quality must prove himself worthy of the great nation to which he would attach himself. It is a great thing to be a Frenchman now; in the future it will be harder than ever it was for any one without the natural qualification to achieve that splendid honour.

* * *

As in the beginning of the year we draw nearer to the splendid peace and all the tremendous and most difficult problems that peace itself will bring, wise thinking is needed upon many subjects. France now in her journals and her assemblies is considering eagerly all the good things she will do when peace-time comes. There is uppermost always in her mind what she will do for the betterment of the world and the brightening of her already lustrous culture. The Académie Française is to be a greater influence than ever it was; French art and literature are to uplift the soul as never before. That is her ideal. It is preached everywhere. One reads hardly ever in the great French newspapers about the trade that is to be done after the war, though the French commercial people are eager about their future trade. That trade is very important. In Britain it is nearly always trade. It is even said that for the sake of trade we must be kind and friendly to the Germans as soon as the peace is signed. The French say they would rather be without such dishonoured trade, and content themselves with their spiritual pursuits. But many of our people dream only of the trade. Not long ago Mr Lloyd George said, 'When this terrible conflict is over, a wave of materialism will sweep over the land. Nothing will count but machinery and increased output.' He had been speaking of music and the joy of singing. Is it true? If so, it is a terrible thing. As we come nearer to peace we must think of such things as these, for on them the advance and happiness of Britain and of the world depend.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER V.—*continued.*

MRS TRAPES swallowed audibly, stared at Spike until he writhed, and finally bored her sharp eyes into Mr Ravenslee again.

'Young man,' said she, 'what name?'

'I think our friend Spike has informed you that I am sometimes called Geoffrey. Mrs Trapes, our friend Spike told the truth.'

'Young feller,' she demanded, ''oo are you, and—what?'

'Mrs Trapes,' he sighed, 'I am a lonely wight, a wanderer in wild places, a waif, a stray puffed hither and thither by a fate perverse'——

'Talking o' verses, you ain't a poet, are you?' inquired Mrs Trapes. 'Last poet as

lodged wi' me useter go to bed in 'is boots reg'lar. Consequently I ain't nowise drawed to poets.'

Mr Ravenslee laughed and shook his head. 'Have no fear,' he answered; 'I'm no poet, nor ever shall be. I'm quite an ordinary human being, I assure you.'

'Young feller—references?'

'Mrs Trapes, I have none—except my face. But you have very sharp eyes; look at me well. Do I strike you as a rogue or a thief?'

Here Spike, chancing to catch his eye, blushed painfully; while Mr Ravenslee continued, 'Come, Mrs Trapes, you have a motherly heart, I know, and I am a very lonely being who needs one like you to—to cook and care for his bodily needs, and to look after the good of his solitary soul. Were I to search New York I couldn't find another motherly heart so suited to my crying needs as yours; you won't turn me away, will you?' Saying which, Mr Ravenslee smiled his slow, sleepy smile, and, wonder of wonders, Mrs Trapes smiled too.

'When d'ye wanter come?'

'Now!'

'Land sakes!' she exclaimed.

'If it won't trouble you too much,' he added.

'There's sheets to be aired'—— she began, but checked suddenly to stare at him again. 'Look a here, Mr Geoffrey,' she went on, 'my terms is two-fifty a week, ten dollars *with* board, and a week in advance.'

'Good!' nodded Mr Ravenslee; 'but since I'm coming in at such short notice I'll pay three weeks ahead just to—er—bind the bargain. See, that will be thirty dollars, won't it?' And, speaking, he drew a handful of crumpled bills from his pocket and proceeded to count out thirty dollars upon the green-and-yellow table-cloth.

'Sakes alive!' murmured Mrs Trapes.

'And now,' said he, 'I'll just step round the corner with Spike to buy—er—a tooth-brush.'

'Toothbrush!' echoed Mrs Trapes faintly.

'And a few other things. I shall be in early to supper.'

'Would a nice English mutton-chop wiv tomatoes'——

'Excellent; and thank you, Mrs Trapes, for sheltering a homeless wretch.' So saying, her new boarder smiled and nodded, and, following Spike out into the hallway, was gone.

But Mrs Trapes stood awhile to stare after him, lost in speculation. 'A toothbrush!' said she. 'My! my!' Then she turned to stare down at the pile of bills. 'Now I wonder,' said she, right hand caressing left elbow-point—'I jest wonder who he's been a-choking of to get all that money? But I like his eyes! And his smile! And he looks a man, and honest! Well, well!'

CHAPTER VI.—HOW SPIKE INITIATED MR RAVENSLEE INTO THE GENTLE ART OF SHOPPING.

'GEE!' exclaimed Spike as they descended the many stairs; 'she sure give you the frosty face, Geoff; but it didn't seem to joggle you any.'

'No, it didn't joggle me, Spike, because, you see, I like her.'

'Like Mrs Trapes! You'n Hermy are about the only ones, then; most every one in Mulligan's hates her an' gets scared stiff when she cuts loose! But say, you do keep on rubbin' it in; I mean about—about thievin'.'

'Probably it's your conscience, Spike.'

'You won't ever go tellin' any one or blowin' de game on me?'

'Spike, when I make a promise I generally keep it.'

'Ye see, Geoff, it ain't as though I was a—a real crook.'

'You meant to be.'

'But I never stole nothin' in me life, Geoff.'

'Suppose I hadn't caught you?'

'Oh well, cheese it, Geoff—cheese it. Let's talk about somethin' else.'

'With pleasure. When does your sister return?'

'This evenin', I guess. But, Geoff, say now, do I look like a real crook—do I?'

'No, you don't, Spike; that's sure. And yet, only last night'——

'Ah yes, I know—I know,' groaned the lad; 'but I was crazy; I think it was the whisky, Geoff; an' they doped me too, I guess. I don't remember much, after we left, till I found myself in your swell joint. God! if I was only sure they doped me'——

'Who?'

'Who! Why, gee! you nearly had me talkin' that time. Nix on the questions, Geoff. I ain't goin' to give 'em away; it ain't playin' square. Only, if two or three guys dopes a guy till a guy's think-box is like a cheese an' his mind as clear as mud, that poor guy ain't to be blamed for it, now, is he?'

'Why, certainly,' nodded Ravenslee.

'How d'ye make that out?'

'For being such a fool of a guy as to let other guys fool him, of course. Sounds a little cryptic, but I guess you understand.'

'Oh, I get you,' sighed Spike drearily. 'But say, didn't you come out to buy a toothbrush?'

'And other things, yes.'

'Well, say, s'pose we quit chewin' th' rag an' start in an' get 'em. There's a Sheeny store on Ninth Av. where you can get dandy shirts for fifty cents a throw.'

'Sounds fairly reasonable,' nodded Mr Ravenslee as they turned up Thirty-ninth Street.

'Then you want a new lid, Geoff.'

Mr Ravenslee took off the battered hat and

looked at it. 'What's the matter with this?' he inquired.

'Nothin', Geoff; only it wants burnin',' sighed Spike. 'An' then, them boots—oh, gee!'

'Are they so bad as that?'

'Geoff, they sure are the punkest pavement-pounders in little old New York. Why, a Dago hod-carrier wouldn't be seen dead in 'em; look at th' patches. Gee-whiz! Where did His Whiskers dig 'em up from?'

'I fancy they were his own once,' answered Mr Ravenslee, surveying his bulbous, bepatched footgear a little ruefully.

'Well, I'll gamble a stack of blue chips there ain't such a phoney pair in Manhattan village.'

'They're not exactly things of beauty, I'll admit,' sighed Mr Ravenslee; 'but still'——

'They're rotten, Geoff. They're all to th' garbage-can. They are th' cheesiest proposition in side-walk slappers I ever piped off.'

'H'm! You're inclined to be a trifle discouraging, Spike.'

'Why, ye see, Geoff, I wancher t' meet th' push, an' I don't want 'em to think I'm floatin' around with a down-an'-out from Battyville. You must have some real shoes, Geoff.'

'Enough; it shall be done,' nodded Mr Ravenslee.

'Well, tan Oxfords are all to th' grapes just now, Geoff. I don't mean those giddy-lookin' pumps with flossy bows onto 'em; but somethin' sporty, good an' yellow that'll flash an' let folks know you're comin'. An' here's Eckstein's.'

With which abrupt remark Spike plunged into a shop, very dark and narrow by reason of a heterogeneous collection of garments, of ribbons and laces, of collars and ties of many shapes and hues, together with a thousand and one other things that displayed themselves from floor to ceiling; amidst which Mr Ravenslee observed a stir, a slight confusion, and from a screen of vivid-bosomed shirts a head protruded itself, round as to face and sleek as to hair.

'Greetin's, Ikey,' said Spike, nodding to the head. 'How's pork to-day?'

'Aw, vat you vant now, hey!' inquired the head; 'vat's the vord? Now shpit it out.'

'It ain't me, Moses, it's me friend wants a sporty fit-out, an' discount for spot cash, see? Show us your half-dollar shirts for a start, an' sporty ones, mind.'

Immediately out came drawers and down came boxes, and very soon the small counter was littered with piles of raiment variously gaudy, which Spike viewed and disparaged with such knowing judgment that the salesman's respect proportionately grew, and Mr Ravenslee, lounging in the background, was forgotten quite, the while they chaffered after this manner:

Salesman—'Here vos a shirt as can't be beat for de money, negligée bosom an' turn-over cuffs, warranted shrunk, an' all for vun dollar.'

Spike—'Come off, Aaron; come off! Fifty cents is th' bid.'

Salesman—'Fifty cents! Vy, on Broadvay dey'd sharge you'——

Spike—'Wake up, Ike! this ain't Broadway. An' fifty 's the limit.'

Salesman—'But shust look at dem pink shtripes, so vide as an inch. Dere's fifty cents' vorth of dye in dem shtripes, an' I'll give it you for seventy-five cents. On Broadvay'——

Spike—'We're gettin' there, Ikey; we're gettin' there; keep on, fifty 's the call.'

Salesman—'Fifty cents, oi! oi! I vould be ruined. A negligée bosom an' turn-over cuffs! Vell, vell, I'll wrap it up, so, an' I make you a present of it for—sixty. An' on Broadvay'——

Spike—'Come on, Geoff, Aaron's talkin' in his sleep. Come on, we'll go on to Mendelbaum's; see, we want shirts, an' ties, an' socks, an' collars, an'——

Salesman—'Vait, vait. Mendelbaum's a grafter—vait. I got th' best selection of socks an' ties on Ninth Av'noo, an' here's a negligée shirt with turn-over cuffs, an' only fifty cents. But at Mendelbaum's or on Broadvay'——

In this way Mr Ravenslee became possessed of sundry shirts whose bosoms blushed in striped and spotted splendour, of vivid-hued ties, and of handkerchiefs with flaming borders. From shop to shop Spike led him, and, having a free hand, bought right royally, commanding that their purchases be sent round hot-foot to Mulligan's. Thus Spike ordered and Mr Ravenslee dutifully paid, marvelling that so much might be bought for so little.

'I guess that's about all the fixin's you'll need, Geoff!' said Spike, as they elbowed their way along the busy avenue.

'Well,' answered Mr Ravenslee as he filled his pipe, 'it will certainly take me some time to wear 'em out, especially those shirts!'

'They sure are dandies, Geoff! Yes, those shirts are all to the lollipops; but say, you made a miscue gettin' them black shoes.' And here Spike turned to stare down at his companion's newly acquired foot-wear. 'Why not buy the yellow boys I rustled up for you? They sure were some shoes!'

'They were indeed, Spike.'

'Gee, but it must feel good t' be able t' buy whatever you want!' sighed Spike dreamily. 'Some day I mean to have a wad big enough t' choke a cow; but I wish I had it right now!'

'What would you do with it?'

'Do with it—well, say, first off I'd—I'd buy Hermy them roses—th' whole lot;' and he pointed where, among the push-carts drawn up against the curb was one where roses bloomed, filling the air with their sweetness. 'An' next she should'——

'Then go and buy 'em, Spike!' and, speaking, Mr Ravenslee thrust a bill into Spike's hand.

'Gee—a twenty-spot! Can I, Geoff?' he cried, his blue eyes shining. 'Th' whole lot—on de level?'

'On the level.'

Spike started joyfully away, paused, turned, and came back with head adroop. 'I guess it can't be done, Geoff,' he sighed.

'Why not?'

'Well, ye see, it ain't as if it was my own money, really.'

'But it is!'

'No, it ain't! I haven't earned it, Geoff; an' I ain't a guy as sponges on his pals—not much I ain't. Take your money, Geoff. When I buy Hermy anythin', it's goin' to be bought with money as I've earned.'

So Mr Ravenslee thrust the bill back into his pocket, and thereafter walked on, frowning and very silent, as one lost in perplexed thought.

Wherefore, after more than one furtive glance at him, Spike addressed him with a note of diffidence in his voice. 'You ain't sore with me, are you, Geoff?'

'Sore with you?'

'I mean, because I—I didn't take your money?'

Here Mr Ravenslee turned to glance down at Spike and clap a hand upon his shoulder. 'No,' he answered, 'I'm not sore with you. And I think—yes, I think your sister is going to be proud of you one day.'

And now it was Spike's turn to grow thoughtful, while his companion, noting the flushed brow and the firm set of the boyish lips, frowned no longer.

'Hello, there's Tony!' exclaimed Spike, as they turned into Forty-second Street; 'over there, behind the push-cart—th' guy with th' pea-nuts!' and he pointed where, from amid a throng of vehicles, a gaily-painted barrow emerged, a barrow whereon were pea-nuts unbaked, baked, and baking, as the shrill small whistle above its stove proclaimed to all and sundry. It was propelled by a slender, graceful, olive-skinned man, who, beholding Spike, flashed two rows of brilliant teeth and halted his barrow beside the curb.

'How goes it, Tony?' questioned Spike.

Whereat the young Italian smiled, and thereafter sighed and shook his head. 'Da beezeneez-a ver' good,' he sighed; 'da pea-nut-a sell-a all-a da time! But my lil' Pietro he sick; he no da same since his moder die-a; me no da same—have-a none of da luck—noding—nix!'

'Hard cheese, Tony!' quoth Spike. 'But say, have you seen th' Spider kickin' around?'

'No, I ain't! But you tell-a da signorina'——

'Sure I will.'

'My lil' Pietro he love-a da signorina; me, I love-a her—she so good, so generosa, ah yes!' and taking off his hat in one hand, Tony kissed the other and waved it gracefully in the air.

'Right-o, Tony!' nodded Spike. 'You can let it go at that. An' say, this is me friend Geoff.'

Tony gripped Mr Ravenslee's hand and shook it. 'You one o' da bunch—one o' da boys, hey? Good-a luck.'

So saying, Tony nodded, flashed his white teeth again, and, seizing the handles of his barrow, trundled off, his pea-nut oven whistling soft and shrill.

'Tony's only a guinney,' Spike explained as they walked on again, 'but he's white, Geoff; 'n say, he's a holy terror in a mix-up! Totes one o' them stiletto-knives. I've seen him stab down into a glass full of water an' never spill a drop, which sure wants some doin'.'

Evening was falling, and dismal Tenth Avenue was wrapping itself in shadow; a shadow made more manifest by small lights that burned dismally in small and dingy shops; a shadow, this, wherein moving shadows jostled with lounging shoulder or elbow. Now, as they passed a certain dark entry where divers of these vague shadows lounged, a long arm was stretched thence, and a large hand gripped Spike's shoulder.

'Why, hello, Spider!' said he, halting, 'what's doin'?'

'Nawthin' much, kid—only little M—— Say, who's wid you?'

'Oh, this is a friend o' mine.—Geoff, dis is de Spider!'

Visualised in the Spider, Ravenslee saw a tall, slender youth, very wide in the shoulder and prodigiously long of arm and leg, who looked at him keen-eyed from beneath a wide cap-brim, while his square jaws worked with untiring industry upon a wad of chewing-gum.

'Good-evening,' said Ravenslee, and held out his hand.

The Spider ceased chewing for a moment, nodded, and, turning to Spike, chewed fiercer than ever. 'Where you'se goin', kid?' he inquired, masticating the while.

'What was you goin' to tell me, Spider?' demanded Spike, a note of sudden anxiety in his voice.

'Nawthin', kid.'

'Aw, come off, Spider. What was it?'

The Spider glanced up at the gloomy sky, glanced down at the dingy pavement, and finally beckoned Spike aside with a quick back-jerk of the head, and, stooping close, whispered something in his ear—something that caused the boy to start away with clenched hands and face of horror—something that seemed to trouble him beyond speech, for he stood awhile dumb and staring, then found utterance in a sudden, hoarse cry: 'No, no! It ain't true. Oh, my God!'

And with the cry Spike turned sharp about, and, springing to a run, vanished into the shadows.

'What's the matter?' demanded Ravenslee, turning on the Spider.

'Matter!' repeated that youth, staring at him under his cap-brim again; 'well, say, I guess you 'd better ask de kid.'

'Where 's he gone?'

'How do I know?'

'It isn't his sister, is it?'

'Miss Hermione? Well, I guess not.' So saying, the Spider, chewing ferociously, turned and vanished down the dark entry with divers other shadows.

For a moment Mr Ravenslee stood where he was, staring uncertainly after him. Presently, however, he went on toward Mulligan's, though very slowly, and with black brows creased in frowning perplexity.

(*Continued on page 86.*)

OXFORD IN THE SEVENTIES.

PART II.

APART from the canons, we had some distinguished or interesting men on the staff of the college. Vere Bayne, the Senior Censor, was a perfect specimen of the old-fashioned don—dignified, courteous, rigorously precise, and yet with a good deal of humanity behind his starched exterior. A 'Limerick' which appeared in the seventies was generally supposed to have been aimed at him:

> There was an old don of the House
> Renowned for his wisdom and *nous*.
> When they said, 'You are wrong,'
> He replied, 'Go along,
> We never are wrong at the House.'

But it was not a complete portrait. Bayne was an academic, but when you got to know him you found that he was not a pedant at heart, that he had a pleasing vein of dry humour, as well as a nice taste in music and a good judgment in wine. Francis Paget, ultimately Bishop of Oxford, took the honour men in classical composition; and for Greats work we had Macan, now Master of University College; Stewart, now Professor of Moral Philosophy; and Richard Shute, who enlightened us on the Pre-Socratics. Shute was a brilliant and delightful man, who crowned a wayward undergraduate career by getting a brilliant First from the Tavern, as New Inn Hall, then the refuge of the irregular, was familiarly and not altogether unfairly known. That was a remarkable feat, but even more remarkable was his standing for and being elected for a studentship at Christ Church. As a matter of fact, he settled down into a most admirable don, a stimulating teacher, excellent on committees and as an administrator, and a most charming and humorous guide, philosopher, and friend to the undergraduates who came under his influence. Unfortunately he died young, much beloved and deeply regretted. But undoubtedly the don whose fame stood highest with the world at large was 'Lewis Carroll' (the Rev. Charles L. Dodgson), the author of *Alice in Wonderland* and other immortal works. 'What a delightful sort of don he must have been!' I can imagine people saying. And he certainly could be delightful and highly entertaining in the company of his equals—in Common Room, for example, whence echoes of his wit used occasionally to reach our ears. Some of us also read his clever squibs on university controversies. But the rest was practically silence so far as undergraduates were concerned. He lectured on mathematics; but I never came across any undergraduate who had ever been to his rooms or knew what manner of man he was. As a social influence he was *nil;* he seemed to lose all interest in people once they grew up. And yet all of us had read and adored his books, and would have been his devoted friends if he had let us. As it was, he stood wholly apart from the *fougue de vingt ans*, a mysterious and perplexing figure.

The æsthetic movement had already invaded Oxford, and a certain number of dons' wives, sisters, and daughters discarded fashion-plates, and went about in shapeless sage-green garments, and were addicted to the cult of Botticelli, or 'Botter,' as he was called by the irreverent, for the Harrow slang was already in vogue, and we talked of 'toggers' (torpids), 'Bletcher Junker' (Bletchley Junction), 'Shakers' (Shakespeare Readings); indeed, I remember hearing a man once allude to the crack of doom as 'cracker.' A handful of undergraduates worshipped at the same shrine, and the vagaries of Postlethwaite, satirised by Du Maurier in *Punch*, had their origin in the studied eccentricities of one of the number. But the attitude of the majority was frankly and wholesomely Philistine. Some years afterwards, when the apostle of Neo-Paganism visited his old college, he was forcibly immersed in the Cherwell. The incident was discussed in the All Souls' Common Room, and one of the friends of the victim grew vocal in his indignation against the outrage. The offenders, he declared, ought to be prosecuted. 'I suppose you mean under the Rivers Pollution Act' was the immortal comment of one of the Fellows who had up till then remained silent. Emancipated intellectuals read and imitated Swinburne. Some parodied him; but the best efforts in the domain of travesty fell a long way short of the wonderful 'Octopus' in the Cambridge *Light Green*. The *Light Green*, it may be mentioned, was in respect of its title a burlesque of a magazine called the *Dark Blue*, published in London in the early seventies, which suggested

a connection with Oxford life and thought not borne out by the contents. Undergraduate literary activity found vent in a certain amount of occasional verse, emanating chiefly from Balliol, but both in quality and quantity inferior to that of later years. The *Oxford Magazine* was not yet in existence, and A. D. Godley, though a contemporary of mine, had not gained, or at least shown, that mastery of the serio-comic vein which has long entitled him to the command of Oxford metrical light horsemen. There were some good things in the *Shotover Papers*, to which the late Mr Ivan-Müller was the chief contributor; but the wittiest Oxford rhymes in the late seventies and early eighties were the series of Balliol quatrains, miniature portraits of prominent dons and undergraduates which enjoyed a wide oral currency, and were composed by a brilliant group of undergraduates, distinguished in later years in literature, diplomacy, and the Church. I remember hearing Mackail recite his prize Newdigate poem in the Sheldonian; but the only line that stuck in my head was part of an enumeration of exotic unguents: 'Stactè, and tragacanth, and galbanum.'

The published contemporary lampoons and satires—with rare exceptions, such as those by Dodgson already mentioned—compared unfavourably with the old *Art of Pluck* and Mansel's brilliant squibs, which still commanded a ready sale in the bookshops. Caricatures of university celebrities appeared in the windows, but were crude and amateurish, and for one volume of undergraduate verse published in those days Mr Blackwell now probably publishes ten. Dress was on the whole more decorative. Battered caps and gowns abounded, but rags were not *de rigueur* with eminent undergraduates. We were not 'all Socialists' in those days; and at the Union debates the advocates of conventional, orthodox, and Conservative views were generally secure of a large majority when it came to the vote. Ruskin undoubtedly exerted an influence; but Ruskin College was yet to come, and the majority of the undergraduates who were marked out for distinction by their success at the Union were on the side of the established order of things. An exception was B. R. Wise, but his Radical views were somewhat modified in middle age. Wise was an all-round man, proving that 'he who runs may read,' as he won his Blue for the mile, besides taking a First in Laws. His subsequent career in Australia is well known; and he was Agent-General for New South Wales at the time of his death, which occurred between my writing this paper and correcting the proofs. Toward the end of my time Lord Curzon was one of the star speakers at the Union; but perhaps the highest expectations were formed of A. A. Baumann, who seemed equipped with all the qualifications for a resounding parliamentary success. In his recent book, which proves him to be in full possession of his brilliant powers of criticism and expression, he attributes his failure in politics to the possession of a judicial mind. Lord Milner, Mr Asquith, Mr Herbert Paul, and Sir Thomas Raleigh had all taken their degrees; but the memory of their intellectual prowess, especially Lord Milner's, was still fresh, and their rise to eminence regarded as secure. They were the giants of the immediate past. In my own humble view the best brain and the keenest wit is that of Sir Thomas Raleigh, but his incorrigible diffidence, his lack of ambition and of the minor arts of success, have kept him out of the limelight, though they fortunately have not prevented him from doing excellent work both in India and at home.

Of the Union I have spoken above. Other debating societies were the Canning and the Palmerston, which was started in my time at Balliol, but was open to members of other colleges, and of which I was an obscure and silent member. At Christ Church there was a small debating society, the meetings of which were invested with the utmost secrecy. Its very name was only breathed in whispers by members away from the debates. In earlier days it had been glorified by the attendance and eloquence of Lord Dufferin and other notables; but in my day we had only one orator, and he has since remained mute. He also had another claim to distinction, for he was one of the first pioneers of that adventurous band who in later days practised mountaineering on the roofs of colleges and public buildings. At that time some architectural changes were in contemplation at Christ Church, and in order to see how they looked a number of dummy pinnacles were put up on the roof of the Hall. Late one evening my friend came to my rooms and informed me that he had 'got a little pinnacle,' which, after much exertion, he had detached from its context, brought down as a trophy, and deposited in one of the canons' gardens. The kindred but more distinctive pastime of wall-pushing, which has yielded startling results, was a much later development of these irregular activities. Among the mollifying arts was music; there were two societies, the Philharmonic and the Choral, afterwards amalgamated, besides the Musical Club for the practice of chamber music. Sir Walter Parratt was organist at Magdalen, and Taylor, who conducted the Philharmonic, at New College. We had a small male voice choral society at Christ Church, where we sang glees and Mendelssohn's *Œdipus Coloneus* music. But although I heard Rubinstein give a pianoforte recital, and Hallé and Madame Norman-Neruda more than once, the musical experience that impressed me most during my stay at Oxford was the singing of the carol on May morning at daybreak on the top of Magdalen Tower.

The river was a delight as well as a discipline, or rather, one should say, the rivers, for the

Cherwell has its tranquil charms as well as the 'silver sliding Thames;' and among the memories of successful entertainments few stand out more vividly than those of water picnics in Commemoration time. Oxford is more beautiful in Eights' week; but at all seasons her sons are proud to show off her glories to their guests, especially if they happen to be good-looking sisters or cousins, or the good-looking sisters and cousins of their friends. One wonders sadly whether Oxford will ever renew the gaieties of Commemoration. To visit her now, with her handful of students, mostly weaklings, bereft of the noblest and best of her sons, is a humbling experience for elderly men who in their time were never called upon to make the great sacrifice, but have lived to see it made cheerfully and heroically by their sons. Truly this generation are entitled to use the Homeric vaunt, though they are the last to think of doing so; and when one compares our placid youth, in which the horse-play of a bump-supper, the bruises and occasional broken bones of the football field, ragging and making hay, represented the maximum of peril, with the long inferno of trench warfare, the pleasures of reminiscence are marred by the cruel violence of the contrast. And yet the old days, though they furnished little scope for heroism and endurance, were joyous and happy. One only resents the inscrutable decree of fate that has denied the innocent joys of early manhood to those who deserved them better than we did. Of the many lessons we elders have learned in the last two years none is greater than this—that we should exercise the privilege of age more sparingly in our criticism of our juniors. The old saw, *Maxima debetur pueris reverentia*, takes on a new and overwhelming truth in view of what they have done and endured—of early errors nobly redeemed, of splendid promise fulfilled in untimely death. The trumpets nowadays are always sounding on the other side.

THE END.

THE FIRST BIG STRIKE.

By E. R. PUNSHON, Author of *The Crowning Glory*, *Arrows of Chance*, &c.

IN the early summer of the year 1892 Neville Brooke Moines des Moines was sitting comfortably in the shade of a great birch-tree, reading the Court and society news in a fashionable weekly London paper.

True, the paper was a year old or more, but that did not interfere with Neville's enjoyment; for it was more than a year and more than a decade since he had heard of many of those people of whom he was now reading. He was enormously interested. There was hardly a name in the list that was not familiar to him. Lord This had been his fag at Eton, and Lord That—known in those days as Fatty—still owed him sixpence, borrowed to be spent on cream-tarts. Great Moses! The Duchess of So-and-So 'presented on her marriage' was that cheeky, green-eyed kid who had wanted to kiss him at the Christmas-party at the Abbey in—he had forgotten the year, but he remembered well how mad she had been when he had flatly refused, and how emphatically she had called him a 'rude little boy.' Neville chuckled grimly as he wondered what she would call him if she could see him now.

He threw the paper aside with a sigh. How vividly it brought the old days back! Well, all that was over now for him. He had gone the pace, and he had come a smash, of which it was possible that a few ripples were still visible on the surface of far-off London society. But what a time it had been while it lasted! He held out his hand before him. It was as firm and steady as a rock—as, indeed, it had need to be, since on his skill as a hunter and trapper his livelihood depended. He remembered that in the old days it had often shaken so much that he had sometimes found himself unable to lift his glass of champagne to his lips without spilling half the contents.

He began to fill his pipe, looking round him idly as he did so. In the distance, under a blue haze, rose the great pine-covered hills; between him and them ran a little bubbling creek fed by ice-clear glacial waters. Far away Neville thought he heard a deer call, but he was not sure. Everything was very quiet and still in the heat of the noonday sun, though this stillness was that of an overflowing life in brief repose, and not the silence of the frozen death that would come when the brief summer was over and there reigned in its stead the bitter sway of sixty below.

Neville picked up the paper again. He was aware of an odd restlessness to which he had been a stranger for many a year. The paper had been given him by a half-breed in exchange for a bottle of whisky, and reading of the old familiar life he had known so well had brought back the past too clearly. It was curious to think that years ago hardly a single column such as he had just been reading could have been written without his name occurring in one or another of the paragraphs.

He supposed it was still the same as ever over there—young fools going the pace, laughter and fun in plenty, and then the bill to pay. Well, thank goodness! he had paid his bill in full, good measure pressed down and running over, and the old life was past for ever.

But it would be rather amusing to turn up there again. He let his imagination play with the idea. The very impossibility of the phantasy amused him.

What fun it would be to stroll into the enclosure at Ascot, for instance! Men would look at him, and some would say, 'Isn't that Des Moines? Deuce of a time since I saw him.' Women, once dear, would go a little pale perhaps. And then there would be whispering in corners, and a few very likely would pretend not to see him.

He began to think of Piccadilly, of Pall Mall, of the clubs. It would be good to turn into the old club again. He supposed he was still a member, for he had paid a life-subscription, and it wasn't likely they would have taken the trouble to expel him. The theatres, too, and the opera on a gala night. His memory showed him a hundred such scenes as he lay beneath the tall, lone birch, and he moved uneasily.

'I wish I had never read the thing,' he said to himself; 'it sets a chap thinking.'

He wondered if there were any who would welcome him back for his own sake. He was not quite sure; for towards the end, when he had made the pace so hot, a good many of his old pals had dropped him. Peter Townley might remember when they two went in first together for Oxford at Lords; but Peter was well on the way to a judgeship now, and grown mighty respectable. Or little Jimmy Reeves—he wondered what had become of little Jimmy Reeves. Jimmy Reeves owed him something for stopping that scandal about the barmaid which would have brought his career to such an untimely end. He wondered if by any chance little Jimmy could be identical with the Very Reverend Dr James Reeves, who was mentioned in one of the paragraphs he had just been reading as bishop designate of Southminster. If so, the bishop designate might not be over pleased at seeing Neville des Moines again; most likely his sincere hope was that Neville des Moines was long since dead and forgotten. Or there was Billy—but Billy was in Parliament, apparently as the rising hope of the extreme Nonconformists. Billy would certainly not be at all pleased to see his old pal back again. On the whole, the outcast under the tall, lone birch did not feel he could count on a very warm welcome—perhaps felt that he did not deserve one. Unless, of course, he came with his pockets full of money, and then he would soon have the old crowd round him again.

Neville laughed to himself a little, and sat upright. There was certainly no chance of his ever having pockets full of money again; he had never had the gift either of making it or keeping it. No; he had had his fun, and paid for it as a gentleman should; and, on the whole, he supposed things might be worse. It was only that fool of a newspaper rag had set him dreaming of the old days. So long as health and strength lasted he could always knock out a living in these northern woods and hills, trading for skins, hunting, trapping, fishing. Honestly, he did not think there were many better hunters in all the West; as good there were, he knew, but none better, he thought. And, anyhow, he was doing no harm now; it was a clean, straight life. He was respected where to win respect one had to show one's self a man and no quitter, and never close-fisted. Yes, he had won respect out here; and when his time came, as it surely would—for from all who live by the wilderness there comes the day when the wilderness claims its rights—he would lie down and die without a murmur or a regret, as the dumb beasts die.

He jumped to his feet with a sudden movement. He had been dreaming so long, it was growing late, and there were traps to see to on the banks of the Klondike creek. He shook himself to shake off unwelcome thoughts, as a wet dog shakes off the rain-drops from its coat, and he made up his mind that the next London paper that came his way he would burn without giving it a glance.

As this thought passed through his mind, his foot chanced to knock against a stone half-embedded in the earth. Idly he kicked it from its place, and he noticed a yellow gleam where it had lain. Carelessly enough, he kicked the loose earth. The yellow gleam showed more plainly. The next moment he was on his knees, scratching, tearing, digging with hand and knife, like a madman. All the earth he turned up was streaked with yellow, thick and heavy with yellow grains. He gave a sudden great cry that floated away and was lost in the vast silence of the hills and the woods around.

'Gold!'

It was gold, beyond a doubt. He had struck gold—struck it rich. Never had he heard of gold so far north, but here it was. The yellow stuff that means so much was here like any other dirt, waiting to be picked up, shovelled up, carted away to reap the homage that awaited it. For here it was yellow dirt and nothing more; but there it was the glory and the splendour of the world and all the power thereof.

He worked on in a frenzy. Forgotten were the traps upon the creek-bank; forgotten supper; forgotten rest and sleep. While daylight lasted—and that was long at that time of the year in those high latitudes—he worked on, till he had scraped a great hole in the earth, and the deeper he went the richer seemed the dirt. The great pile by his side was nearly a fifth pure gold.

At last he gave up, because he could see no more, and he lit a fire and cooked himself some supper. But he had no appetite for food, for a furious excitement possessed him.

He knew very well this was a big thing. It meant millions very likely. It meant a rush

from all the corners of the earth; it meant a great city rising here in this lonely valley; it meant for him, Neville Brooke Moines des Moines, his old place in the world again, given back to him by a miracle as strange as ever was wrought upon this earth.

Weary as he was, he could not sleep, and filling his corn-cob pipe, he began to smoke. So it was all coming true. He was going back; he would see the old faces; he would lead the old life.

He found it odd to think of that. Bedrooms, for example. Stuffy they would be after this free northern sky. And white shirts with stiff starched fronts and collars. And the electric light, and the crowded streets, instead of these majestic solitudes that lay around as on the day when their Creator had looked upon them and found them good.

How the chaps would swarm round him when they knew he was rich again! How boisterous would be their greetings! How ready women would be to smile on him! It would be the old times again—wine and laughter, cards and racing, flushed faces and heavy eyes, bed at four or five in the morning, breakfast at noon or later. How well he knew that life! How strange it was to think it was all going to begin all over again!

'Up to the same old smash at the end when I've been sucked dry,' he said to himself with a laugh that had in it not much mirth. He knocked the ashes out of his pipe. 'Wonder what's the matter with me!' he thought.

He wrapped his blanket round him and lay still, and tried to imagine the great lonely valley with all the swarming crowd like flies that the news of his great find would summon hither from the four corners of the earth. He thought of the crowded saloons, the blare of the noisy pianos, the shouting gramophones, the drunken men, the women, the noise—noise unceasing and everywhere in place of this perpetual peace—the restless bustle in place of this great untroubled calm, the hard glare of flaring lamps in place of the pale glamour of the stars.

Again he thought of the old life that now it was in his power to return to at his will, and a contrast rose in his mind between that riotous round of meaningless excitement and his wild, clean, unfettered life as hunter and trapper. He looked again upon the majestic peace of the land, untroubled and calm in the warm night, and the idea came to him that it would be a foul treachery to give these calm solitudes over to the greedy horde that would come with clutching, outheld hands he could almost see, to snatch, and seize, and devour.

'I'll not do it—not I,' he said aloud, and he fell at once into a deep sleep, in which it was as though the hills and the valley and the little clear creek near by watched together over the slumbers of the man who had it in his hands to give them over to the enemy or to refrain.

When he awoke in the morning he was still of the same mind. He pushed back into the hole from which he had taken it that heap of yellow earth he had dug up the night before, and he stamped it down so heavily that little sign of any disturbance remained. Then he cooked and ate his breakfast, and took his rifle and went off to attend to the traps he had neglected the night before. And it was some years later when news came to a lonely camp in the Rockies that 'gold! gold! GOLD!' had been found in the Klondike.

'There's the biggest rush ever known on,' said the man who had heard the news to a bronzed, clear-eyed trapper his companions called 'Nev;' 'the whole place is just a swarm of 'em.'

'It would be,' said Neville des Moines briefly.

'Gosh!' said the other yearningly, 'don't you just wish it was you had had the luck to make that strike?'

But 'Nev' was a man of few words, and the other was not much surprised that he did not answer.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

PROBABLY no contemplated engineering enterprise has aroused such long-continued discussion as that of a tunnel beneath the Strait of Dover, to serve as a link between Great Britain and the Continent. If only commercial and engineering interests had been at stake, the undertaking would have been consummated many years ago, but hitherto the suggestion has always been vetoed by the defence authorities. But the present great war has caused many opinions to be revised, as is shown in Sir J. H. A. Macdonald's article on the 'Dover Tunnel and the Scottish Ship-Canal,' which was published in the November part of this Journal. The military situation has undergone a complete change, and, indeed, in many quarters it is urged that we should have been far better equipped for the movement of troops and supplies if the tunnel had been available. Still, all things considered, the postponement of the scheme has not been without its advantages. When it was first mooted, steam would have been necessary for the movement of the trains. To-day electricity constitutes the ideal propelling force, and the contiguity of the Kentish coal-field should ensure an adequate supply at a low cost. We have seen what can be accomplished by this agent in operating the heaviest descrip-

tions of main line railway traffic. Electricity has superseded its old-established rival for working some of the greatest tunnels of the world, namely, those which penetrate the Alps and the great mountain chains of the United States. More recently the electrification of the four hundred and forty miles of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and Pacific Railway traversing the difficult country of the Rockies offers comprehensive data for the solution of the intricate problems involved. The Channel Tunnel, as at present contemplated, will be about thirty-one miles in length, and the tracks will be laid in separate tunnels, somewhat after the system of the tube railways of London. Each tunnel will have a clear internal diameter of eighteen feet, and will be at a minimum depth of one hundred and fifty feet below the sea-bed. Presumably shuttle working will be practised, with cross-overs and side-switches at certain intervals, to permit express trains to pass slower trains if necessary. From the engineering point of view the project offers no pronounced difficulties. The preliminary soundings indicate that the tunnel would run through solid chalk, which would probably prove to be free from faults. Boring would be carried out by means of the Greathead shield under compressed air, and the circular bore, as excavated, would be lined with steel plates with a grouting between the plates and the chalk, while the plates themselves would be lined with cement. Better ventilation and greater security against fire will both be assured by the adoption of electric working. At an average rate of forty-six miles per hour, the passage would be accomplished in about forty minutes, but there is no reason why higher speeds should not be reached under the conditions that will obtain. At the British end the tunnel would be gained through a deep valley which would render the question of approach a simple undertaking, as only an easy gradient would be involved; while on the French side this subterranean as well as submarine passage would emerge at a point some four miles inland, so that the entrance may not be exposed to the dangers of bombardment by submarines. The engineers anticipate that the tunnel would be completed within five years, since there is no reason to suppose that the 'unexpected' would assume abnormal proportions, the formation of the chalk being comparatively regular, while it is not anticipated that water will prove exceptionally troublesome. The construction of the tunnel immediately after the war would turn to profitable use a vast quantity of plant and material already shipped across the Channel, while the finding of employment for some thousands of skilled navvies would be a contribution towards the solution of the post-war labour problem. The provision of a submarine connecting-link would be a decided stimulus to Anglo-Continental traffic, as there would be a complete avoidance of the delay incidental to transhipment at the ports. The enthusiastic advocates of the enterprise have discussed the possibility of running through-trains between the British manufacturing centres and the remote cities of Europe and Asia. But this is a romantic dream, for there are differences in track gauge to be taken into consideration, the engineer not yet having solved the problem of fitting rolling stock with a universal wheel system capable of adapting itself to all the various gauges in use upon the Continent. The alternative to a tunnel beneath the Channel is a ferry like those operating upon the great lakes of America. This scheme, it may be mentioned, has many commercial advocates, because the capital expenditure would be considerably lower for an equally effective service.

TWO STOVES IN ONE.

The urgent necessity for the housewife to be sparing in the consumption of coal has once more served to draw attention to the disadvantages of the familiar kitchen-range, especially in small houses and villas. The range is a coal-eater of the most spendthrift character, while it is additionally harassing to 'my lady' because of the labour involved in keeping it clean and efficient. Accordingly appreciation of the 'inter-oven' is more pronounced to-day than ever. This novel invention has been freely adopted in various 'Garden Cities' and in improved dwellings for the working-classes. In its latest form the apparatus is exceedingly attractive. When not in use for cooking purposes, the grate has the appearance of the most recent type of sitting-room stove, with the scientifically designed open low fire and back to throw the maximum of heat into the room with the minimum consumption of fuel. The stove is entirely self-contained, and possesses all the features associated with the ordinary kitchen-range. At the top is the oven, which is placed behind what serves as the ordinary ornamental canopy. The canopy, in fact, constitutes the door of the oven, being hinged at its lower end, opening at the top, and folding over in the manner of the desk-lid of a bureau. When opened out and lying flat, the door serves as a hot-plate. At the back of the grate, occupying the space between the top of the fire and the canopy, is an iron plate. This is likewise hinged at the lower end, and when a catch at the side of the stove is released it falls over to cover the lighted fire, forming a top precisely similar to that of the kitchener, upon which saucepans can be boiled. At the same time as this top is lowered dampers are automatically opened in side-flues of iron leading up to the oven, so that the heat from the fire, in passing to the chimney, is first brought to play upon the oven. This heat is so distributed as to cook the contents equally on all sides, thus obviating the necessity of turning the dishes

while cooking. If desired, a boiler can be fitted at the back of the fire, and the connections have been so simplified and standardised as to facilitate joining up with an existing pipe system with the minimum of expense and without carrying out any structural alterations. Owing to its introduction in the single circulation system, the boiler is heated along with the oven, the flames and the smoke passing around the one before reaching the other. This is a distinct advantage over the ordinary kitchener, in which the oven and the boiler have to be heated separately by the opening of individual dampers. But in the combination stove all the heat emitted from the fire is brought to bear in succession upon the hot-plate on which the saucepans are boiled, the boiler, and the oven. When cooking operations have been concluded, it is merely necessary to manipulate the side-catch in the reverse direction to cause the hot-plate to fold up against the back of the grate, thus concealing the boiler connections, and giving the ordinary grate of the living-room once more. Even then the hot-water supply is kept going, because the boiler is in constant contact with the fire, forming, as it does, the back of the grate. This stove has met with conspicuous success, and, owing to the facility with which it may be fitted, is being substituted for the ordinary range. Conversion may be easily effected, and a useful and attractive surround to occupy the unnecessary space may be devised to meet individual tastes.

AN INGENIOUS EGG-POACHER.

A simple device for poaching eggs in the most attractive manner—with the yolk floating centrally within a jacket of white—has been placed on the market. In general appearance it recalls somewhat the familiar frying-pan, as it comprises a shallow circular metal outer vessel to receive the water. To the rim of this is attached a flat disc with four dished recesses to receive the eggs. A little butter or other suitable fat is placed in each recess previous to the egg being put in, to prevent the latter from adhering to the metallic surface during cooking. The whole is then covered with a lid, and thus all the heat arising from the boiling of the water is retained within the vessel to perform the cooking operation. If ordinary care is taken, this simple device ensures the cooking of the eggs to perfection; and four may be as readily and quickly poached as one.

A CANDLESTICK FOR THE TRENCHES.

Life in the trenches at night, when the conditions permit, is rendered far more tolerable when it is possible to use a light, and the fighting-man, whenever possible, sees to it that a candle is in his pocket. It may furnish only a faint flicker; but even such an amount of illumination as that gives an appearance of comfort to the scene and enables the time to be usefully employed in reading or letter-writing. But an unprotected wax or tallow candle is not an ideal article for the pocket; the heat radiated from the body is apt to play sorry tricks with it. To overcome this difficulty an inventor has devised a novel candlestick intended primarily for use in the trenches. It consists of a short, nickel-plated nosed cylinder, the base of which is detachable by a screwing motion. The base forms the holder, and when the candle is to be lit it is detached from the cylinder. To put out the candle it is merely necessary to replace the tubular top, which not only acts as an extinguisher, but also preserves the candle and keeps it in position ready for use when the next favourable opportunity arises. The contrivance is small and neat, enabling it to be carried in the pocket. It is also water-tight, so that no trouble arises with the wick, no matter how wet the weather may be.

A NEW SEVENTY-TWO-INCH REFLECTING TELESCOPE.

On Little Saanich Mountain, Victoria, British Columbia, is being mounted a new seventy-two-inch reflecting telescope, which ranks as one of the finest ever built. Victoria was selected by the Canadian Government as the site for this instrument owing to the equable character of its climate, variations of temperature being exceedingly inimical to an instrument of this character, because of its extremely delicate mechanism. Several features in its construction arouse interest. Particular attention has been paid to the securing of rigidity, and the steel-castings constituting the support have been constructed upon special lines. All the delicate operating mechanism has been enclosed in dust-tight cases, and for the most part it moves in oil. The moving parts of the instrument weigh forty-five tons, but the mass is so delicately balanced, and the bearings so finely finished, as to require but a weight of five pounds to set it in motion. Seven electric motors have been installed for its operation, and with these the instrument can be easily and quickly brought to bear upon any part of the heavens. The mirror has been made from a block of glass seventy-three and a half inches in diameter and thirteen and a half inches thick, and weighing over two tons in the unpolished state. It was cast in Belgium, and fortunately was shipped from Antwerp five days before the outbreak of war. The central section of the tube, which is a steel-casting, is eight feet in diameter, six feet in length, and scales seven tons. The mirror-cell attached to the base of the tube weighs nearly three tons. The mirror floats in this cell upon twelve carefully adjusted wheels, nine of which are so counterbalanced as to distribute the weight of the glass equally over the twelve supports. The skeleton-work forming the upper part of the instrument is twenty-three feet in length by seven feet in

diameter. Another noteworthy feature is the sector-shutter, which has been designed to form a dustproof covering for the objective when the telescope is not in use, and the perfecting of this alone presented a difficult problem to ensure absolute accuracy of fitting and easy operation. The polar axis constitutes the heaviest individual piece of the movable portion of the mounting for this tube, scaling, as it does, nine and a half tons. To this is attached a worm-wheel nine feet in diameter, forming part of the driving mechanism. The whole has been so designed as to enable the driving-clock to revolve the immense weight with such accuracy and uniformity as to allow the narrow aperture in the eyepiece to be kept exactly upon the star under observation. Rapidly responsive movement of the instrument is assured by delicate electric control. The telescope is being housed in a building sixty-six feet in diameter, built of steel throughout, and sheathed with a double wall of galvanised steel. The space between the walls ensures perfect circulation of air, so that the temperature within the building is kept precisely the same as the shade-temperature outside. The dome is of the revolving type, with a double shutter having a fifteen-feet opening. When this telescope was first proposed the idea was to establish it at Ottawa; but investigation revealed the fact that the average daily variation of temperature upon Little Saanich Mountain is less than one-half the diurnal range at Ottawa, and accordingly British Columbia was given the distinction of possessing what is generally admitted to be the finest observatory in the world.

A NOVEL MUSIC-TEACHING DEVICE.

An electrical student at an American university has evolved a novel device for teaching music, which it is claimed will overcome the difficulties normally encountered in mastering this art. There is a sheet of semi-transparent material, such as celluloid, on which are printed the staff and the notes. Behind this is ranged a battery of electric incandescent-lamps operating upon the flashlight system. To complete the invention a special keyboard is provided, each key of which is fitted with a light push-button which controls a particular lamp. When a note is depressed, the completion of the circuit causes a solid red oval to appear upon the corresponding line or space of the staff on the semi-transparent sheet, and, of course, any desired combination may be obtained. The visible flashing of the note corresponding with the key touched indicates whether the correct note is being played or otherwise.

MIRACLE WHEAT.

The world's demand for wheat, and the request to farmers to put more land under its cultivation, have been responsible for the reappearance of what are described as 'wonderful' varieties of grain for seeding purposes, their supposed virtue being that they are more productive than those usually sown. To defeat the machinations of those engaged in foisting these 'wonder wheats' upon the market—at a most exorbitant price, be it observed—a note of warning has been issued by the United States Department of Agriculture, which has investigated the extravagant claims advanced in support of them. Special warning is issued against what is being widely described as 'Alaska' wheat, the purpose of the description, of course, being to take advantage of the reputation deservedly attained by the excellent crops which are being raised in that northern country. But, according to the above authority, 'Alaska' wheat was known over one hundred years ago, when it was introduced into America under the title of 'Jerusalem' wheat. Those who advocated its widespread adoption pointed to the advantage of its peculiar characteristic of throwing a multi-branched head, which it was claimed must have the effect of producing more grain per acre than the ordinary single-headed variety. Indeed, claims of yields ranging up to two hundred and twenty-two bushels per acre were made. Within recent times this self-same variety has reappeared at different intervals under other attractive names, such as 'Egyptian,' 'Miracle,' 'Mummy,' and 'Three-thousand-years-old' wheat. Some of these titles, of course, imply that it was the variety of grain raised in Egypt three or four thousand years ago, and that it has secured revival because of the fortunate recovery of a stock from an Egyptian mummy case. 'Alaska' wheat first commanded attention in 1908, and is nothing else than another form of the original 'Jerusalem' grain. It secured a vogue because of the striking story of patient experimenting on the part of an American farmer, who, as a result of nine years' effort, was said to have produced a variety in which the central ear was surrounded by nine other heads. Its sponsors claimed that a crop ranging up to ten times that obtainable from the ordinary types could be secured by the use of this seed. The American Department of Agriculture promptly exploded this fallacy, and steps were taken to prevent the exploitation of the so-called 'wonderful' seed. But the story had secured too long a start to be readily overtaken, and 'Alaska' wheat was actually shown at a recent exhibition in that country.

EXPERIMENTS WITH POTATOES.

In Bulletin No. 239 of the Ontario Department of Agriculture, Professor Zaritz presents the results of experiments and investigations with potatoes during the past twenty-six years. Some conclusions he has arrived at for Ontario may possibly have a wider interest. We learn that in 1915, an exceptionally unfavourable year for potato-growing, the average yield was only seventy-six bushels per acre. One

variety, the Snowball, gave a yield of only thirteen bushels per acre, and another variety, the Hustler, under similar conditions, three hundred and sixty-six bushels. The Extra Early Eureka, a medium early variety, gave an average of three hundred and twenty-six bushels per acre. Over a longer period the Empire State potato occupies the highest place in productiveness. The Davies Warrior and the Extra Early Eureka also gave high yields. The conclusions set down in the Bulletin are that the crop could be decidedly and economically improved by a more general use of pure well-bred seed of the best varieties, by the adoption of better methods of culture, and by a more complete control of insects and diseases. Every one knows that potatoes are essentially a starchy food; that if used alone they form an unbalanced ration, but if used in conjunction with foods rich in protein they become an important factor of diet. Germany before the war had the highest European annual production of potatoes, of which about 40 per cent. were fed to stock, 28 per cent. were used for table purposes, 12 per cent. for seed, 6 per cent. for alcohol, 4 per cent. for starch and related products, and 10 per cent. decayed. Over four hundred varieties of potatoes have been under experiment by the department. After a trial of five years the poorer varieties are dropped. The cost of production works out at from three pounds to twelve pounds per acre in Ontario and the northern states. The statement is made that from five to six families are supplied with potatoes for one year from each average acre of land which the farmer plants with this crop. It is quite apparent, therefore, as Professor Zaritz says, that the man who grows good potatoes where potatoes are needed is a public benefactor.

A TABLE ELECTRIC STOVE.

Electricity in its application to the table has become highly popular during the past few years, and another interesting development in this direction is to be recorded. This is the electric table-stove. It consists of a suitable pedestal support, similar to that employed in connection with table-lighting devices, carrying a copper bowl. At the base of this bowl is a convex disc of refractory material, upon which is mounted a grid, which glows when the current is turned on. Ordinary plug and flex connections are employed; while the stove, which is neat and compact, is obtainable in a variety of designs to meet different tastes. It emits considerable heat with a low consumption of current, and, as the bowl is mounted upon a pivoted joint which allows it to be set at any angle, the heat is thrown in any required direction by adjustment of the bowl. But the appointment is not designed merely to diffuse heat. The inside edge of the rim is so fashioned as to receive a circular support, on which toast may be prepared, water boiled, milk heated, or coffee or cocoa made ready. Even when the stove is being employed in this way considerable heat is radiated, so that it fulfils two purposes at one and the same time.

CORROSION BY SEA-WATER.

A series of experiments which should prove of incalculable value to marine engineers is being prosecuted at Brighton, with the object of securing more conclusive data concerning the corrosive action of sea-water upon condenser tubes. This is one of the most baffling problems confronting marine engineers to-day. No member of the profession can definitely tell why the condenser tubes in one vessel should withstand the ravages of sea-water for months without showing marked defects, while the tubes of a sister-ship may go all to pieces within a few weeks. These experiments were originally undertaken by the University of Liverpool; but at that institution great difficulty was experienced in connection with the supplies of the necessary sea-water, which had to be transported in large water-carts and stored. While data of considerable value were obtained, the Liverpool experiments were not deemed conclusive, as the conditions were so dissimilar from those prevailing at sea. By transferring the venue to Brighton conditions more closely corresponding to the normal are secured. The investigations should furnish valuable results, and it is hoped they will conduce to the perfection of an alloy of a practical commercial character more resistant to sea-water action than any in use at present. The Brighton Corporation is facilitating the work of the Corrosion Research Committee, which has been completely reorganised, by giving permission for the investigations to be pursued at its electric generating station, which is situated upon the seashore; while it has also permitted its staff of electrical engineers to afford any assistance that may be desired. From the determined character in which this difficult problem is being attacked it is anticipated that a definite solution will be found, more especially as the hearty co-operation of the Admiralty and of various scientific institutions has been secured.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

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SEVENTH SERIES

'MOHAMMED'S COFFIN.'

By Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS, Bart.

CHAPTER I.

THE Squire sat alone in his study, studying the Stud Book.

To whom entered his wife, a letter in her hand, excitement depicted in every line of her good-looking matronly face. 'From Edwin!' she exclaimed.

The Squire looked up. 'Nothing wrong?' he questioned nervously.

'Quite the reverse! He is coming home—coming home on four months' leave, which should give him about three months here.'

'Good, indeed! Now, Joan, you must lay your brains asteep, as they say hereaway, to think what we can do to amuse the dear lad whilst he is with us, for the neighbourhood grows duller every year.'

'I scarcely think that he is likely to find it dull after life upon a ranch,' returned his better-half, with quiet superiority.

For Edwin Fairfield, the only child of well-born but by no means wealthy parents, had of his own free-will exiled himself, in the hope of making some money, which should serve as an offset to his father's reduced agricultural rents. And already his self-denial had begun to be rewarded. Reticent as by nature he was, he had given his parents to understand that he was doing 'not badly.' And thereby hangs this tale.

Any one who had the smallest skill in reading countenances could have told you, on looking in Mrs Fairfield's face, that she had not yet disburthened herself. She had still another announcement to make, and it was, if anything, the more startling of the two.

'What do you think of this?' she said, and proceeded to read aloud from the letter in her hand.

What she read was briefly this. Edwin wrote that, being now in a position to maintain a wife, and there being no suitable girls where he was, he would be much obliged if his parents would invite some nice girl to pay them a visit at Fairfield Demesne while he was there, 'with a view to matrimony.'

'What do you think of that?' repeated the Squiress, speaking with a calmness she was far from feeling, as she folded and laid down the letter, this momentous passage read.

'Think of it?' exclaimed her helpmeet boisterously. 'Why, I think it the most ridiculous whimsey I ever heard of! Whoever heard of a young man asking his parents to choose a wife for him? The idea is preposterous—ho, ho, ho! If the young fool can't find a wife for himself—why, he isn't fit to have one, say I! What d'ye think of it yourself, wife?'

This question, which was much less emphatically enunciated than what had gone before, was drawn from Mr Fairfield by a sobering perception that he was not, as the saying is, taking his wife along with him.

'I do not agree with you at all, John,' returned Mrs Fairfield, with dignity. To the lifelong partnership upon which the worthy couple had entered over a quarter of a century ago, it was she who had brought prudence, propriety, and a nice sense of *bienséance*. The Squire was ever too impulsive, and must have his joke—often a very indifferent one, as she could not help thinking, united couple though they were. 'I confess I fail to see your point of view, John,' she continued, almost stiffly. 'I see nothing whatever outrageous, or unnatural, in Edwin consulting us as to his choice of a wife.'

'*Consulting* us? Yes, by all means,' interjected her husband, 'that is right enough! But not looking to us to take the first step.'

The interruption passed unheeded.

'On the contrary,' resumed Mrs Fairfield, 'I think it is very, very dear of him.' There were tears in her eyes and voice.

The Squire grew fidgety. 'I don't say'—— he began.

'Edwin is not like other young men,' continued the mother, knowingly pressing her advantage.

'Not like other young men? Oh, come, Joan'—— interposed the man. It was noticeable that, from cocksure, his tone had become coaxing or persuasive.

'I say that he is not like other young men,' pursued Mrs Fairfield serenely. 'From boyhood, he was always more docile than others, more willing to please, and anxious to do what was expected of him. I know him better than you do, Squire.'

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'Admitting (for argument's sake, mind) that you do, Joan, surely—surely, in this particular matter, we wish that he should please himself rather than us?'

'I am not quite sure of that. But, at any rate, John, I have no intention of forcing a bride upon the boy, as you, in your impulsive way, appear to think. All I propose is to ask some nice girl to stay with us whilst he is here, and then let things take their chance. That, in fact, is all he suggests. It commits us to nothing.'

Even in his own despite, John Fairfield could never help admiring his wife. He looked up to her, not in stature alone.

'Have you any one in view, Joan?' he asked with great interest.

With a slight smile, Mrs Fairfield nodded her head. 'Whom do you think?' she asked indulgently.

'Claudia?' he ventured.

'Is it likely? No; I shall invite Ruth Davenport.'

'Why not Selma Durell? She is a nice girl.'

'I have nothing to say against her; but, for several reasons, I prefer Ruth.'

'I prefer Selma.'

'Nonsense! We scarcely know Miss Durell—at least, we do not know her nearly so well as we know Ruth, and Edwin does not know her at all.'

'Selma has coin,' urged the pertinacious little Squire.

'Well, Ruth is not absolutely unprovided for. No, Squire, I have quite made up my mind that Ruth it is to be; so it is useless to say more.'

Mr Fairfield took the hint. But though he said no more, his thoughts were not idle—of which there was evidence, some two or three weeks later, when the day arrived on which both Edwin and Ruth were expected at the Demesne.

Travelling by different trains, they would reach Fairfield at different hours, Ruth coming first. The day happened to be wet, and both the Squire and his wife were at the window when the station-fly was seen approaching along the drive.

'What a lot of luggage she has!' remarked Mrs Fairfield; adding, as the cab drew nearer, 'I see she has brought a maid, too, though her letter said nothing of that. I must have a second room got ready. Dear, dear! Girls did without maids in my day.'

For answer, a sound as of a person being asphyxiated proceeded from John Fairfield. His better-half looked sharply round, but found him normal.

'I do not think there is a maid,' he murmured gravely.

'Yes, John; I am sure there are two persons in the carriage. Your sight must be growing dimmer.'

Then at last the Squire exploded. 'I don't think it is *my* sight that is at fault, wife,' he said. 'Look again! Don't you see who the second person is? Well, I suppose there is nothing for it but to own up. I wrote to Selma Durell in our joint names, asking her here on a long visit, to meet Edwin.'

For some moments an expression of mystification had been struggling with one of anger in the Squiress's countenance. Now a clear light broke on her. 'John,' she exclaimed, in tones of positive distress, 'you have ruined everything!'

The Squire was laughing as if his sides would split. A most affectionate and admiring husband, if there was one thing more than another which he enjoyed it was a joke at his wife's expense—what he called 'scoring off' her. Yet, in the very midst of his sonorous ho-ho-ho-ing, a qualm smote him. Had he gone too far? It looked rather as if he had.

At that instant a bell rang—the cab had drawn up at the door. *Bienséance* had to be considered. The Squire's mirth had subsided to the half-opened soda-water-bottle state.

'They will think you have gone mad,' said his wife, almost savagely.

Then the door opened, and a maid announced, 'Miss Durell; Miss Ruth Davenport.'

For wherever these two girls appeared in company, it was a foregone conclusion that, as if in deference to a natural right, the precedence would be Selma's. Though a year or so the elder of the two, little Ruth accorded it unquestioningly. They were both amiable girls, and had become great friends during the drive from the station.

But it was not in Mrs Fairfield to resist the impulse to show her preference. 'My dearest Ruth!' she exclaimed, and folded the winsome maiden to her bosom.

Her reception of Selma was chilly. But that queenly young beauty never noticed—never even suspected it. Life had not made her sensitive to snubs. Even if it had, the Squire's gallantry must have more than compensated for his wife's rudeness. With every bit of a little man's congenital admiration for large women, John Fairfield had determined that Edwin should have at least a chance of winning this glorious young creature as a daughter-in-law for him. So, as seemed perfectly natural and fitting, each guest found herself at once engaged in cordial conversation—Miss Durell with the host, and Miss Davenport with the hostess. And this pleasant state of matters continued until the arrival of the tea-urn. So that, in spite of the cross-purposes of Squire and Squiress, no thought or suggestion of crudeness was allowed to mar the girls' enjoyment.

Edwin was not to arrive until after dinner.

By mutual agreement, the girls had slipped out on to the lawn, so that the first meeting between son and parents might not be intruded on. And as they paced the dry-shaven turf together, side by side, in their light evening-shoes, Selma, speaking rather listlessly, as was her way, put the question to her companion, 'You know this Edwin already, I understand, Ruth—may I say "Ruth"?' she remarked.

'Oh, please do. And may I say "Selma"? It is such a lovely name!'

'Of course,' answered Miss Durell with indifference, and went on with her interrogation. 'What is he like?'

Woman-like, Miss Davenport took the inquiry to apply to his appearance, and speaking with the gravest earnestness, and in entire good faith, she answered, 'Very handsome.'

Selma was languidly astonished at her new friend's air of conviction. 'Indeed!' said she, almost superciliously; and went on: 'Dark, I suppose?'

'No; very fair—with colouring which in a girl would be considered pretty.'

'Oh, that style, is he? Humph! Well, I don't fancy we shall quarrel over him. He is a friend of yours, is he?'

'No, indeed—a mere acquaintance, or not much more. We have not met for ever so long.'

Meantime, left to themselves in the drawing-room, the Squire and his wife were conscious of a slight *gêne*. But the occasion was too joyful a one to be marred by any such feeling.

'Look here, Squire,' said the Squiress, with magnanimity, 'you have made a sad mess of things; but it is too late to regret that now. Let us come to an honourable understanding, that neither you nor I will in any way interfere with the natural course of events. Promise me that you will make no attempt to put a spoke in Ruth's wheel, and I will make you a similar promise with regard to Miss Durell.'

Pudgy Squire Fairfield nodded. 'I am quite agreeable.'

In his heart he had not the slightest doubt as to the course events would take. But Joan Fairfield, as the recipient of certain old-time confidences of her son's, felt that she knew better than the Squire—was in possession of data for forming an opinion which were denied to him. Yet those confidences, had she reasoned upon them, were of the lightest; nor had they been reverted to since they were made.

There was a bustle at the door, and the next moment Edwin was in his mother's arms. Then she released him, in order that she might admire him, whilst he shook his father warmly by the hand.

'Well!' he said pleasantly. That was all.

He was a tall, manly young fellow, and sufficiently good-looking, though a critic might possibly have objected to a certain slowness, or inertness, in the movement of his blue eyes. 'Slightly lymphatic,' a physiognomist might have said; whilst an observer of humbler station would have recalled the vulgar catchword, 'Long and lazy.'

After his laconic and truly English greeting to his parents, Edwin had turned, inconsequently enough, to look out of the window. Possibly he was finding the situation a little trying to his composure. The sight of the two glimmering figures on the lawn supplied just the diversion he needed. 'Whom have you staying here, mother?' he inquired.

The Squire was the first to get in his answer. 'A charming young lady'—— he was beginning.

But Mrs Fairfield cut him short. '*Two* charming young ladies,' said she graciously.—'You may call the girls in, John.'

Nothing loath, the Squire went at her bidding.

But Edwin turned to his mother almost reproachfully. 'Oh, mum!' said he, 'why two?'

She could not answer.

'One would have been enough,' he added. It was almost as if he was charging her with extravagance or waste.

(*Continued on page 105.*)

RECENT GREAT EARTHQUAKES.

By R. Blyth.

THE year 1906 will long be remembered by those who were resident then in the cities of San Francisco and Valparaiso. In that year two of the most terrifying earthquakes of recent times occurred, the first in April in the beautiful Californian city, and the second in August in the most important business centre of Chile, the picturesque Valparaiso (which in Spanish means 'Vale of Paradise'), in which city the writer was a resident on that never-to-be-forgotten occasion. The 16th of August was a day which stands out as having been peculiarly inappropriate to the climatic standard of Chilian weather, it having been heavily oppressive, and at sundown a thick, very fine rain, a typical Scotch mist, beginning to fall—a most unusual occurrence there, where, when it does rain, it makes no mistake about it, but descends in torrential showers, generally short-lived. So on that eventful evening, when Jupiter Pluvius behaved in such an extraordinary fashion, it was little wonder that the Scotch mist raised questions in our minds as to the why and wherefore. We had not long to wait for an answer, for just a

few minutes before eight o'clock came the first shock, like the crash of countless big guns. It was the time of the evening meal, and those of us who were fortunate enough to have finished enjoyed our last dinner for many long days. We were sitting over our coffee, discussing the day's events, when, absolutely without warning, in the twinkling of an eye, we were plunged into Stygian darkness, the remains of the meal were flung on to the floor by the swaying of the house, and we were all left groping about, covered with the plaster of the falling ceiling. I got first to the door, and tried in vain to wrench it open as a means of escape; but it had got jammed with the swaying of the house, and we were prisoners, awaiting events. Our release came with dramatic suddenness, for exactly five minutes after the first shock there came another still more violent and unnerving; and in the fearful upheaval which ensued I was able to wrench open the door and escape to the street, closely followed by the others. This was nearly my undoing, for I had just cleared the doorstep when the entire top front masonry of the house crashed down, and missed me by a few inches. The other occupants of the house had, very wisely, kept close to the walls, and so escaped also.

The spectacle which met our gaze baffles description. All around were screaming, praying women and children, mad with terror, and all of us with badly shattered nerves. During this time the shocks were continuing at intervals of a few minutes, and it was almost impossible to keep our equilibrium, owing to the ground swaying at such a rate; it was more like being on board ship in a bad storm than being on *terra firma*. The entire city was in utter darkness, only lit up here and there by the fires which had commenced in the fallen buildings, and which added to the terror; for there were no means of fighting this new enemy, as all the water-mains had burst, and the fire-engines and gear had been buried under the ruins of their stations. Great balls of fire, steel-blue in colour, were bursting overhead, and everywhere was the pervading odour of sulphur; the shrieks of the injured and the nerve-shattered filled our ears; and, to add to the confusion and terror, we could hear the crack of rifles near at hand. The explanation of this last was not far to seek; it meant that the prison guards were firing upon the escaping prisoners, for the great central prison had collapsed, and those of the inmates who were not killed evidently thought that the time of their lives had arrived, and a good many escaped in the darkness. But of this more anon.

After we had spent a seemingly interminable night in the street, well away from the tottering buildings, dawn broke at last, and the whole hideous picture of devastation was laid bare before our eyes. It was a terrible sight. The city was changed beyond belief; for not only in the hills where the bulk of the dwelling-houses were, but also in the entire business section of the city on the stretch of reclaimed land surrounding the bay, there were awful gaps, telling of entire blocks, and in many cases streets, utterly wiped out.

There were countless fires all over the devastated area, and these burned themselves out in time, but some continued smouldering for months. It was difficult to pass along many of the streets, as they had been strewn yards deep with débris, and stretcher-bearers on their errands of mercy and succour had the greatest difficulty in piloting their burdens through the almost inextricable tangle which met them at every step. For days one saw on every hand a never-ending procession of bearers with impromptu stretchers conveying their melancholy burdens. The total number of killed was estimated to be somewhere in the neighbourhood of eight thousand, but the actual figures were never known, as so many had disappeared completely in the great fires which consumed entire blocks, and left no trace behind; and the material damage was enormous.

With so many houses razed to the ground, the only thing for the homeless to do was to strike a tent in the safest bit of waste ground, and make the best of it. The writer was one amongst these thousands, and, I may add, one of the fortunate ones; for our sojourn under canvas was only a matter of about a fortnight, as an inspection of the home we were so very unceremoniously turned out of proved to be satisfactory, and we returned there, though not without fear and trembling, for we were all suffering from badly shaken nerves, and did not dare to don night attire for a considerable time afterwards.

Earth tremors continued almost uninterruptedly for three months, at comparatively short intervals, decreasing in intensity as time progressed, until the earth quietened down again, except for the usual mild tremors to which Valparaiso is continually a martyr, but which only periodically culminate in such a cataclysm as this proved to be. Trade was entirely suspended for weeks, and many were utterly ruined, losing business and house, and in some cases their own kin besides. Food was very scarce for a while, as we were cut off from the rest of the world; and, until shiploads of flour, &c., arrived from the Argentine, and other necessaries from Peru, we felt the pinch. Amongst other things, we had to take it in turn to stand in a queue each morning at the baker's shop to purchase the one small loaf, the limit allowed by the military authorities. Truly 'our daily bread.' Fresh-water was a luxury, and we had to carry our daily supply in a bucket a long way, sufficient to put an extra sharp edge on the appetite, which, in these circumstances, was quite superfluous!

From the first night of the earthquake the city was placed under martial law; and, as all the military and police were required to protect

the business section from the attentions of the horde of jail-birds who were everywhere, we, on the hill where we lived, deemed it advisable to form the male portion into a civil guard for our own protection. This was done, and on obtaining Mauser rifles and clips of ball-cartridge from the Chilian warships in the bay, we formed ourselves into night-watches of four hours each, with an authorised password, so that no one might pass through our district without authority. This was effective, and we were saved from the attentions —none too gentle—of the Chilian *roto*. Other sections were not so fortunate as we were, and we daily saw evidence of what foul deeds the prisoners who escaped from the prisons on that first night had been guilty of. Large numbers were caught red-handed robbing and maiming the dead, fire-raising, wilfully wasting fresh water, &c., and they paid the last penalty, being shot on the spot by the military, then lashed to the nearest lamp-post or tree, and left for forty-eight hours as a warning to other evil-doers, with a rough notice scrawled by the soldiers fixed up over their bodies, briefly telling the crime for which they had been sent to their account.

I witnessed some of these drumhead courts-martial, and saw the executions carried into effect. The recollection of them, with their surroundings of devastation, and overhead the clear blue vault of the Chilian sky, will never pass from my memory. One in particular stands out as clear to-day as when it occurred in that memorable August. It was early afternoon, on a bright, beautiful Sunday, when, as I was walking down one of the principal *avenidas* of the city, there suddenly wheeled into view from behind a heap of ruins a small procession headed by a bareheaded priest in flowing gown; behind him two youths, one a mere boy white as death, both with arms tied behind their backs; and bringing up the rear a file of soldiers. At the command of the officer in charge the procession stopped, and every one around stood silent and tense. Then the boy prisoner beckoned the priest to come to him, and he whispered a request in the cleric's ear. The priest immediately got out his own cigarette-case, lit a match in the shelter of his gown, and after lighting the cigarette which he had taken from his case, he transferred it to the boy's lips, who gratefully looked the thanks he had not the strength to utter, and the priest stepped back. Then another command from the officer, and the file of soldiers stepped forward, took careful aim, and these two evil-doers paid the supreme penalty, the boy with the cigarette between his lips to the last. The other was not so courageous, and he had to be propped up to keep him from collapsing before the end. When the execution was about to take place a woman's shriek pierced the air, then dead silence, which told its own tale to those who heard it. The woman turned out to be the boy's mother, who had been drawn thither by curiosity, and in the younger prisoner she had recognised her own son. The boy was incorrigible, as he had been caught the previous day robbing the dead; and, as was the practice with youthful criminals, he was soundly horse-whipped, warned, and let off, only to be caught the very next day at the same gruesome occupation, now for the last time. The curtain was rung down on the final act of this little drama after a soldier had stepped out of the file, picked up a bit of packing-case wood lying near, and laboriously scrawled on it in white chalk, '*Fusilado por ladron*' ('Shot for a robber'). He repeated the performance; and then with the assistance of the other soldiers the bodies of the miscreants were lashed to the nearest lamp-posts, the warning notices were affixed over their respective heads, and, at the word of command, the soldiers fell into line, marched off, and disappeared.

A gruesome and extraordinary thing happened in one of the ruined cemeteries perched on the top of a hill overlooking a *plaza* in the centre of the town. The niche system of burial prevailed there, the coffins being placed in niches in thick walls, and the apertures sealed at the ends. Consequently the first shock weakened the walls, and the next burst them asunder, with the inevitable result that the coffins slid from their niches, and rattled down the face of the hill to the *plaza* below, some of them being deposited in the back living-rooms of dwelling-houses, to add to the occupants' terror. In some instances live donkeys which had been grazing on the slope were carried bodily down with the ghastly avalanche, and some were discovered alive long after in the rooms of the wrecked houses, unwilling but patient prisoners. As a Chilian *burro* can live and thrive on almost anything edible that can be picked up—and the soil in and around Valparaiso is conspicuous for its lack of verdure—it is not to be wondered at that they managed to survive the ordeal.

One of the most complete wrecks to be seen amongst the public buildings was the Victoria Theatre, a large, handsome building, and the principal playhouse, which collapsed like a house of cards. Fortunately there was no performance that evening, but many pedestrians were caught in the collapsing walls. That instance was only one of the many, for what happened there was repeated at every corner, and it was a marvel how any escaped at all in such an awful seismic disturbance. The Vale of Paradise had been converted into the Valley of the Shadow as if by a magician's wand, and sorrow reigned on every hand. It was matter for comfort that a tidal wave did not engulf the ruined city after the catastrophe, as the shocks came from the sea, and it was only the great depth of water in the bay which prevented that too frequent accompaniment of earthquakes from making its presence felt; but it was observed that the water in the bay receded several inches, and left the

surrounding coast permanently drier. Valparaiso in time, no doubt, will recover from the effects of that awful visitation, as the Chilians are a hardy race, and not easily dismayed.

From personal observation which the writer was able to make some time after in San Francisco, there is no doubt that the Valparaiso earthquake was the much more severe of the two, although in San Francisco the numerous fires did enormous damage, and great blocks were entirely wiped out. So far as Chinatown is concerned, the earthquake seems to have been a blessing in disguise, for a new Chinatown has sprung into being, a little bit of China, with its domes and turrets, its almond-eyed inhabitants (with sadly docked pigtails, alas!), its restaurants with the ever-present 'chop suey' and bird-nest soup, and its fine bazaars replete with fascinating and magnificent Oriental wares. San Francisco has been entirely rebuilt, and is now her old self again, the 'Queen City of the Golden West,' set on a glorious bay, from which great ships of all nations incessantly glide out past Alcatraz Island, and the villa-dotted slopes of lovely Sausalito, through the Golden Gate—where the sunsets are great glories of crimson and gold—and so out to the blue Pacific, California's beautiful caressing ocean.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By Jeffery Farnol.

CHAPTER VII.—CONCERNING ANKLES, STAIRS, AND NEIGHBOURLINESS.

IT was in no very pleasant humour that Geoffrey Ravenslee began to climb the many stairs (that much-trodden highway) that led up to his new abode. He climbed them slowly, frowning in a dark perplexity, and wholly unconscious of the folk that jostled him or paused to stare after him as he went.

But presently, and all at once, he became aware of one who climbed half a flight above him; and, glancing up, he saw a foot in a somewhat worn shoe, a shapely foot nevertheless, joined to a slender ankle, which peeped and vanished alternately beneath a neat, well-brushed skirt that swayed to the vigorous action of the shapely limbs it covered. He was yet observing the soft, rounded curves of this most feminine back when he became aware of two facts: one, that she bore a heavy suit-case in her neatly gloved hand; two, that the tress of hair peeping rebellious beneath the neat hat-brim was of a wondrous yellow gold.

Instantly he hastened his steps, and, reaching out his hand almost instinctively, sought to relieve her of her burden.

'Allow me,' said he.

She stopped, and, turning on the stair above, looked down on him with a pair of wondering blue eyes; her cheeks glowed, and she was panting a little. For a long moment they fronted each other thus silently upon that grimy, narrow stair, she above with gracious head stooped, her dark eyes questioning and wistful. And, looking up into the flushed loveliness of her face, those eyes deep and soft beneath their long black lashes, the tender droop of those vivid lips—beholding all this, he knew her to be a thousand times more beautiful than any photograph could possibly portray, wherefore he bared his head, and, striving to speak, could find no words to utter. For a moment longer she hesitated, while her clear eyes searched his face; then the red lips curved in a little wistful smile.

'Thank you,' she said, and, yielding him her burden, led the way upstairs. 'I'm afraid it's rather heavy,' she said over her shoulder after they had climbed another flight.

'It's quite too heavy for you,' he answered.

'Oh, but I've carried it often before now.'

'Then you shouldn't.'

'But I have to.'

'No,' said Ravenslee, shaking his head; 'you should let your brother bring it up for you.'

'My brother!' she exclaimed, pausing to look her amazement.

And again, as she stood thus poised above him, he took joy to note the warmth of her rich colouring, the soft, round column of her white throat, the gracious breadth of hip and shoulder.

'You know I have a brother?'

'Oh yes, Spike—er—that is, Arthur and I are quite—er—ancient cronies—pals, you know—friends, I mean.' Mr Ravenslee was actually stammering.

'Oh, really?' she said softly; but, all at once becoming aware of the fixity of his regard, the colour deepened in her cheek, the long lashes drooped, and, turning away, she went on up the stair.

'It's a long way up yet. Hadn't you better let me take it?'

'Not for worlds,' he answered.

'Isn't it getting heavier?' she inquired, as they climbed the next flight.

'Decidedly heavier.'

'Then, please,' said she, slackening her pace—'please let me take it.'

'On the contrary,' he answered, his gaze on her slender foot and ankle, 'I should like to

carry it for you all my—er—ah, that is, I mean'——

Mr Ravenslee was stammering again.

'Yes?'

He was aware that the shapely foot had faltered in its going. 'As often as I may, Miss Hermione.'

Hereupon the shapely foot halted altogether, and once again she turned to look at him in wide-eyed surprise.

'You know my name?'

'I learned it from Arthur, and I shall never forget it.'

'Why not?'

'Well, because it is rather uncommon, and very beautiful.'

'Oh!' said Hermione, and went on up the stair again, yet not before he had seen the flush was back in her cheek. 'Are you getting tired yet?' she inquired, without looking round.

'Not appreciably,' he answered; 'but if you think I need a rest'——

'No, no!' she laughed; 'we should never get off these frightful stairs.'

'Even that might have its compensations,' he murmured.

'And we've been much longer than if you'd let me carry it up myself.'

'But then we've no cause for panting haste, have we?' he suggested.

'And we have four more flights to climb,' she answered.

'So few!' he sighed.

'You see, I live at the very tip-top.'

'Good!' said he.

At this she glanced down at him over the sweep of her shoulder. 'Why "good"?' she demanded.

'Because I also live at the tip-top.'

'Do you—oh!'

'With the excellent Mrs Trapes.'

'But I thought she had lost her lodger?'

'She had the—er—extreme good fortune to find a new one to-day.'

'Meaning you?'

'Meaning me.'

By this time they had reached the topmost landing, where Mr Ravenslee set down the suit-case almost reluctantly.

'Thank you,' said Hermione, looking at him with her frank gaze.

'Heaven send I may earn your thanks again, and very soon!' he answered, lifting the battered hat.

'You didn't tell me your name,' said she, fumbling in a well-worn little hand-bag for her latchkey.

'I am called Geoffrey.'

Hermione opened the door, and, taking up the suit-case, held out her hand. 'Good-bye, Mr Geoffrey.'

'For the present,' said he; and though his tone was light, there was a very real humility in his attitude as he stood bareheaded before her. 'For the present,' he repeated.

'Well, we are very near neighbours,' said she, dark lashes adroop.

'And neighbourliness is next to godliness—er—isn't it?'

'Is it?'

'Well, I think so, anyway. So, Miss Hermione, not "good-bye."'

Now at this she glanced swiftly up at him, flushed, and turning about, was gone. But even so, before her door closed quite, she spoke soft-voiced, 'Good-evening, Mr Geoffrey.'

Thereafter, for a space, Mr Ravenslee stood precisely where he was, staring hard at the battered hat. Yet it is not to be supposed it was the sight of this that could possibly have brought the smile to his lips and into his eyes a look that surely none had ever seen there before—such a preposterously shabby, disreputable old hat! Of course not.

(*Continued on page 99.*)

THE KEA, THE KAKA, AND THE KAKAPO.

NEW ZEALAND PARROTS WHICH HAVE CHANGED THEIR CHARACTERS.

By L. B. THOBURN-CLARKE, Author of *Prawns and Prawners.*

PERHAPS in no country in the world are the weird forms of bird-life more pronounced than they are in New Zealand. Not only are many of these bird-forms of an almost prehistoric type, survivals of early life on this globe, but two of them (the kea and the kakapo) have undergone a complete change to suit their environment. In other lands birds have shown extraordinary developments, both in form and feathering, under the restraining hand of man; but these New Zealand parrots have, in a wild state and absolutely without man's interference, developed in unexpected ways.

The kea (*Nestor notabilis*) probably lived, before the British settlers arrived in New Zealand, upon the same food as its sole living relative, the kaka (*Nestor meridionalis*)—the berries and honey from the blossoms of the rata and other flowering shrubs and trees found in the New Zealand bush, varied by insects that lived under the bark. Its brush-fringed tongue would suggest such a diet; but under the civilising influence of the settler it first became a flesh-eater, then finally developed a full carnivorous habit, and preyed upon the living sheep; this being the only case where a parrot in a wild

state has adopted a flesh diet, although in captivity parrots frequently grow very fond of cooked meat, and eat it readily.

No one knows when the kea first became a 'hanger-on' to the sheep-station, or what first induced the bird to eat flesh. Perhaps, during a time of great scarcity, hunger may have compelled it to try the new diet; and, the taste once developed, the habit continued for ever afterwards. It is quite a usual custom on a sheep-station for one or more sheep to be killed daily. Only the best portions are eaten, the rest, with the head and offal, being thrown down for the dogs to eat. The head, being hard and covered with wool, is frequently refused by the dogs; consequently there may be quite a number of sheeps' heads lying about the killing-yard or paddock, rotting in the sun. No doubt the sight of the dogs feeding on offal may have suggested the first taste, and afterwards the bird continued eating the food which was always lying ready at hand.

I have had no experience of tame keas, nor have I ever heard of anybody who possessed one; but the great brown night-parrot, the kaka, its only relative, is without a rival in its uncanny intelligence, so why should not the kea have equal intelligence and sagacity? The kea, 'perching itself on the sheep's head or offal,' relates an eye-witness, 'proceeds to tear off the skin and flesh, devouring it piecemeal, after the manner of a hawk; or at other times holding the object down with one foot, and with the other grasping the portion it is eating, in the fashion of the ordinary parrot.'

Several of these great parrots eating offal were quite a common sight in the killing-yards, and created no comment. The dogs might object, but they had too wholesome a fear of the parrot's formidable beak to interfere with its feeding. As no one can tell just when the kea first commenced to eat flesh, so no one knows just when it developed a taste for the kidney fat of a sheep, and how it learnt to secure the tit-bit. This must always remain a mystery, although there are many theories to account for it. Perhaps the kea, tearing to pieces a sheep that had died on the mountains, found out the fat around the kidneys, and with diabolical intelligence attacked the living sheep, and, clinging fast with its claws to the wool, dug deeply into the skin and flesh of its living victim, and ate its fill of the fat. This appears the most probable theory. Many observers, however, consider that the practice, common on sheep-stations and large farms in New Zealand, of hanging the sheep's carcass on the flagstaff, or on a pole raised for the purpose, may have taught the kea just where to find the fat. But in this case the carcass would have been skinned and ready for cutting up before being hung up, and the kea would have had no necessity to tear its way down to the fat.

The discovery of dead and dying sheep with great yawning holes in their backs first astonished the sheep-owners, then worried them, for no one had the remotest idea that the kea was the culprit. The sheep were mysteriously attacked and mortally injured, the bird being content to eat the fat and leave the unfortunate animal to die a lingering death. When, however, the kea was found to be the culprit it was no longer allowed to have the run of the killing-yards, but was shot or trapped. But this did not stop the ravages upon the sheep. It is quite probable that the keas which attacked the sheep in the first instance were parrots that were not in the habit of coming down to the slaughter-yards to feed on the offal, but were birds that had not discovered this easy method of obtaining food. The clinging to the wool of the terrified animal, as it rushed about seeking to get rid of its tormentor, could have been no easy matter, although the kea is quite as large as a raven, with claws that fit it for hanging on to anything that it has once gripped hold of. In the face of this change of habit it seems extraordinary that our own birds of prey have not developed equally astounding tactics in securing their food. But apparently the British birds of prey still feed in the same manner as their ancestors have done for generations.

No doubt the kea, in its attacks upon its victims, uses its powerful wings to buffet and worry the sheep. Any one who has felt the force of the wings of even a small bird when it is battling with a foe must realise that the force behind the kea's wings is not to be despised. The sheep is not renowned for its resourcefulness under danger, and no doubt the attack of the winged marauder simply makes it crowd among its fellows, thus offering an easy victim to the merciless foe crouching on its back.

It is a pity that this large and interesting bird has become so injurious to the sheep, as it will probably be exterminated within a very short time, and follow in the wake of the many wonderful forms of bird-life which have already disappeared before the march of man's destroying footsteps. Its sole remaining relation, the kaka, has developed no new traits under the changed conditions of life introduced by the settler into New Zealand. Far rather does this parrot avoid the haunts of man. Its habits are nocturnal; and, although many birds may be living in the depths of the densest bush, it is rarely seen by the bushman. I have lived for months in the bush, and have never seen one in a wild state. Yet as soon as the twilight and sudden dusk of the southern hemisphere set in the night would be full of their shrill, piercing cries, as they winged their way to their favourite feeding-grounds. Sometimes at night we would hear them in the tall trees; but as a rule they are silent except when on the wing, and then they are extremely noisy. Even when living at

Takapuna, near Auckland, although there were no tall forest-trees very close at hand, I have heard them night after night passing over, their harsh screams weirdly suggestive of uncanny proceedings up among the clouds, for even on moonlight nights I could never catch a glimpse of the flying night-parrots.

My first experience of the great brown kaka was gained from a tame one belonging to a neighbour. This bird was possessed of almost fiendish intelligence and a capacity for mischief only equalled by a small monkey. When he had accomplished anything particularly wicked he would fly on to my shoulder, and, leaning forward, would stare up into my face with a look of impish mischief that was almost humanly evil in its expression. I was only a small child at the time, and the kaka constituted himself my principal torment, and I was terrified by the uncanny impishness of the bird. He would fly over to our place in the twilight and seek me through every room until he found me; then, watching for an unguarded moment, he would fly on to my shoulder and nip my ear with his powerful beak. My scream of pain would be echoed by a wild whoop of delight as he flew away to await another chance of torturing me. The very sound of his pattering feet on the veranda would send me seeking frantically for safety behind locked doors; while the kaka would patiently wait on the doormat watching for me, until some one, answering my frantic appeals, seized the bird and carried him off. He never attacked any one else in the same way, so I suppose my terror amused him. He was very knowing; and, although he pattered all over the garden and house from early twilight until ten o'clock at night, he would vanish mysteriously the instant the clock struck, so that he should not be locked up in his cage. He was quite friendly with the numerous animals, and would visit the big duck-yard and amuse himself waddling up and down, and never attempted to touch the ducklings; and he was quite to be trusted with cats and kittens. But every skin hearthrug was torn to scraps; and, if he could manage it, he would in the course of a night have the window-frames bitten through and the glass in pieces on the ground. Cups and saucers were pushed to the edge of the table and knocked over just to hear them break with a crash on the kitchen floor. He fully realised that he was doing wrong, for he would screech with delight.

Another kaka which I owned a few years later was a most amusing bird, and loved walking, following me about like a small dog; but he invariably slept during the day, only waking in the late afternoon. He loved climbing the tall blue-gum-trees in the garden, and would scream defiance to our entreaties to him to come down. He climbed straight up the trunk after the usual parrot manner, but always came down backwards. Gripping with his beak a piece of bark or a projection of wood, he would drop his feet straight down, then catch hold, and cling while he twisted his head down as low as possible, taking another grip with his beak, and repeating the process until he had reached the ground; then he waddled after me. No calling would make him come down; but the sight of me opening the gate would bring him scrambling down, as he dearly loved a walk in the twilight.

We fed him on fruit, and during the summer he would gather and eat all he required in the orchard. I never saw him attempt to find insects; nor did he trouble to suck the honey from the flowers. He was exceedingly fond of sweets and sugar, and was very mischievous. One of his favourite tricks was to come in very quietly, and remain hidden until the middle of prayers, when he would suddenly fly on to my shoulder with a screech which was most startling. If shut out of the room he would go round to the window and endeavour to get in. He loved to catch hold of anything that was being shaken, and would sit on a sack, almost asking to have it dragged over the ground. When he wanted anything he would catch hold of my dress and try to drag me in the direction he wished. At night he was shut up in a large outhouse with the dogs, and when he got dissatisfied with his own kennel he would drive out a dog and take possession of the kennel he coveted. He was very quiet, but sometimes he would call to his relatives as they flew past; and one day, when he was about eighteen months old, he flew off to join them, and I never saw him again. He was much missed, for he was always amusing, and his mischief had such a thought-out element about it that it was interesting to try to fathom the reasoning power of his brain.

The kakapo (*Strigops habroptilus*), another large parrot, has changed, not its food, but its physical habits, owing to the difference in its surroundings. A nocturnal bird, always feeding on the ground, and admirably concealed by its protective colouring of freckled green, so closely resembling the moss on which it feeds, the lack of ground vermin big enough to attack so large a bird has made this parrot lose the use of its wings. Sir Walter Buller, in speaking about this, states that the wings are apparently large and strong; but, although the muscles are developed, they are overlaid with a quantity of fat, and the bird never attempts to use them.

The kakapo appears to have been very plentiful in the days when Sir Julius Haast observed its habits while he was exploring the west coast of New Zealand in the early sixties. He speaks of the true habitat of the kakapo as being the 'mossy fagus forest near mountain streams, with occasional grassy plots; but it also lives on the

hillsides, amongst great masses of rocks in which it has its holes or burrows.' These immense rocks were mostly overgrown with roots of trees and a deep covering of moss. He saw 'one sitting on a fuchsia-tree, feeding upon the purple berries; but as soon as it saw him advancing it threw itself off the branch as if it had been shot, and disappeared amongst the huge fragments of rocks strewed along the hillside.' Apparently it never attempted to use its wings. In order to experiment with the kakapo, he took one which his dog had caught, and, selecting a wide flat which had sufficient open space for his purpose, he liberated the bird. It made no attempt to fly, or even to open its wings, but ran with extraordinary rapidity towards the nearest trees, its gait resembling that of a hen.

The aspect of the kakapo is peculiar, and has gained for it the name of 'owl-faced parrot,' but in captivity it is intelligent, social, and affectionate. Sir George Grey described its behaviour towards its owner as more like that of a dog than of a bird. It would run from the corner of the room and seize hold of his hand with bill and claw, and roll over and over like a kitten. It would then let go the hand and retreat to the corner, only to run out again and repeat the performance. The approach of a dog towards its cage was greeted with outspread wings and a pretence of anger. When the dog retreated it showed its pleasure by the most absurd antics and postures. When extremely pleased it would nestle down on its master's hand, ruffling its feathers and lowering its wings, fluttering first one and then the other, at the same time shaking its head from side to side.

At that time the kakapo was evidently very plentiful, for the old Maoris repeat legends of its having been very numerous in the North Island; but the cause of its complete disappearance from that part of New Zealand remains a mystery. After the extermination of the moas and the kindred birds, the Maoris, essentially a flesh-eating people, must have been in sore straits for animal food. Eels certainly abounded in the lakes and swamps, but other fresh-water fish were not to be had. The only animal reared by themselves and eaten was the woolly-haired yellow poa dog; consequently, when the annual shark-fishing proved a failure there was no flesh-food to be had. Probably the kakapo, which burrowed in the ground and was easy to capture, was soon exterminated in the North Island, where the greatest number of Maoris lived. These times of food scarcity were often prolonged, and I have heard old Maoris say that their ancestors, after they had killed and eaten all their slaves, and exhausted all their food, had to fall back upon the roasted roots of the bracken. I have never tasted a more unpalatable food, and wonder that the Maoris did not exterminate all the ground-feeding birds of New Zealand rather than partake of such fare.

What the Maoris' lack of flesh-food did in the North Island the settlers' dogs and cats did in the South Island. Unfortunately dogs have run wild, and these packs of animals soon destroyed the guileless kakapo, and it has become very rare; so that the report that Mr R. E. Clouston, a mining engineer, has discovered a colony of kakapo on the Gouland Downs, south of Collingwood, will be received by naturalists as being very important news. Most of Mr Clouston's work was done at night, by the aid of strong acetylene lamps, and he was thus able to observe the habits of these night parrots fully, and to discover many things which were not previously known. The fact of the kakapo having been found on the Gouland Downs is interesting, as this, being a bird sanctuary, is controlled by Government, and these curious and interesting parrots will be protected in the future. Perhaps, too, the controversy about the bones and muscles of their wings will be finally settled.

In the early days of the Commonwealth the kakapo trails were often taken by the settlers for tracks made by human beings. These are frequently fourteen inches wide. Mr Reischek, an Austrian naturalist, who observed the habits of the kakapo, stated that these tracks were usually made along the spurs of the hills. He found that when the hills were covered with snow the birds still travelled over the surface, keeping to the same route. Where, however, the dense scrub, consisting of silver-pine, ake-ake, and alpine vegetation, prevented the snow from penetrating to the ground, the birds lived in their burrows during the winter, the darkness under the snow apparently making no difference in their obtaining the food they required. When the snow began to melt in the spring the kakapos emerged and crouched in the sunshine, evidently enjoying the warmth. They were no doubt sleeping, for Mr Reischek found some, after the snow had melted, sitting on the low branches of a silver-pine. He approached quite close to them without their evincing any alarm; only when he had caught them did they attempt to free themselves by biting and scratching. This naturalist, like so many others who had observed the kakapo in the days when it was plentiful, stated that the flesh was delicious, and far better eating than any other of the native birds; so, now that the kakapo has been rediscovered, it is just as well that it is in a protected area, or perhaps it would be exterminated by the settlers who might wish to taste a dish of roast kakapo.

THE ANCESTRY OF PRIVATE SCHULTZ.

By William Freeman.

PRIVATE JOHANN SCHULTZ, whom his regimental record knew as Private Michael O'Hara, leant against the parados of what an optimistic sapper had christened a trench, and wished with great intensity that he were dead. In front of him, swept by a vicious north-east wind, was a section of Flanders—a section more desolate than the prairie itself. It was six hours since he had had more than the suggestions of a meal, and his world had, to all appearances, forgotten that he existed.

Until the summer of 1914, the Fates had dealt not unkindly with Private Schultz. One hundred years before that date, a certain bluff, fair-haired dragoon in the Prussian army had fallen in love with the Irish nursemaid in the household of the ambassador at Berlin, and after a wooing as brief as it was tempestuous, had married her. And when the name of the Little Corporal had lost its menace, the dragoon had returned to Ireland with his wife, become naturalised, and there settled. The eldest son of each succeeding generation had been named Johann; and intermarriage notwithstanding, the stiff yellow hair and blue eyes of Private Schultz's great-great-great-grandfather had been faithfully handed down.

Private Johann was the last of his line. At the beginning of the war he had been working in London for Binsteds, the big builders. Followed a chilly period of boycott, an interview with the head of the firm, and the intimation that, under the circumstances, he had better seek work elsewhere. His German name and German appearance were hopelessly against him.

'But 'tis meself that's as loyal as th' best av thim,' protested Johann.

'Quite so—quite so,' said the manager; 'but the feelings of the men must be considered.'

So Johann departed, with an excellent character and a month's wages in lieu of notice. That same Saturday afternoon he left his room at Camden Town and took the tram to Highgate. At the door of a tea-shop he halted, screwed his courage a notch higher, and went in. He passed down an aisle of marble-topped tables and entered a small parlour behind, where a dark-haired, exceedingly pretty girl was arranging a plate of cakes.

'Hallo!' she said, the colour in her cheeks deepening. 'Mother's out. Anything wrong?'

'Binsteds are afther givin' me th' sack,' said Johann. 'Finish attindin' to y'r customers, and Oi'll explain.'

He did explain. Jenny Parker listened, with growing coldness. She and Johann were not formally engaged; there had been nothing more than an 'understanding' between them. And latterly sundry girl-friends had dwelt on Johann's ancestry, and her mother had added certain caustic comments of her own. Sick at heart, Johann perceived that she was superficially sorry for his sake, but that she viewed the diminishing prospect of their marriage with more relief than regret.

'A girl nowadays couldn't be expected to feel the same,' she explained, 'towards a man whose forefathers had been German.' And Johann had passed from the shop into the chilly October air, his life broken and worthless.

A recruiting poster caught his eye, with an arrow that showed the way to the nearest depot. He walked there like a man in a dream, and, still like a man in a dream, answered the questions put to him by a keen-eyed sergeant. 'Surname, O'Hara' (Johann's mother's); 'Christian name, Michael; age, twenty-three; occupation, house-painter.' And so forth. The local battalion was badly in need of more men, the sergeant disinclined to push his inquiries too far. Michael O'Hara was duly sworn in, and after a brief leave, during which he deposited his few belongings with his landlady, found himself an inconspicuous unit in B Company, 17th (Service) Battalion, South Surrey Rifles.

But despite the name on the regimental roll, a whisper sprang up from somewhere that it was not his own, and that he was not the Irishman his brogue indicated.

'A blighter that looks like a bloomin' 'Un and talks like a Dublin car-driver ain't to be trusted,' opined Jimmy Evans, the little Cockney corporal in B Company. 'Sargint, what's that there Latin word for a chap as goes abaht wiv a name that ain't 'is own? In—in'——

'*In loco parentis*,' said Sergeant Jupes, without hesitation. And 'Loco' Private Johann became forthwith.

Extreme depression does not make for popularity; and though the officers found Johann tractable and quick enough, that alert buoyancy which is worth so much on active service was lacking. So, while draft after draft went abroad, he remained at home. Then came an action which brought the regiment much honourable mention in despatches, and left gaps which urgently needed filling. Johann was told that his turn had come at last, and was offered forty-eight hours' leave by his company officer. He hesitated for a moment, and then declined it.

'No best girls you want to say good-bye to?' asked the captain, with a curious glance at the tall, stiff figure.

Johann had a sudden transitory vision of Jenny Parker's face when they had parted at the tea-shop door.

'Not me, sorr.'

'Please yourself,' said the officer; and Johann saluted and retired to polish his equipment furiously, and to persuade himself that he was forgetting.

That was three months ago—long enough for the whispers that had been forgotten in the excitement of departure to come to life again.

'Beggin' your pardon, sir,' said Sergeant Jupes respectfully, 'but I wouldn't put Private O'Hara —him the chaps calls "Loco"—at No. 3 listening-post.'

'Why not?' said Lieutenant Mellish. 'O'Hara is efficient enough.'

'Maybe, sir. But the others don't care for his company. There's an idea that he's half-German. His hair and eyes'——

'Oh, all right!' said Mellish impatiently. 'Send him to the end of the trench. Nothing ever happens there. And if you get any further information on the point'——

'I'll let you know at once, sir.'

So Private Johann found himself at the end of the trench, a man as lonely and embittered as any in the long line that straggled across Flanders. His wandering thoughts were checked by a faint gnawing sound. It was as though some giant rodent was slowly making its way into the earth beneath his feet. The newly trained soldier in him awoke, and he flattened his ear against the damp clay and listened intently. The gnawing sound stopped long enough for him to count twenty, and was followed by a phenomenon totally beyond the analysis of Private Johann. He was conscious only of a heaving shudder that convulsed the trench, and of a blinding, stunning roar. Thereafter he dropped an interminable distance into black oblivion.

At the end of an unmeasured interval he opened his eyes again. Through a chink in the mass of rubble above him, he could distinguish a solitary star swimming in a sky of velvety blue. It convinced him that, all other evidence to the contrary, he was still alive. He wriggled one arm free, and made an effort to shift the dreadful weight which was crushing his chest. His hand encountered torn sacking, clay, and stones. He tried to turn his body, and failed; tried to shout, and found his voice little more than a cracked whisper.

'Be gob, but if Oi'm not out av this befure long, Oi'll never be out at all!' Private Johann told himself. Despite the fact that his head was aching abominably, his brain worked with astonishing clarity and detachment. It was plain that he would have to proceed with caution as well as speed. With frequent pauses to rest, he freed both arms, and then, more slowly, his body. At which stage he sat up.

The sky above him was clear, but the horizon was gray with scurrying cloud, amid which the moon, almost full, rode in a track of silver vapour. Of the landscape she illuminated Private Johann appeared to be the sole living occupant. Whether there had been a battle, and, if so, which way the fortunes of war had swayed, he had no conception. He was alone, utterly alone on a tortured plain, with only prone and motionless figures for company. The thought crossed his mind that the end of the world had come while he lay there, and that the final catastrophe had passed and left him the only man alive.

He ceased to speculate, and began scrabbling at the débris which still encumbered his legs. It was painful work, but he was free at last. He felt himself over with grimed and bleeding fingers. So far as he could discover, no bones were broken. He stood up, turned dizzy, and dropped to a sitting position. Ten minutes passed before he could walk with any degree of confidence.

The moon, rising clear of the cloud-wrack, showed him what had lately been the front-line trenches occupied by B Company. But in which direction the company had moved, or even if it still existed, he had no idea. A growing sense of physical discomfort became suddenly acute, and he realised that his uniform had been rent and slashed until it was a mere collection of fluttering rags. He was cold—colder than he had ever been in his life.

From where he stood, Private Johann could see the hunched-up figure of a man, unmistakably dead, clad in a magnificently voluminous overcoat that was not even muddied. Impelled by the primitive need of covering himself, he stumbled towards the figure. The task of annexing a dead man's garment was horrible; but war, whatever its minor aspects, is always fundamentally horrible at heart, and without hesitation Private Johann unfastened the shining buttons.

'Sorry!' he said, as one apologising for the discourtesy, and annexed also a resplendent helmet and a pair of noble gauntlets. 'But 'tis a moighty good fit, no less,' he added.

In the moonlight he could see the face clearly, and shuddered. Death itself lacked the power to give dignity to the gross features and dog-like hang of the lower jaw. But the end had been merciful—a clean-drilled hole through the forehead.

'An' now f'r the exile's return!' said Private Johann.

The moon had vanished, and he was left to stumble onward, with no sense of direction. For the first few hundred yards he went fairly sure; then an attack of vertigo overcame him, and he collapsed on a pile of rubble which had once been a well-built thirteen-inch wall. His hand came in contact with a side-pocket of the overcoat—a garment of superfine cut and quality. He unbuttoned the flap, and extracted a notebook and an aluminium box. In the latter he discovered a small phial of spirits and several flat slabs of chocolate.

'Here's luck to th' bhoys!' said Private Johann, and drank a toast to the lost company. The stuff was a cordial of a brand unknown to his limited experience, but pungent in the extreme. It sent a revivifying glow through his entire body, and made the world again a place worth living in—a place where a man of action might still carve his way to fame. He munched a slab of chocolate, and then turned his attention to the notebook.

'Graf von Zenden, Colonel on the Staff of General Stuber, 188th Division,' translated Private Johann under his breath, and whistled softly as he studied the notes that followed.

Among his few extraneous accomplishments was an ability to speak German with a fluency and distinction which many a professor might have envied. There had been no use for German at Binsteds', and the accomplishment had lain dormant, so to speak. But it had always been a theory of Johann's father that a man should speak at least one tongue beside his own, and what more natural than that of great-great-great-grandfather Schultz? Another incentive existed, in the form of the big brass-bound Bible which had belonged to the old dragoon, and which tradition demanded should be passed on from father to son as soon as the boy could read its pages. Gorgeous pages they were, filled with copperplates depicting the Creation, innumerable heavenly hosts—all with placid Teuton faces and garments as capacious and tangible as blankets—and patriarchs surrounded with flocks and herds which would be a credit to Smithfield at its best. Johann had loved the book, and learnt it before he was ten, and still kept it in the box that his Camden Town landlady was guarding.

His brain grasped the fact that the seventh regiment of the division was to make an attack following the explosion of a certain mine, which was to wreck, annihilate, and generally remove from the map the British first-line trench.

'Which same explosion,' communed Private Johann, 'is afther dumping me half-way betune the loines—but still aloive,' he added, as one gratefully appreciative of a miracle. He restored the notebook, together with the aluminium case, to the overcoat pocket, and continued his dubious progress.

Ten minutes later he was confronted by a bulky little man with a dapper moustache and gold-rimmed *pince-nez*. The dapper little man, who apparently emerged from nowhere, saluted rigidly. Mechanically Private Johann, his own face in the shadow, saluted in return.

'Colonel von Zenden, sir?'

'*Ja*,' said Private Johann huskily. He was physically incapable of running away, even if he had wanted to. Nor was there anywhere to run to.

'Let me introduce myself as Captain Sapt, commanding Companies F and G. We have been expecting you for some time. Was the explosion a success, sir?'

'One might call it so,' said Private Johann cautiously.

'We inferred,' continued the captain, polishing his glasses, 'that the enemy would probably retreat, but that we might retreat—temporarily—also. We are consequently awaiting the further instructions which the General informed us he would send by yourself.'

Private Johann nodded. 'Where is Major Weinberg?'

'He was killed an hour ago, sir.'

Private Johann paid the defunct major the tribute of a sigh. In point of fact, he was considerably relieved. It eliminated his chief risk of being recognised. The notebook had referred to Weinberg as 'my old and valued friend, at present commanding a double company possessing less intelligence than sheep.'

'You will come down, sir?' insinuated the captain, indicating a black entrance.

'I will come,' said Private Johann, and followed his guide past a rigidly saluting sentry. In the hinterlands of his brain he was assuring himself that his chances of coming to the surface again were about one in two million.

Two flights of steps brought them to a second sentry, and a doorway. They entered a brightly lighted room, furnished with wicker chairs, a carpet, and coloured pictures from *Lüstige Blatter*. A dozen officers were grouped about a central table, in various stages of *négligé*—sure sign that they were Landsturmers, and not regulars. They leapt to their feet, saluting, as the two men entered, and an officious young lieutenant dragged a chair to the head of the table for the newcomer.

'Be seated, gentlemen,' commanded Private Johann, with a wave of his hand. The cordial had given him confidence, as well as warmth and strength. He would have as gaily passed the time of day with the Imperial Butcher himself. 'Give me a plan of the trenches,' he ordered—chiefly to gain time.

They brought him a tracing that showed every detail.

'Good! Now listen to me.' He wagged an admonitory forefinger to ensure their attention. 'The English line ran *so*, and *so*.' He indicated it with his thumb-nail on the paper. 'I say "ran," because the first line no longer exists. The second is held in such force that it would be useless for us to make more than a demonstration against it. The real attack will come from Colonel zu Wedel, on your right. What are your remaining effectives, captain?'

'About four hundred and seventy-five men, sir; scarcely enough to'——

'Frighten a couple of thousand demoralised Englishmen?' completed Private Johann, with a cold glare that would have done credit to the

old dragoon. 'Parade them in twenty minutes' time.'

'Very good, sir.'

'By the way, if you have any food available'——

They hastened to assure him that every crumb, every drop of wine, was at his absolute disposal.

'Then I will forage for myself,' said Private Johann, with the austere magnificence of a Von Moltke. 'Direct me to the kitchen.'

A dozen voices made haste to direct him. The way lay through a corridor lined with their equipment, and was separated from it by a curtain. The sergeant in charge of the cooking-quarters produced, with the utmost alacrity, coffee, bread, and a sausage which he solemnly assured his excellency was the last in the possession of the regiment.

'Berlin itself could do no better,' said Private Johann, and made an excellent, if hasty, meal.

When presently he emerged into the open again, the air was shuddering under the roar of a distant bombardment, the sky meretriciously bright with star-shells. It was a state of things he had seen so often that it had lost even its element of picturesqueness, and become no more than an accepted background to the dull unhappiness of his lot. He turned, and made a critical survey of the long double line of men who waited—tall fellows with close-cropped heads, and faces from which all except the animalism engendered by weariness and hunger seemed to have been obliterated.

'Brutes they are,' said Private Johann to himself; 'just poor brutes, bein' druv to death.' He moved towards the captain, who stood in the doorway of the dug-out, buckling on his revolver. 'You will advance two-deep, Captain Sapt, in the direction I indicate. Since it is to be a surprise attack, there will be no artillery preparation, and no man will fire until he is instructed. You understand?'

The captain saluted. In silence the advance began.

It was difficult to keep line, and more than once the men had to halt and re-form. To Private Johann, his nerves strained almost to snapping-point, the few hundred yards that separated him from the obliterated line of trenches seemed as many leagues. They reached it at last, and he went back to Sapt.

'You will wait here until I return.'

'Very good, sir. But if one might venture to suggest, as a precaution'——

'Suggest what you please—when the Emperor hands over the command of his armies to a syndicate of junior officers,' said Private Johann. 'Until then, obey my instructions without comment.' And to himself he added, 'Th' natest bit av tongue-waggin' Oi 've done, so far!'

The captain reddened, and stepped humbly back, leaving Private Johann to pursue his solitary way.

Minor adventures succeeded, including a fall into a shell-crater, before he ultimately blundered into a listening-post, comprising Sergeant Jupes, Corporal Evans, and four privates. More particularly he blundered into the sergeant, who had constituted himself a temporary exploring-party of one. The encounter was not without its lighter side, for both men were on their hands and knees. Johann was the quicker, but the sergeant was the bigger man. There was a brief struggle, during which Private Johann interjected, '*Kamerad! Kamerad!*' passionately several times, without the smallest effect; and finally he was hauled, in an extremely muddied and bruised condition, into the presence of Lieutenant Mellish.

'O'Hara, by all that's marvellous!' said the lieutenant. 'And in the uniform of a Prussian field-officer! You—you damned traitor!'

'Not me, sorr!' panted Private Johann. 'Niver a bit av ut, sorr! 'Tis a scarecrow Oi am to luk at, but no thraithor at all, at all. Oi 've been blown heavens-hoigh, an' buried hell-deep; an' Oi 've been in the inimy's dug-out, and by diplomacy an'—an' swank, got away again wid a few prisoners.'

'How many?' demanded the sceptical lieutenant.

'Fower-siventy-foive, wid officers complate, sorr.'

There was a momentary pause, during which Private Johann casually unbuttoned his overcoat.

'You 've been drinking,' said the lieutenant sternly, struggling to avert his eyes from the remarkable condition of the delinquent's uniform.

'Oi have, sorr—stuff that tasted loike a red-hot poker boiled in soda-wather. But 'twas a foine tonic. An' now, if ye 'll listen'——

. . . . . .

The men under Captain Sapt were still waiting, like so many figures in cast-lead, when Johann reappeared. He beckoned the captain into the shadow of a little hummock that hid them from the others.

'I regret,' said Private Johann, 'to bear unpleasant news.' He cleared his throat. 'There has been a—blunder. The men have taken a wrong direction. It is a question of surrender or annihilation. You will order them to pile arms and raise a white flag.'

The captain gave a strangled cry, and dragged at his revolver.

'By God, but you are a traitor!' he said, and pulled the trigger.

'Be jabber, 'tis y'rself that's more than a bit av a fule,' said Private Johann, 'f'r there 's not a cartridge in wan av y'r pistols. Oi emptied 'em myself;' and with a swift and nicely calculated blow on the point of the chin, he sent Captain Sapt into an oblivion, from which he emerged in the presence of an English M.O.

Dawn found Private Johann in his dug-out, reading. He was half-blind with fatigue and exhaustion; but it would have needed total blindness to keep him from reading a letter from Jenny Parker. She had discovered his address from the Camden Town landlady, and she wrote to say that she missed him awfully, and that she hoped he would not altogether forget her. There was a good deal more in the letter, but its real value lay in the three little crosses which had been shyly scratched beneath the signature. Private Johann was holding it suspiciously near his lips when the lieutenant appeared.

'Er—O'Hara'——

Private Johann blushed vividly, and rose.

'Sorr?'

'The colonel will want to see you in the morning. He is pleased—distinctly pleased—at your work to-night, and, apart from other recognition, you will probably be offered several days' leave—which, of course, you 'll decline.'

'Not this toime, sorr.'

'Really! Well, here 's a sovereign, because I —er—called you names, and—— Good-night, O'Hara!'

'Good-night, sorr!'

The lieutenant went on his way. Down the trench advanced sundry other apologetic spirits, chanting 'For he 's a jolly good fellow' at the top of strenuous voices. But Private Johann was already succumbing to slumber—to dreams that were brighter than the moonlight that mocked the many prisoners of his taking.

CAPTAIN VILKITSKI'S VOYAGES IN THE NORTHERN ARCTIC.

By G. LINDESAY.

IN 1878–79 Nordenskjold, on board the *Vega*, sailed from Norway to Behring Strait; in 1914–15 Captain Vilkitski, in command of the Russian Hydrographic Expedition, succeeded in making the voyage in the opposite direction for the first time, his ships, which left Vladivostok on a second attempt in July 1914, arriving in Archangel on 16th September 1915. The results attained by the latter in various directions were of very considerable importance.

Last October the Russian Government, through its representatives abroad, officially notified to Allied and friendly governments the incorporation into the Russian Empire of lands and islands in the North Polar Sea discovered in 1913 and 1914 by the scientific expedition under Naval Captain Vilkitski.

The Government also notified to foreign Governments the fact that other Arctic islands lying off the Russian coasts, though discovered by foreigners, are included in the Russian Empire. The following are the lands and islands concerned, all of which are shown in a special map accompanying the communication: Off the Taimyr Peninsula—Emperor Nicholas II. Land, Tsarevitch Alexis Island, Starokadomski Island. Off the New Siberian Islands—Henriette, Bennett, Jeannette, Novopachenni, and General Vilkitski Islands, together with Herald and Solitude Islands.

A brief reference to some of these may be interesting. The two vessels which carried the expedition, the *Taimyr* and the *Vaigatch*, were built in Petrograd on the same principles as the *Fram*, Nansen's famous craft. Their displacement was fifteen hundred tons; their average speed was eight knots; they carried coal sufficient for a voyage of twelve thousand sea-miles; and the complement of each consisted of five officers, an engineer, a doctor, and forty men. Each was provided with a hydro-aeroplane and radio-telegraphic apparatus, and they were provisioned for sixteen months.

Captain Vilkitski's instructions were to explore the northern coast of Asia, of which the tract from Behring Strait to the mouth of the Lena River had previously been only partially investigated. He was then to proceed to Cape Tsjeljuskin, the most northern point of Asia (in about one hundred and three degrees east longitude), then northwards from that headland as far as the ice conditions would permit, and afterwards to Archangel.

In 1913 the ships left Vladivostok, passed through Behring Strait, and worked their way westward, the *Taimyr* keeping to the south and the *Vaigatch* to the north of the New Siberian Islands. Off Cape Tsjeljuskin impassable ice was encountered, and further progress westward was put an end to; but this brought about the discovery of Emperor Nicholas II. Land, the existence of which had for long been believed in by geographers. It was with the object of finding this presumed territory that the *Dijmphna* Expedition of 1882–83 was fitted out. Unfortunately it hit on a most unfavourable season in the Kara Sea. The vessel stuck fast in the ice, and drifted about in it the whole succeeding winter; but it was fortunate enough to rescue the people of the Dutch meteorological station, whose ship, the *Varna*, had been crushed by the ice. Bad fortune had also attended other expeditions which started with the same object in view.

When endeavouring to pass round the ice off Cape Tsjeljuskin, Captain Vilkitski got so far north that he fell in with the new land, and

sailed along its eastern coast to eighty-one degrees north latitude and ninety-six degrees east longitude. He gave it the name of his emperor, the Tsar Nicholas II., and an island between it and Cape Tsjeljuskin he called after the Crown Prince, Tsarevitch Alexis. In addition to these discoveries, he found General Vilkitski Island, to the south-east of the New Siberian Islands, and a smaller one between these and Bennett Island. As the passage to the west was closed, the expedition returned the same year to Vladivostok, and as a reward for the results obtained, the rank of Adjutant to the Emperor was conferred on its commander.

In July 1914 the ships again started for the Northern Arctic, with orders to complete the survey of the Taimyr Peninsula and Nicholas II. Land, and afterwards to proceed westwards through the Kara Sea to Archangel. Great difficulties were experienced that year with the ice. On 2nd September Cape Tsjeljuskin was passed; but both vessels were ultimately obliged to go into winter quarters immediately to the west of that headland, in the neighbourhood of King Oscar's Bay. On both voyages the wireless telegraph was found to be of inestimable value, as it enabled the ships to communicate with one another at any time, even when the distance between them was very considerable.

Of permanent Russian radio-stations in the Arctic there are at present five: two to the south of Behring Strait, at Anadyr and Nagakhan, and three at the entrances to the Kara Sea. These three have been established for the benefit of the navigation (so important for Siberia) through the strait to and from the great Russian rivers Obi and Jenesei. One of them is on the mainland on the Jugor Strait, opposite the island of Vaigatch; the second is on the north-west side of that island; and the third is at Mara Sale, in the Kara Sea, on the southern part of the west coast of the Jahnal Peninsula. From the anchorage to the west of Cape Tsjeljuskin it was found impossible to communicate with any of these stations, and fears began to be entertained in Russia as to the fate of the expedition. On 19th January 1915, however, wireless communication was successfully obtained with the ship *Eclipse*, under the command of Captain Sverdrup, which had been despatched in search of Rusinov and Brusilov's expedition. The *Eclipse* had worked its way eastwards over the Kara Sea, but had been compelled to go into winter quarters about two hundred and twenty miles to the west of the place where the *Taimyr* lay at anchor. On receipt of Captain Vilkitski's message, Captain Sverdrup forwarded it to the station at Jugor Strait (about a thousand miles), from which it was sent to Archangel (some nine hundred miles). In spite of the reassuring intelligence thus conveyed to Russia, arrangements were made for the despatch of a relief expedition, with coal and provisions, in case Captain Vilkitski should find himself obliged to remain away another winter; but in the summer of 1915 he succeeded in getting clear of the ice, and, as above stated, reached Archangel with both his ships on 16th September.

Although Captain Vilkitski was thus successful in voyaging from Behring Strait to Europe, it is hardly likely, in view of the difficulties which attach to it, that this route can ever be utilised for regular trading purposes; and in a recent issue of the *Novoje Vremja* a well-known Russian writer ridicules the idea. He advocates the construction of a waterway to Europe by means of the Siberian rivers and artificial canals, by which many of these remote provinces of the Russian Empire might be connected with Russia itself at a comparatively moderate cost. In his opinion not more than three relatively short canals would suffice; and where the making of these is too difficult, he suggests railways.

THE TWO VISIONS.

METHOUGHT I gazed upon a battlefield,
And saw unnumbered hero-soldiers yield—
With steadfast purpose—all the hopes of youth
A willing sacrifice to guard the Truth
And Liberty and Justice of the world,
Which else had from their rightful thrones been hurled.
I shuddering saw how over all the plain
Accumulated ghastly heaps of slain;
I heard the murmured prayer to Heaven addressed,
The groans of agony not all suppressed;
I saw homes mourning their illustrious dead,
Hearts nigh to breaking, faith so nearly fled.
I cried, 'Oh Father, God of love and power,
Make Thyself manifest in this dread hour!'

The vision faded from my view. I heard
A Voice which all my inmost being stirred:
'My child, thou shalt be favoured. Look again,
And see what follows after all the pain.'

The scene was changed. I stood beside the gate
Of Paradise itself, where angels wait
The arriving souls. The spirits of the dead
Thronged from the battlefield, and angels said,
'Welcome, ye brave, who in this awful strife
Have gladly yielded, of your love, your life.
"No greater love than this." Know your reward
From Him who taught you, your most loving Lord.'
I saw calm faith now repossess the heart
Of those who mourned; no longer far apart,
In One Communion of the Saints they rest,
Waiting the call to join their dead so blest.

And now I cried, 'Oh Lord of Life and Love,
I thank, I bless Thee; with the hosts above
I glorify Thy name, who out of ill
And woeful loss canst bring such trust, and fill
These blissful mansions with the ransomed souls
Whose shout triumphant round Thy Presence rolls.'

W. M. MEREDITH.

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SEVENTH SERIES

LIFE ON DARTMOOR WITHOUT SERVANTS.

By BEATRICE CHASE, Author of *The Heart of the Moor*, *Through a Dartmoor Window*.

SINCE the heartless Government took our bluejacket for coast defence we have been afflicted with female failures who have made me a hardened misogynist. They were not the single, modern young female servant, whom no consideration would induce us to admit inside this house. They were elderly, respectable, married women, who had been in gentlemen's service of what ought to have been the good old-fashioned kind; and to say that I was only just alive and sane when we got rid of the last one sums up the horrors of our year. Now we have settled down with a splendid local woman who has never been in service, and has a beautiful little home. She comes for the mornings. A native man, who is an all-round genius, comes any evening he is wanted, and always on Saturdays and Sundays; so with this help we have settled in for life. When that fails I shall rise at 4.30 A.M., and do their work also.

All my life, of course, I have done a large proportion of the higher branches of housework, such as cooking, fine laundry-work, silver and brass cleaning, and many other things. Now, however, I have boldly attacked the roughest and dirtiest departments, such as cleaning stoves, blackleading, and scrubbing; and the more I do of it the more my misogynism is confirmed. It is not until an intelligent woman does things herself that she plumbs to its depths the half-witted incompetence of even the best type of female domestic servant. I have always maintained that housecraft requires the highest form of intellect, which is why many lower-class women are unable to do it; and now I am certain of the truth of my theory. They do their work without using any mental power about it. They behave like machines, and when there comes one of those unforeseen emergencies which occur constantly in every house they are thrown off the line for the day. Apart from emergencies, through lack of brain-power, they make double the labour out of every task; and, for the same reason, as soon as anything is clean, they begin to mess it up again. The Rainbow-Maker has always remarked, 'It is the servant who makes the work and the dirt.' I find it is literally true. She also remarks, 'God sends the food, and the devil sends the cook.' That is, no doubt, truer; but as no servant in Europe can cook for us, we are spared that particular torment.

For instance, take grates, fires, and stoves. I now clean one grate every day, without missing. I do it in twelve minutes from the time I spread the grate-wrapper till the new fire is laid. This includes going over the cobbitt, fireirons, and handsome black iron kettle with the blacklead-brush. Every scrap of cinder is taken away; the bars are clear for the draught—a new experience. All the ironwork shines with polish—also a new experience—and the fire is laid in a way that can allow it to burn. When a servant cleans a grate she first leaves the bars choked, and then, hermetically to seal the necessary underdraught, she relays the fire with a mass of cinders under the paper. Then we all go mad with smoke, and the clean rooms are ruined. You explain till you are hoarse that fires require to breathe as we do; but you cannot teach her. She always has laid a fire with an impenetrable layer of cinders under it, and she will continue to do so. Then she tries to counteract this folly by using double the necessary amount of wood and paper. Flues are, of course, nearly every servant's stumbling-block. She would rather be smoked out, have to clean the kitchen, be unable to cook anything or to get any hot water, than clean her flues. The blacksmith told me this summer that in the busiest harvest season, when he was working from dawn till dark at the machinery and shoeing, he had to lose many half-days wanted for this important work 'to run the country' on all sides in response to dirges from ladies round about, saying their stoves would not burn, and they could get no food. In every case, he told me, the slut of a servant had got the flues choked solid with soot, and the fool of a mistress had not even known it. In no instance was there anything whatever wrong with the stove. Well, to me, there is a high satisfaction, not to mention pride, in cleaning out a grate, making it look beautiful, and lighting a fire which will burn. When I have done it, I am conscious of successful intellectual achievement. I wear a long blue pinafore reaching from my chin to my toes, a blue sun-bonnet, and a pair of special grate-gloves made, by a clever young friend of mine, of American cloth, which is much

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more satisfactory than wash-leather, as it permits no kind of leakage. I have caps, of course, for ordinary housework, such as sweeping and dusting; but for real filthy work, like grates, there is nothing to touch the old-fashioned sun-bonnet. The valance comes down beyond the nape of the neck; the ears are also completely covered; you can pull it down over the eyes in front, and the strings prevent any displacement. Added to this, it is quaintly picturesque. In addition to the dirty way in which the grate itself is only half-cleaned, there is the aggravation of the dust which a servant lets loose all over the room in taking up ashes. I never knew that it was possible to clean a grate without even having to dust the mantelpiece; but I find it is. I open the door of the room and an opposite window wide before I begin. This creates a draught which blows the ash up the chimney instead of all over the room. I must in honesty confess that I did not invent this patent. It was taught me by the local chimney-sweep, who declines to begin his operations till door and window are wide open and a draught established. If you try to teach this to a servant, she prefers to produce a fog of ash all over the room, and then either to dust everything or else leave it dirty. Again, there is a sense of intellectual delight in cleaning a grate without making any mess. Without intellect the thing cannot be done.

This intellectual effort applies not only to each task, but to the programme of the entire day. It produces a maximum of well-done work at a minimum of fatigue and time expenditure. Instead of doing a dab here and a dab there, as many servants do, I have certain hours when I am doing housework, and in an hour I do what they would take three hours over. For instance, in the evening hour of preparing dinner I start all my stoves and pans, and then clean the grate ready for the morning. The stoves and pans cannot be left entirely, yet they do not require more than intermittent attention, so that several things can be done at the same time. When the grate is finished I attend to buckets and cans, which means several journeys into the open. Thus half-an-hour of morning work is done in the evening dinner-hour, and when I descend to get breakfast ready there is a blazing fire in two minutes.

Washing-up is another trouble over which servants waste much time. To begin with, they, too often, wash up all the dirtiest and greasiest things first, and glass and silver last in a thick pea-soup of grease, coffee-grounds, tea-leaves, lumps of fat, and every other solid matter they can get together. Then they take an extra half-hour to polish silver and glasses, or else we use both in a sickeningly smeared condition. When an intellectual woman washes up, she begins with glass, continues with silver, and works on to saucepans last. I find it is a mistake to wash up after every meal. Washing-up is always the greatest problem of housework, for the very reason that it inevitably comes after a meal, when one ought not to be exerting one's self. After various experiments, I find it is better to have two washings-up a day rather than four; and the greatest mistake of all is washing-up after dinner in the evening, which is the chief meal, when one is most tired. So I leave dinner-things in soak till morning, and then do them and breakfast-things together. Exertion at that time in the morning matters much less. Lunch-things are left, and done after tea with tea-things. Tea is a lighter meal than lunch, and exertion then is again the minimum of injury. At that hour I also prepare everything for dinner, so as not to have to start all over again in half-an-hour or so. Thus I get a good spell off duty, and only have to put a match at dinner-time to the oil-stoves, on which every pan is ready. I find that the butter, milk, cream, and fat in washing-up water are extremely good for the hands, and are a preventive of chilblains. After finishing, I wash my hands in very hot water, and then rub on a lotion of lemon-and-glycerine. After peeling vegetables, especially onions, to get rid of the odour, particularly about one's nails, I use a little bottle of essence of lemon, into which I dip each finger-tip. This entirely does away with any odour, and also whitens the skin.

Another problem is the answering of the door. This I have solved to my own satisfaction, if not to my friends'. When any one calls at the hour which would throw out some domestic task, I say politely, 'I am sorry I am not at home. I have just begun washing-up, and the water is getting cold. Can you come again?' No one appears to mind. Sometimes it happens the caller only wants to know something which I can tell him at once. Before meals I plant upon the step, anchored by a boulder, a legend in large type, 'Not at home till ——. Please shut and fasten the gate.' I found, if I were to preserve my health, that this was absolutely necessary. No one can be disturbed constantly at meals without serious suffering eventually. I think people, as a whole, prefer these methods. No one wants to be a nuisance, or to cause me suffering; and then people are sure when they are asked in that I really do want to see them.

There are many little dodges by which an intelligent woman can minimise fatigue. One is to wear heelless shoes when engaged in household tasks. These are restful to both the feet and the spine, and for some reason one can get about at double the pace without heels. Very prettily cut shoes can now be had in velvet and satin in lovely colours such as cinnamon, turquoise, crimson, pink, violet, rose, gray; and, if desired, they can be changed for heels when one has finished. After a task which has meant standing for some time, I always sit in an easy-chair, and put my feet up as high as my head

on another chair padded with cushions, with a specially big cushion under the knees. Five minutes of this makes one feel perfectly fresh. It not only rests the feet and legs, but eases the heart enormously. If possible, I do it in sun and fresh air. A book for these few minutes is part of the dodge. To read even a few pages switches the mental current along a new line, so to speak—a line which has been resting for several hours and is perfectly fresh. One way to remain perennially fresh is to change the mental current frequently along rested lines. Another good dodge after fatigue or being indoors is to stand at the open door and breathe deeply for twelve breaths, especially before going to bed. Servants, of course, do none of these things. They require intellect and education.

For me there is art and beauty in housecraft which cannot be attained by any other means. What ideal can be more beautiful than to serve those we love with our own hands? What in life is more sacred than home? Home means health for the family, and families mean the nation. What work could be more sublime? I hope the day is coming when thoroughbred women, like the noble ladies of medieval times, will return again to their own, and will count it a disgrace to let their kinsfolk and their guests be served by menial hands. Let the plebeian women go out daily to what they are pleased to call man's work. It is all many of them are fit for. But, in heaven's name, let us patricians awake to our birthright, and see to it that only ourselves, the high priestesses, minister in the sacred sanctuary of Home.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER VIII.—OF CANDIES AND CONFIDENCES.

'OH!' said Mrs Trapes, 'so you've come? Good land, Mr Geoffrey, there's parcels an' packages been a-comin' for you constant ever since you went out. Whatever have you been a-buyin' of?' and, opening the door of his small bedroom, she indicated divers packages with a saucepan-lid she happened to be holding.

'Well,' said her lodger, seating himself upon the bed, 'if I remember rightly, there are shirts, and socks, and pyjamas, and a few other oddments of the sort. And here, when I can get it out of my pocket, is a box of candies. I don't know if you are fond of such things; most of the sex feminine are, I believe. Pray take them as a mark of my—er—humble respect.'

'Candy!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, turning the gaily bedecked box over and over, and glaring at it fierce-eyed; 'fer me?'

'If you will deign acceptance.'

'Candy,' she repeated, elbows a-twitch, 'fer me? Land sakes, Mr Geoffrey, I—I'—— Here, very abruptly, she turned about and vanished into the kitchen.

Mr Ravenslee, lounging upon his white bed, was taking languid stock of his purchases when Mrs Trapes suddenly reappeared, clutching a toasting-fork. 'Mr Geoffrey,' she said, glaring still, 'them candies must ha' cost you a sight o' money?'

'True, certain moneys were expended, Mrs Trapes.'

'They must ha' cost you well-nigh a dollar-fifty, I reckon?'

'They did,' nodded Mr Ravenslee, smiling.

'My land!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, and vanished again.

Mr Ravenslee was sighing over a hideously striped shirt when Mrs Trapes was back again, flourishing a very large tablespoon.

'Mr Geoffrey,' said she, 'it's nigh forty years since any one bought me a box o' chocolates. An' now they look so 'cute, all done up in them gold an' silver wrappin's, as I don't wanter eat 'em; seems a sin, it do. But, Mr Geoffrey, I—I'd like to thank ye;' and, lo! she was gone again.

Mr Ravenslee had just pitched the striped shirt out of the window, when, behold! Mrs Trapes was back yet once more, this time grasping a much-battered but more be-polished dish-cover.

'Mr Geoffrey,' said she, 'I ain't good at thankin' folks; no, I ain't much on gratitood, never havin' had much to gratify over; but them candies is goin' to be consoomed slow an' reverent, and in a proper sperrit o' gratitood. And now, if you're ready to eat your supper, your supper's a-waitin' to be ate.'

So saying, she led the way into the parlour, where, upon a snowy cloth, in a dish tastefully garnished with fried tomatoes, the English mutton-chop reposed, making the very most of itself; the which Mr Ravenslee forthwith proceeded to attack with surprising appetite and gusto.

'Is it tender?' inquired Mrs Trapes anxiously. 'Heaven pity that butcher if it ain't! Is it tasty, kind of?'

'It's delicious,' nodded her lodger. 'Really, Hell's Kitchen seems to suit me. I eat and sleep like a new man.'

'So you ain't lived here long, Mr Geoffrey?' queried Mrs Trapes, eagle-eyed.

'Not long enough to—er—sigh for pastures new. Don't go, Mrs Trapes; I love to hear folks talk. Sit down and tell me tales of dead kings, and—er—I mean, converse of our neighbours, will you?'

'I will so, an' thank ye kindly, Mr Geoffrey, if you don't mind me suckin' a occasional candy.'

'Pray do, Mrs Trapes,' he said heartily. Whereupon, having fetched her chocolates, Mrs Trapes ensconced herself in the easy-chair, and, opening the box, viewed its contents with glistening eyes.

'You're an Englishman, ain't you?' she inquired after a while, munching luxuriously.

'No; but my mother was born in England.'

'You don't say!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes. 'So was I—born in the Old Kent Road, Mr Geoffrey. I came over to N' York thirty long years ago as cook-general to Hermy Chesterton's ma. When she went and married again I left her an' got married myself to Trapes, a foreman, Mr Geoffrey, with a noble 'eart, as 'ad wooed me long.' Here Mrs Trapes opened the candy-box again, and, after long and careful deliberation, selected a chocolate with gentle, toil-worn fingers, and, putting it in her mouth, sighed her approbation. 'They sure are good,' she murmured. 'But talkin' o' Hermy Chesterton's ma,' she went on after a blissful interval, 'I been wonderin' where you came to meet that b'y Arthur.'

'Ah, Mrs Trapes!' sighed Ravenslee, leaning back in his chair and shaking a rueful head, 'you touch on gloomy matters. As the story-books say, "thereby hangs a tale," the dismal tale of a miserable wretch whose appetite was bad, whose sleep was worse, and whose temper was worst of all—oh, a very wretched wretch indeed!'

'My land!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, stopping abruptly in the act of masticating a large chocolate walnut; 'so bad as that, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Worse,' he nodded gloomily. 'It is, indeed, a gloomy tale, a tale dark and dismal that I love not the telling of; for, Mrs Trapes, that more than hopeless wretch stands, or rather sits, before you.'

'Save us!' ejaculated Mrs Trapes. 'Meanin' yourself?'

'My unworthy self.'

'Lord!' she whispered, 'what you been a-doin' of?'

'Wasting a promising life, Mrs Trapes.'

'You mean,' she questioned in a harsh whisper—'you mean as you've killed some one accidental?'

'Oh no, the life was mine own, Mrs Trapes.'

'Land sakes, Mr Geoffrey, you give me quite a turn! Ye see, sometimes folks gets theirselves killed around here, an' it's always accidental, sure!' and Mrs Trapes nodded meaningly, and went on chewing. 'But say,' she demanded, suddenly sharp of eye, 'where does Arthur come in?'

'Arthur comes in right here, Mrs Trapes. In fact, Arthur broke into my—er—life just when things were at their darkest generally. Arthur found me very depressed and gloomy. Arthur taught me that life might yet have its uses. Arthur lifted me out of the Slough of Despond. Arthur brought me to you! And, behold, life is good, and perchance shall be even better, if—ah yes, if! So you see, my dear Mrs Trapes, Arthur has done much for me; consequently I have much to thank Arthur for. Indeed, I look upon Arthur'——

'Shucks!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, 'that'll be about enough about Arthur—Arthur, indeed! You oughter know his sister.'

Now at this her lodger started and glanced at her so suddenly, and with eyes so unexpectedly keen, that once again she suspended mastication.

'Now, in the name of all that's wonderful, Mrs Trapes, why mention her?'

'Why, because she's worth knowin'. Because she's the best, the bravest, the sweetest thing that ever went in petticoats. She's beautiful inside and out, mind. I've nursed her in these arms years ago, an' I know she's—oh, well, you ought to meet Hermy.'

'Mrs Trapes, I have.'

'Eh? You have? My lan'!' Mrs Trapes bolted a caramel in her astonishment, and thereafter stared at Ravenslee with watering eyes. 'An' you to sit there an' never tell me!' quoth she; 'an' Hermy never told me! Well, well! When did ye meet her? Whereabouts? How?'

'About half-an-hour ago. Coming up the stairs. I carried her grip.'

'Well!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, staring; 'well, well!' and she continued to munch candy and to stare and say 'Well!' at intervals until arrested by a new thought. 'That b'y!' she exclaimed. 'Was Arthur with her?'

'No,' answered Ravenslee, wrinkling his brows; 'I lost him on my way home.'

Mrs Trapes sighed and shook her head. 'The sun sure rises and sets for her in that b'y, an' him only her step-brother at that.'

'Her step-brother?'

'Yes,' nodded Mrs Trapes emphatically. 'Hermy's ma were a lady, same as Hermy is; so were her pa—I mean a gentleman, of course. But Hermy's father died; an' then her ma, poor soul, goes an' marries a good-lookin' loafer way beneath her, a man as weren't fit to black her shoes, let alone take 'em off! An' Arthur's his father's child. Oh, a good enough b'y as b'ys go, but wild now an' then, an' rough, like his dad.'

'I see,' nodded her hearer thoughtfully.

'Now, me, though married ten long year, never 'ad no children; so, ever since Hermy's mother died, I've tried to watch over her an' help her as much as I could. Ah! she's had a mighty hard struggle, one thing an' another, Mr Geoffrey; an' now I've known her an' loved her so long, it kind o' seems as if she belonged to me almost.'

'She looks very good and brave,' said Mr Ravenslee.

'Good!' cried Mrs Trapes, and snorted. 'I tell you she's jest a angel o' light, Mr Geoffrey. If you'd seen her, like I have, goin' from one poor little sick child to another, kissin' their little hot faces, tellin' 'em stories, payin' for doctor's stuff out of her bit o' savin's, mendin' their clo'es—ah, yes! an' prayin' over 'em when they died, why, I guess you'd think she was a angel too. One sure thing,' said Mrs Trapes, rising, 'there ain't a breathin' man in all this whole round earth as is fit to go down on 'is knees an' kiss 'er little foot—not a one! No, sir!'

'No, I don't think there is,' said Mr Ravenslee slowly.

'As for that Bud M'Ginnis,' cried Mrs Trapes, seizing on the coffee-pot much as if it had been that gentleman's throat, 'I'd—I'd like to bat him one as would quiet him for keeps. I would so!' and she jerked the coffee-pot fiercely, much to the detriment of her snowy tablecloth. 'There, now, see what I've done; but I do get all worked up over that loafer.'

'Pray, why?'

'Why?' snorted Mrs Trapes indignantly. 'Hasn't he made eyes at her ever since they was kids together? Hasn't he worried an' worried at her; an' because she won't look at him if she can help it, don't he try to get back at her through that b'y?'

'How does he?'

'How? By puttin' him up to fightin' an' all sorts o' devilment; by teachin' him to be tough; by gettin' him drunk.'

'Oh, does he?'

'Oh, bless ye, Bud M'Ginnis can do anything with him.'

'How so?'

'Because Arthur jest worships M'Ginnis for his strength an' toughness.'

'Ah, I see.'

'Yes, Arthur thinks there's nobody in the world could lick Bud M'Ginnis.'

'H'm! May I smoke, Mrs Trapes?'

'Sure ye may,' she nodded, and began to collect the supper-things. 'I tell you what,' she exclaimed suddenly, flourishing the fork she had just taken up; 'if somebody would only come along an' thrash M'Ginnis—thrash him good—it would be a sight better for every one round here—it would so! M'Ginnis is always makin' trouble for some one or other, an' there ain't a man big enough or got heart enough to stand up to him; not even Spider Connolly. Wish I was a man, that's all, just for an hour! Ah!' Here Mrs Trapes snorted fiercer than usual, and the jut of her elbows was deadly.

'And he gets Arthur drunk, does he?' said Ravenslee, puffing dreamily at his pipe.

'Yes,' sighed Mrs Trapes as she loaded a tray with the supper-things. 'Hermy's seen him drunk twice to my knowin', an' I thought it would break her heart, poor dear. Ye see, Mr Geoffrey, his father died o' the drink, an' she's frightened for fear Arthur should go the same road. Oh, Hermy's life ain't all ice-cream sodas an' lollipops—not much it ain't, poor, brave, beautiful thing!'

Saying which, Mrs Trapes, sighing again, took up her tray. Mr Ravenslee, having opened the door for her, closed it again, lighted his pipe, and, sinking into the easy-chair, fell into frowning thought.

The windows were open, and from the crowded court below rose the shrill babel of many children's voices, elfin shrieks and cries, accompanied by the jingle of a barrel-organ, very wiry and very much out of tune; but Ravenslee, deep-plunged in thought, heard nought of it, nor heeded the fact that the pipe, tight-clenched between his strong white teeth, was out. For Geoffrey Ravenslee had set himself a problem.

The barrel-organ ceased its jangle; the children's voices were gradually hushed as, one by one, they were called in by hoarse-voiced mothers, and led away to bed; and the gloomy court grew ever gloomier as evening deepened into night. But still Mr Ravenslee lounged in the easy-chair, and so motionless that he might have been asleep except for the grim set of his jaw and the bright, wide-open eyes of him.

At last, and suddenly, he sat erect, for he had heard a voice whose soft murmur he recognised even through the closed door.

'I don't know, Hermy dear,' came in Mrs Trapes's harsh tones. 'I'm afraid he's gone to bed. Anyway, I'll see.' Ensued a knocking of bony knuckles, and, opening the door, Ravenslee beheld Mrs Trapes, and behind her stood Hermione, and in her eyes he saw again that look of wistful, anxious fear he had wondered over at the first.

'Oh, Mr Geoffrey,' said Mrs Trapes, 'it's eleven o'clock, an' that b'y ain't in yet. Here's Hermy been out huntin' the streets for him, an' ain't found him. Consequently she's worritin' herself sick over him—drat 'im!'

'Out on the streets,' repeated Ravenslee—'alone?'

'Yes,' answered Hermione; 'I had to—try to find him.'

'But alone, and at this hour, Miss Hermione; that was surely very—er—unwise of you?'

'Yes; you see, I didn't know where to look,' she sighed. 'I've been to the saloon, but he wasn't there.'

'The saloon! Good Lord!' exclaimed Ravenslee, his placidity quite forgotten, his face set and stern; 'that is no place for you, or any girl.'

'I must go to find Arthur,' she said softly.

'No, not there, even for that. Think of the—the risks you run. No girl should take such chances.'

'Oh, you mean that!' said Hermione, meeting his eyes with her frank glance. 'But no one would try to insult me hereabouts; this isn't Broadway or Fifth Avenue, Mr Geoffrey;' and she smiled a very sad, weary little smile. 'But I came to ask if you happened to know where Arthur is, or whom he was with.'

'Wasn't wid that Bud M'Ginnis, was he?' questioned Mrs Trapes sharply.

'No, he wasn't with M'Ginnis,' answered Mr Ravenslee in frowning perplexity; 'but that's about all I can tell you.'

'Thank you,' sighed the girl. 'I must go and try again. I know I shall find him soon.' But, though she tried to speak in a tone of cheerful confidence, her shapely head drooped rather hopelessly.

'You mean you are going out on to the—to look for him again?'

'Why, of course,' she answered; 'I must find Arthur.'

'Don't, Hermy, don't—so pale an' tired as you are, don't go again,' pleaded Mrs Trapes, her usual sharpness transfigured into a deep and yearning tenderness, even her voice seeming to lose something of its harshness. 'Don't worry, my sweet; the b'y 'll find his way home right enough, like he did last time.'

'Like last time!' cried Hermione, and, shivering, she leaned against the wall as if she were faint. 'Ah, no, no!' she whispered; 'not like last time!' and, bowing her head, she hid her face in her hands.

Close, close about that quivering form came two motherly arms, and Mrs Trapes fell to passionate invective and tender soothing thus: 'There, there, my love, my pretty, don't remember that last time! Oh, drat my fool's tongue for remindin' you; drat it, my dear, my honey! Ah, don't go breakin' your angel's heart along of Arthur, my precious—and drat him too! That b'y 'll come back all right, he will—he will; I know he will. Oh, if I was only behind 'im with a toastin'-fork! There, there, Hermy dear, don't fret; Arthur 'll come home all right. My honey, you 're all tuckered out, an' here it 's gettin' on to midnight, an' you go to Englewood by the early car. Go to bed, dear, an' I 'll sit up for Arthur. Only don't cry, Hermy.'

'Oh, I 'm not crying, dear,' said Hermione, lifting her head. 'See, I haven't shed a tear. But I must find Arthur. I couldn't rest or sleep; I should lie listening for his step. So, you see, dear, I must go out and find him.'

Hereupon, with swift, dexterous fingers, Hermione straightened the very neat hat which the embrace of Mrs Trapes had rendered somewhat askew, and, turning to the door, came face to face with Mr Ravenslee, and in his hand she beheld his battered hat, but she did not notice how fiercely his powerful fingers gripped it.

'Miss Hermione,' said he, in his soft, indolent voice, and regarding her beneath languid, drooping lids, 'pray accept the hospitality of my—er—apartment. You will find the easy-chair is very easy; and while you sit here with Mrs Trapes I 'll find your brother and bring him here to you.'

'Thank you,' she answered, a little shortly because of his lazy tone, or his sleepy eyes, or his general languid air, or all of them together; 'thank you, but I 'm going myself. I must go; I—I couldn't wait.'

'Oh, but really you must, you know.'

'Must?' she repeated, looking her surprise.

'Ab-solutely must,' he answered softly, nodding so sleepily that she almost expected him to yawn. 'You really can't go out again to-night, you know,' he added.

Hermione's blue eyes flashed, her delicate brows knit themselves, and Mr Ravenslee saw that she was taller than he had thought.

'You mean you will try to stop me?' she demanded.

'No; I mean that I will stop you.'

'But you 'd never dare!'

'I would dare even your anger in so good a cause. Ah, please, don't be angry with me, Miss Hermione, because'—and here his sleepy voice grew positively slumberous—'you shall not go out into the streets again to-night.'

'Ah, an' that 's right too, Mr Geoffrey!' cried Mrs Trapes. 'Hermy needs some one strong enough to master her now an' then, she is that wilful, she is so.'

But now all at once, as he watched, Hermione's eyes filled with great, slow-gathering tears, her firm-set lips grew soft and quivered pitifully, and she sank down in the easy-chair, her golden head bowed upon the green-and-yellow table-cloth. The battered hat tumbled to the floor, and, striding forward, he had bent and caught one of her listless hands all in a moment; and thereafter, though it struggled feebly once, he held it close prisoned in his own.

'Ah, don't!' he pleaded, his words coming quick and eager; 'don't do that! Oh, do you think I can't see that you 're all overwrought? How can I let you go tramping out there in the streets again? You couldn't go—you mustn't go! Stay here with good Mrs Trapes, I beg of you, and I swear I 'll bring Arthur to you. Only you must promise me to wait here and be patient however long I am. You must promise, Hermione.'

Now at this she lifted her heavy head and looked at him through her tears. And surely, surely in the face that bent above her was none of indolence or languor? These lips were firm now, and close-set; these lazy eyes were wide and bright, and in them that which brought the

warm colour to her cheeks; but reverence was there also, wherefore she met his look, and her fingers were not withdrawn from his until she had answered, 'I promise.'

'That 's my wise dearie,' nodded Mrs Trapes.—'An' good luck to you, Mr Geoffrey; an' when you find that b'y, say as I wish—ah, how I wish!—I was back of him with a toastin'-fork, that 's all!'

Then Mr Ravenslee caught up the shabby hat, opened the door, and, going out, closed it softly behind him.

'Hermy,' said Mrs Trapes, clasping the girl's slender waist in her long arm, and leading her into the brightest of bright little kitchens, 'I like that young feller. Who he is I don't know, what he does I don't know, but what he is I do know, an' that 's a man, my dear. An' he called you Hermione. Sounds kind o' pretty the way he says it, don't you think?'

But Hermione didn't answer.

Meanwhile Mr Ravenslee, descending the monotonous stairs, paused suddenly to smile and clap hand to thigh. 'A toasting-fork!' said he; 'a toasting-fork is an instrument possessing three or more sharp points. Ha! Mrs Trapes is a woman of singularly apposite ideas.' And he smiled a little grimly as he went on down the stairs.

(*Continued on page 115.*)

THE IMPORTANCE OF SPANISH.

THE interest that is being caused by the inclusion of Spanish in the curriculum of study at the schools in England has given rise to much comment and a very favourable impression in the educational circles of South America, where the study of English is compulsory at the majority of the schools. The importance of Spanish has always been underestimated in England, and why the German language should ever have been given preference over the beautiful language of Cervantes is hard to say. When we stop to consider that Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages, and that it is the official tongue of some twenty independent self-governed countries, inhabited by little short of eighty million people, who jointly form one of the most homogeneous races in existence, its importance cannot be overlooked. The Spanish-speaking nations of the world, particularly those of the New World, have all entered on an era of unequalled growth and prosperity. They are the countries in whose high and low lands lie the natural resources the whole world will have some day necessarily to draw upon. Their population is increasing, assisted in a great measure by the thousands of Europeans that annually make their way thither in search of an easier, better, more independent, more remunerative livelihood. Seven out of every ten of these emigrants succeed in the work they, as a rule, engage in, and, after a few years of constant toil and economy, manage to establish themselves independently in the different branches of commercial and industrial activity. Many of these men marry native women, and thus they bring up families that do honour and justice to the land in which they were nurtured. The natural result of this mixture of races will be that finally the inhabitants of these young nations will constitute a people even more perfect than heretofore. Everything seems to be in their favour—climate, resources, and territorial extension. Peru, for instance, is the size of Italy, France, Spain, and Germany put together. People do not talk about the weather in Lima, because it never rains there. Bolivia is just on sixty times the size of Belgium, and yet it has only one-third of Belgium's normal population. Buenos Aires, Argentina's beautiful capital, at the present rate of increase, will be the second city in the Western Hemisphere fifteen years hence. Ecuador produces 40,000 tons of cacao beans a year; Paraguay gives commerce something like 100,000 tons of yerba maté; Brazil, with its yearly output of about 800,000 tons of coffee, supplies four-fifths of the world's consumption; Chile produces about 2,500,000 tons of nitrate; Peru furnishes 165,000 tons of sugar and 50,000 tons of guano; Argentina produces 250,000 tons of sheep's wool, and, what is almost impossible for the mind to grasp, nearly 15,000,000 tons of wheat and other grain, besides vast quantities of frozen meat.

A fair knowledge of Spanish is as important to a British financier, business man, or traveller connected with South America as are day and night to the order of living. If British manufacturers expect to remain on the top rung of the ladder of South American trade, they must see that their representatives speak Spanish. The attention of the conservative British manufacturer should be called to the fact that his wily and business-like American cousin will beat him out of the market if he does not make haste and cast off the garb in which he is lulled asleep by the idea that the market belongs to him alone. The ignorance of the majority regarding the resources and progress of the South American countries is very disheartening. To arrive at this knowledge it is necessary to have lived in South America and seen the sort of traveller British manufacturers send out to compete with the all hustle and bustle American representative, thoroughly conversant with the Spanish language in most cases, clever, intelligent, practical, and 'a regular knocker at the right door.'

There is the German commercial traveller, too, who comes to South America thoroughly drilled and disciplined, and who is as shrewd a business man as the American. To their knowledge of Spanish is due, in a great measure, their success. South American business men are just as fond of being addressed in their own tongue as the Englishman is of being addressed in his. When the American or German traveller calls on his South American client he is welcomed with the usual, '*Para servir a usted.*' It is good to see how ably the American will catch on and talk his client into business in Spanish. From the first moment he masters the situation, and has succeeded in ingratiating himself in the other's sympathy in such a way that the rest is only a matter of good salesmanship. The British traveller, on the other hand, with the exception of the strictly limited few who have been visiting South America for years, will, when addressed by his Spanish-speaking customer, invariably let fly these dry and selfish words, 'I don't speak Spanish,' expressed in English, much to the shame of himself and his people! I happened once to be in the office of a well-known Guayaquil merchant when an English traveller called. Of course, he could not speak a word of Spanish. Being a countryman of mine, I did for him all the talking he wanted. When he had left, however, the manager remarked amusedly, 'The deuce! does the gentleman suppose that I should have studied English?'

I am not trying to point out the importance of the Spanish tongue merely for the sake of those destined to move in Spanish society, or those who may want to read *Don Quixote* in the original, or may be desirous of earning their living as correspondence clerks or members of the Diplomatic Corps. An intimate acquaintance with a language that is not one's own is unnecessary for the mere getting about in any foreign country. What I do wish to point out is that every man sent by the British manufacturer to work the South American markets, and every man on an official mission to the South American Governments, should know Spanish if he is expected to do his duty with thoroughness and in such a way as will at least equal, if not surpass, that of his American and German rivals. It is to the maintenance of British prestige and commercial and financial preponderance that we must look. The lead has been obtained after long years of patient endeavour, perseverance, and enterprise, in days when competition from the sources mentioned was less keen, when the determination and endurance of British trade pioneers were well tried, but never beaten, by the innumerable barriers that had to be surmounted on the road to ultimate success. Is the result of all those years and years of patient toil and trade victories to be snatched away from us at a single blow? To avoid it we have only to keep pace with the great rivals who openly dispute not only the markets that remain to be exploited, but also those that British manufacturers entered and held for more than a century without fear of competition. It is impossible for the measures they are adopting to escape our notice. Every movement of theirs should be countered by a similar or more efficacious movement in Great Britain.

American business men are doing their best to take full advantage of the opportunity offered by the breach caused in the commercial relations between Europe and the South American states by sending down some of their most prominent citizens to build up the trade for them. As a proof of this may be cited the recent visit of Professor Leo S. Rowe, of the University of Pennsylvania, an expert on Latin-American affairs and an enthusiastic advocate of the Spanish tongue, being himself an efficient Spanish scholar. Further proof of the interest now being taken in South America by American business men is an address which James A. Farrel, president of the United States Steel Corporation, recently delivered before the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Amongst other things, he said: 'How important a part British capital will play in the financing of Latin-America after the war remains to be seen; but the consensus of financial opinion seems to be that interest rates will materially increase, and the amount of this increase, as compared with the price of United States loans, will doubtless determine the question of who is to be the chief investor.'

Although the English language is not taught in the schools of South America as it should be, it is a recognised fact that more success is obtained in Chile, for example, with the teaching of English than in England with the teaching of German. In Chile, after the ordinary six years' study, the student leaves school with a fairly good all-round knowledge of English, which he begins to put into practice the moment he finds employment. The result is that before long he is able to speak English correctly. I do not know whether it may be safely said that the same thing happens in England with regard to the German language. In my own schooldays I could never get such a necessary grip of the German tongue as would enable me speak it with relative ease, although I studied during several years and took several prizes for efficiency. I know many others of whom I might say the same. What is the cause of this difference? It is sad to reflect how much time and money have been wasted on experiments that have been worse than useless. Up to the present, foreign languages have been taught at the English schools more as a matter of form than anything else. It would be venturesome to say so with regard to the schools in the United States, where there are a large number of competent Spanish teachers whose work has been crowned with flattering success. With regard

to the teaching of Spanish at the schools in England, there are many advantageous systems that might be adopted in order to make the undertaking a success. To the experienced teacher it should be apparent that the success of the teaching of a language depends chiefly on the method employed. The difficulty arising therefrom might be surmounted in part if the Governments would interest themselves in the matter. There are many native teachers in South America who speak English fluently, and many of them are engaged in teaching English at the public schools. Would it not be possible to engage some of these teachers for service in this country as teachers of Spanish? In return, the same number of English teachers might be sent to South America. There would be some advantage in this. The English teachers would have a splendid opportunity of acquiring a good, practical knowledge of Spanish, and a thorough idea of the South American countries and peoples, which would place them in a position that would enable them, immediately after their return to England, to devote themselves to the teaching of Spanish. This, or something similar, would be a start in the right direction. The cost would be comparatively insignificant, and the success attending the adoption of the system would doubtless amply compensate for the trouble and outlay involved.

'MOHAMMED'S COFFIN.'

CHAPTER II.

SELMA DURELL and Ruth Davenport formed a pleasant contrast, as well in antecedents as in looks. Ruth had the freshness and demure prettiness of the daisy, and, being the eldest child of a large family of modest means, had learnt how to practise self-denial winningly. Anselma, to give her name in full, was rather striking in appearance, and had been brought up as the only child of parents who could afford to indulge her. Indeed, Mrs Fairfield shrewdly suspected that, when one got to know her better, she would turn out to have been spoiled. But this did not happen. Except when ruffled, Selma was by nature amiable, and, except in being rather easily hurt, gave no indication of the slightly enervating influences attending her upbringing. Of the two, little Ruth had distinctly the more courage, and was more ready to take the initiative in difficulties. Selma quickly developed the habit of appealing to her, and indeed of leaning on her. With Edwin to amuse and to escort them, the two girls asked nothing better than to take life as it came. Edwin, for his part, fell in with their view, as he was perhaps too much inclined to do with all and sundry of his associates. So far, however, there was no fault to be found with this attitude of his.

'He is looking about him,' said his father to Mrs Fairfield, quite prepared to take the defensive. And to 'look about' is excellent, provided that the process be not too prolonged.

Meantime the Squire and his wife were interested spectators, each being fully prepared, should occasion offer, to take the other to task for infringement of their compact of non-intervention.

'Give them time to get acquainted,' Mrs Fairfield would remonstrate when her impatient lord and master prematurely demanded developments. 'Our Edwin is not one to fall in love at first sight—he has too much sense for that. He is constitutionally deliberate.'

'He takes it from you, then,' retorted her spouse. But, so far, he himself had detected no sign of a preference on his son's part, and he was beginning to wonder inwardly what the young fellow was made of. For John Fairfield was not deliberate, whether by constitution or by training.

Partly from inclination, partly from expediency, the Fairfields had fallen into the way of living very quietly. They did not 'run to' house-parties, and the consequence was that the three young people were left a good deal to themselves and their own devices.

Without appearing to do so, the Squiress kept a watch on them as they went about together, visiting some of Edwin's favourite haunts, which he had not seen for so long. A misgiving had arisen in her breast, and she made this forecast of the future: 'I know exactly how it will be! A delightful time for all three, to start with; and then jealousies and heart-burnings. And it is all your fault!' (Needless to state whom she was addressing.) 'Oh, Squire, Squire! to think that a man should live to your age and never realise the force of the proverb that "two's company"—— I foresee that one of these two girls is doomed to disappointment, and I feel for her.'

The Squire was content to reply, with quiet provocation, 'I do not fancy it will be Selma.'

In a moment Mrs Fairfield's curiosity was rampant. 'Tell me, John,' she half-entreated, half-commanded—'tell me at once—have you observed anything?'

Putting aside a temptation to tease, he reassured her. 'Nothing whatever! I was merely speaking upon grounds of general probability.'

'You are sure of that? Well, I trust you. But I do not share your view.'

'Well, well! Time will show. Are you not a little premature, wife, in taking the situation

so seriously? What is likelier than that nothing at all may come of it?'

But the Squiress had her own views on the subject. She reflected that, whoever was to be the sufferer in the love-drama which she saw ahead of her, at the worst it could scarcely be her son. What fond mother can imagine a son of hers rejected by any girl?

And Edwin had returned from abroad more debonair even than before. It could not be said, perhaps, that he shone in conversation. But what he did say was always pleasant to listen to, though in substance rather matter-of-fact.

When he had been about a week at the Demesne, a little crisis came about. It was just this. The Fairfields and their guests had been invited to a garden-party at the County Member's—a somewhat dull and formal affair, it was expected to be; for the Member was a noted temperance reformer, who loved to interpose spacious addresses on his favourite theme between tea and tennis, and to force his friends to listen to them. In a dull country neighbourhood, such events are talked over in advance; and it had been laid down by Mrs Fairfield, who in all these matters was a mirror of correctness, that though the party promised no great pleasure, it was their duty to attend it.

When the day arrived, however, Miss Durell pleaded headache, and begged to be allowed to spend the afternoon in a hammock in the garden.

It required all Mrs Fairfield's self-control to keep her face from lighting up. 'Most certainly, my dear!' she replied; 'you will have a quiet afternoon and tea by yourself, and you will be quite well, I hope, by the time we return. It is this thundery weather, I suspect.' The good lady could not restrain a slight glance of triumph in the direction of her lord. But it was premature.

You have noticed, reader, how the process of disintegration in a party is apt to spread? No sooner had Selma cried off than Edwin tried to do the same. The Squire returned his wife's glance, with much more than its original import. This put Mrs Fairfield on her mettle, and, little doubting of success, she began to use her influence with her son to persuade him to go with her.

To her surprise, Edwin remained obdurate, replying to her arguments. 'Really, mum, I'd much rather stay at home. After being so long away, I shall feel out of it. And what's the good of remaking acquaintance with the neighbours only to break it off again? Those who really care to see me will know where to find me.'

His mother had returned to the charge; but Mr Fairfield intervened. 'I suppose the boy may do as he likes, Joan? You women can never be content to let people enjoy themselves in their own way! Come, we mustn't keep the horses standing.' So there was nothing for it but for the reduced party to drive off and make the best of things.

Whoever may have enjoyed or profited by the County Member's hospitality that afternoon, Mrs Fairfield was not among them. Though the sun shone, the band played, and her friends greeted her, she was a prey to the distressing sense that her well-laid schemes were going agley. The Squire had scored off her—secured the first point in the game they were playing together. Almost she could have found it in her heart to be cross with her favourite Ruth. Why had not the little goose made the most of her opportunities, to improve the impression she had made on Edwin years before? Could it be that that impression had not proved indelible? Youth's memory is short, alas! and youth is apt to be fickle. But for the Squire to exult over her—as, of course, he would—that was insult added to injury!

Yet all this time the good lady was distressing herself quite needlessly. Edwin met the carriage at the door on its return. 'I hope you had a pleasant afternoon, mum?' said he, with polite conventionality.

'Nothing at all out of the way, I can assure you—the temperance speaker was interminable. I hope you fared better, Edwin?' As she spoke, she looked at him keenly.

His clear eyes did not avoid her glance. 'I spent most of the afternoon in the boat, mother.'

'Ha! does Miss Durell like boating?'

'I don't know. I'm afraid I didn't ask her.'

Then he had been alone! Mrs Fairfield's countenance fell, as do the countenances of those who have harboured unjust suspicions. Nor throughout dinner did she once detect the faintest sign of an understanding between the two young people. Was it, then, possible that their remaining at home had been a mere coincidence—not prearranged at all? She felt relieved, though still puzzled. And even the Squire's jubilancy (visible to her, if to none else) sustained a check when Edwin spent the evening leaning over the piano, at which Ruth was warbling ballads.

'Honours easy, I fancy,' remarked Mr Fairfield, significantly, to his wife as they were preparing to retire.

She thought the same. But she said nothing in reply, for it jarred her to hear a subject so closely connected with her Edwin's happiness spoken of in that light tone.

Selma Durell was not an early riser. She generally came down admirably arrayed, but very late for breakfast. Edwin, too, developed the habit of matutinal lateness. They had to get up very early at the *estancia*, and he seemed

bent upon profiting by his holiday to indulge morning dreams. His fond mother was far from disapproving of this. But it was a little provoking that well-disciplined Ruth Davenport was always down to the minute, to pour out the Squire's coffee. This gave her day the start of Edwin's, and threw their respective time-tables out of harmony. For by the time when Edwin was ready to smoke his first pipe in the sunny veranda, Ruth was already immersed in her practising. So it fell naturally to Selma to bear him company. To the Squiress's annoyance, this happened upon five successive days. But on the sixth day, happening to look into the drawing-room, which at that hour was given up to Ruth, she saw Edwin bending over the piano. Selma had the veranda to herself. Mrs Fairfield's spirits rose. If only Edwin had not been musical! But he was; he sang a little. So the good lady could not quite make up her mind whether it was the music or the girl that had won him from his tobacco.

During the next few days, whilst ostensibly going about her household duties, Joan Fairfield took frequent occasion to pass by the drawing-room. On the second or third morning, it was Edwin, not Ruth, who was singing—actually Edwin, who was always so difficult to persuade. At the end of a verse he broke off, and she fancied she could hear Ruth commending his performance, whilst gently suggesting one or two improvements. 'Come now, that is better!' exclaimed the fond mother. But she must not play the eavesdropper. At the end of the passage she ran into the Squire.

'Do you know where Ned is?' he asked.

'Yes, Squire, I do; he is in the drawing-room with Ruth, playing and singing.' Then she added, 'Do not disturb them just now—he would not like it;' and in a meaning under-voice, 'I think she is teaching him a new song.'

The Squire looked positively blank. 'And where is Selma?' he inquired presently.

'How should I know?'

Yet the pendulum was to swing once more. Happening, next morning, to pass the dining-room a full hour after his own breakfast, Mr Fairfield's ear caught the clatter of porcelain and silver, and he looked in. Selma, attired in a ravishing summer gown, was seated at the table, delicately detaching the stalks from a plateful of ripe strawberries, whilst Edwin watched her with a serious interest befitting the occasion.

'*Bon appétit!*' cried the little man at the door, with an atrocious accent.

Selma looked up from her task. It was one of her charms that she never made an abrupt movement, nor ever did anything in a hurry. 'I hope your remark is addressed to Edwin and not to me, Squire,' she answered graciously; 'I am about to initiate him into the delights of strawberries-and-cream made with cayenne-pepper.'

Mr Fairfield would have liked to linger and have some too; but an even stronger attraction drew him in another direction. Making an excuse to visit his wife's boudoir, he remarked, as if quite casually, 'The boy and girl seem to be hitting it off nicely.'

'Which girl do you mean—Ruth?'

'Selma! I have just found her compounding a strawberry-mash for Edwin, after a recipe of her own.' And, unable to contain himself longer, John Fairfield burst out into a 'Ho, ho, ho!' laughing his tiresome, and, as his wife at that moment thought, almost offensive, laugh; for her warmest feelings were deeply engaged.

Possibly she was unduly impatient, for a new anxiety had begun to take possession of her. It was lest the brief time at her son's disposal should slip by without his reaching a decision. And that would be almost worse than his pairing off with the wrong girl. That he should have appealed to her to find him a wife, and that she should have failed to do so, would be, she felt, such a reflection upon her character as a mother! Yet, all the while, it never occurred to her that she and her husband were doing their best to make the thing they both desired impossible. For, in the first place, it was bad enough that the young man should be confronted by contrasting types of charm and beauty, each of whom was hourly neutralising the impression made by the other. But that was by no means all; for, by insensible degrees, the Squire and his wife had alike departed from the early rigour of their compact of non-intervention. So that Edwin's native indecision was being hourly rendered more undecided, and his confusion worse confounded, by little acts of interference on the part of one of his parents.

For example, not without a certain sense of poaching, Mrs Fairfield had one afternoon carried off her son to her boudoir, in order to have him to herself for a while; for, alas! the times were past, as she felt, when she could regard him as her very own to do what she liked with. 'My dear boy,' said she, fervently, the very moment he was seated—'my dear boy, I should so like to see you settled.'

He understood instantly. There was no failure on his part to grasp—no pretence of not grasping—the precise sense in which she had used that somewhat elastic word. This, by the way, would not always have been so, and, of itself, it showed in which direction his thoughts were running. He sighed, ever so slightly. 'Well, mother,' he replied, 'we are at one there; I wish I were—settled.'

Like a greyhound pursuing a hare, sprang Mrs Fairfield in pursuit of her opportunity. 'But, my dear boy,' she exclaimed, with emphasis, 'you might so easily be "settled." It rests with yourself.'

But now it seemed as though all Edwin's momentary acumen fell away. 'How so?' he asked, heavily, almost blankly.

'How so? Why, surely you know that?' and all the difference of their respective sexes gleamed in her countenance as she spoke. Even Edwin, slow in the uptake as he was, could not fail to catch her meaning.

At that precise moment, a few notes of song, almost bird-like in their clearness, became audible, and the neat figure of Ruth passed before the window on its way along the veranda. She carried a basket in one hand and a pair of secateurs in the other, and was bent on cutting grapes or flowers for the dinner-table, a light duty this with which her hostess had charged her. She did not so much as glance into the room as she passed by.

With the lightness of a girl of seventeen, Mrs Fairfield sprang to her feet, her son following suit with less of *empressement*. 'There—there is your chance!' exclaimed the enthusiastic matron, and, opening the French window, she pushed Edwin in the direction Ruth had taken.

He went, as through life he would be likely to go, where a loved feminine hand impelled. But his step, as his mother watched him, was hardly that of one who goes to pour forth a lover's tale. This was well; for Selma, in garden-gloves, was awaiting Ruth near the vinery door; and thus the intended *tête-à-tête* developed into a party *à trois*.

(*Continued on page 120.*)

THE AUTHORISED VERSION, AND OTHERS.

SIX years ago we celebrated in this country the three hundredth anniversary of the publication of the book which, by common consent, enjoys the largest circulation in the world. It was in the year 1611 that there was published in London, by one Robert Barker, *The Holy Bible, newly Translated out of the Original Tongues, and with former Translations diligently compared and revised by his Maiestie's speciall commandment.*

There are some circumstances connected with this publication which may be reckoned in the category of things not generally known. For one thing, there is not, and never has been, any official warrant for the description 'Authorised Version' habitually attached to this translation of the Holy Scriptures. 'Appointed to be Read in Churches' means simply how the Scriptures were pointed out for public reading. The Puritans and Presbyterians required no such 'appointment;' hence in many editions it is omitted.

When this standard folio Bible was printed in 1611 there were two separate issues set in type in two different printing-houses, both of which were regarded as standard, despite occasional variations in readings. All subsequent editions, in quarto and octavo, in roman or black letter, run in pairs, and each follows the faults of its own office copy or parent. There are many of these minor faults or variations; but the distinctive one occurs in Ruth iii. 15. According to one reading, 'He measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her, and Hee went into the city.' The other version has it, 'She went into the city.' Hence the two versions are known to bibliophiles as the 'Great He Bible' and the 'Great She Bible.' In the long-run the feminine has triumphed, as she generally does, and the 'She' reading is adopted in all modern editions.

Glaring errors in printing, and quaint eccentricities in translation have constituted the special value to collectors of several early editions of our Bible. The most unfortunate case was that of an octavo Bible, published by John Barker in 1631, which, by the omission of the negative in the seventh commandment, earned for itself the title of the 'Wicked Bible.'

Lapses of this kind were serious matters for printers in Star Chamber days. Archbishop Laud caused the whole issue to be destroyed, and imposed a fine of three hundred pounds upon the printer, which money the archbishop judiciously expended in the purchase of a fount of Greek type for the University of Oxford.

The few copies of the 'Wicked Bible' which escaped the fire acquired a very inflated value. Only four copies are now known to exist, and as these are all in public libraries, they will never again offer temptation to the bibliomaniac. It is curious that ours was not the only 'Wicked Bible,' an edition having once been printed in Germany with the same extraordinary omission.

The 'Breeches Bible,' which is still to be met with in dealers' catalogues, was the outcome of the labours of some Protestant refugees in Geneva, who fled from Queen Mary's persecution. They translated, somewhat quaintly, the holy writings from the 'Ebrue and Greke,' and their statement that Adam and Eve 'sewed fig-leaves and made themselves breeches' earned for their edition its distinctive title. Although the 'Breeches Bible' was never sanctioned for public use in churches, it was, because of its racy notes, the household English Bible for nearly a century after its publication.

The 'Bug Bible' took its name from the reading, 'Thou shalt not be afraid for any bugges by night.' Let it be understood that the word, unpleasant in its associations to modern ears, is quite good Old English, bug or bugbear or 'bogey' signifying an imaginary monster held in terror over naughty children.

A Bible published by J. Baskett at Oxford in 1711 is also reckoned among the books which are valued by collectors for their faults. It is a sumptuous volume in imperial folio, a very beautiful example of typography; but its misreadings are so numerous that it was described soon after its publication as 'a Baskett full of printers' errors.' The heading of Luke, chapter xxii., 'The Parable of the Vinegar,' instead of 'the Vineyard,' gives it its title of the 'Vinegar Bible.'

Before our standard version appeared various translations of the Bible or part of it had, from time to time, seen the light. The first entire edition to be printed in English was Miles Coverdale's translation, 'out of Douche [i.e. German] and Latyn into Englishe.' This was printed somewhere on the Continent about 1535. A second edition, published two years later, is admittedly the first English Bible actually printed in England.

In the same year, however, there was published by two London citizens, Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch, an edition, announced as by Thomas Matthews, the real compiler being John Rogers, the first of the Protestant martyrs who suffered under Queen Mary.

Of these earlier versions, the most important was the 'Great Bible,' the first edition of which in folio was published in 1539, the latter part having been printed by Grafton and Whitchurch. This was produced under the authority of Thomas Cromwell, who had licensed Coverdale to revise a new edition on the basis of Matthews's edition. Holbein designed the title-page for this book, which was partly printed in France; but the progress of the work having been forbidden there, it was completed in England. Archbishop Cranmer contributed a preface to the second edition, and no fewer than seven impressions were called for in the space of two years. By royal proclamation its price was fixed at ten shillings unbound, and public copies were attached by chains to the pillars of the churches, with the king's injunction that the book be read with 'Discretion, Honest Intent, Charity, Reverence, and Quiet Behaviour.'

Although neither Caxton nor other of our own early printers included any part of the Holy Scriptures among their productions, it is a noteworthy fact that the Bible was the first printed book in the world, being, moreover, the masterpiece of the illustrious inventor of the art of printing. Johann Gensfleisch von Sulzebach, surnamed Zum Gutenberg, having associated himself with Johann Füst of Mentz, produced with his assistance, in 1450-55 (the book is undated), the famous folio Latin Bible commonly known as the Mazarin Bible, the first copy having been discovered in the library of Cardinal Mazarin. The expense of this production was so great that Gutenberg was unable to repay his partner the money that he had advanced, and was obliged to resign to him the whole of his printing establishment and plant, with which Füst, in partnership with Peter Schœffer, printed the equally famous Mentz Psalter in 1457. By the testimony of auction prices these are the two most valuable books in the world. At the Perkins sale in 1873 the late Mr Huth gave two thousand six hundred and ninety pounds for a copy of the Mazarin Bible. This figure held the record until the Syston Park sale, eleven years later, when another copy fetched three thousand nine hundred pounds; but this was exceeded by a copy of the Mentz Psalter, which at the same sale was acquired at the enormous price of four thousand nine hundred and fifty pounds, so far the largest sum ever paid for a single book.

PAUL.

By Dunbar Waterson.

I MET Paul first in the reserve line. He lay with nose on paws, staring into the stagnant waters of a canal long since given over to the horrors of war. No barge moved over its quiet surface; no panting motor-boat passed with drawling Yankee tourists; the locks were green with the slime of inertia, and rusty from neglect. The flimsy, hastily built wooden bridges crossed from bank to bank. Here and there a jumble of planks and barrels proclaimed the fall of earlier work, and great shell-holes in the banks the reason of their destruction. And Paul seemed to see it knowingly.

Stooping, I patted his great head and watched his stiff stump of tail wag lazily in appreciation, whilst his eyes flashed suddenly on me. I wondered if I had taken a great liberty, and thought my khaki bespoke friendship in his eyes. His keeper said, 'He canna' stand Belgiums nor Froggies. Anybody in khaki 's aal reeght, though. Niver seen a dog like 'im for fightin'. Niver mind what size! Owt on fower legs! Horses, mules, men, dogs, hens, kids, goats; he 's fear'd o' nowt. Aalways on his chain. Strong as a bull he is. He 's an Airedale, one o' Major Richardson's dogs. War-dogs. Wor company won him for good shuttin'.'

Paul was a dog to inspire immediate respect. For an Airedale he was immense. His huge bulk was solid muscle. Although a latent ferocity sat on his countenance, one never had any fear in making advances. His antipathy to foreigners was characteristic of him. Otherwise, towards men, he was genially responsive. His

eyes were large and brown and human, and 'Tommy' often swore that he listened understandingly to talk; but I doubt if this be true. The men of his battalion were from the north, and had that unforgettable accent—the strongly voiced, rugged, north-country pit accent. It was the accent he knew best. Remember, he was trained, perhaps born and bred, in the sturdy north. I have seen an Essex fail to win his immediate respect, simply because of his effeminate, sing-song speech. A pitman need but say, 'Hoo 's the' gan on, son?' and Paul was wagging his stump on the first word.

Though a general favourite, Paul's defect as a war-dog was soon known. Even as I admired him, came the long-drawn drone of a shell. Its sudden rise in pitch, from a low vibration to a vicious screaming and hissing, warned us of its near approach. It was for us. As men, we dived for cover, to emerge unruffled as soon as the nerve-racking explosion was over. As a dog, Paul failed to interpret the signs of the times, and was still lying in the sun when the burst came. Like lightning he was up, and cowering in the corner of a dug-out. His keeper expressed his disgust in a long, throaty sound, and turning to me, said, 'Paul 's a fine dog, sir; but he 's ne good. Suffers fro' shell-shock. Shell-shy, that 's what he is. If a whiz-bang gans off within a mile on 'im, he gits the wind up. What he 's t' be used for we divn't knaa. Good mascot, that 's aal he is. An' we sometimes see him scrappin'.'

This last virtue of the shell-shy dog appeared to compensate amply for his shortcoming.

Paul lives eternally at the end of a strong, heavy chain. Let him loose, and in a few seconds he has sensed the nearest animal. If that animal be a dog, Paul will fight him to a standstill; if a goat, he 'll tear it limb from limb; if a cow, he 'll torment it to a frenzy. Twice since I 've known him Paul has broken loose. He made straight as a dart for a huge, pot-bellied dog, and inside of two minutes had killed him. The Blankshires were furious, for he had destroyed their mascot. I think Paul will remember until his dying day the severe drubbing he got from his keeper. His second break followed the first by an hour. He soon found the carcass of his victim, and began to 'rive it t' bits,' as the north-countryman put it.

I could never reconcile his bitter enmity towards his own kind (and, indeed, towards most four-footed animals) with his deep affection for soldiers. Let his drubbing be ever so severe, his eye would look up pathetically at the wielder of the stick, as though to crave sympathy as well as blows. Within a few minutes Paul would be his old self. He never played, or showed marked emotion, but usually bore himself with dignity, as became a dog afraid of nothing on earth but the roar of a great explosion.

On the march I had unique chances of observing Paul, for I was invariably in the front four of platoons. Paul and the dogman walked ahead of me. Of the two, I believe the dogman was the more interesting. Perhaps I may be allowed to speak more of him at another time. Suffice it that between the two of them I was hugely entertained on the road, and enjoyed many a hearty laugh at their spasmodic differences. Paul would strain strongly at his heavy chain, jerking the dogman out of his step. Down would come the knobkerrie with a nasty thud. Paul would half-close his eyes, wink them rapidly a dozen times, crouch a little, then carry on as usual. Dogman would accompany his blow with his throaty disapproval (of which more anon), and say, 'D' ye want to pull my arm oot?' often followed by the merriest and most odd string of curses imaginable. And when I laughed at his peculiar oaths, he would turn half-sideways and smile apologetically, seeing slight humour in it, and say, 'He 's an awful beast to race ahead. Wants t' bite the captin's horse.'

Being interested in words, I tried to come to some philological conclusion on the throaty disapproval of the dogman. To convey any impression of its sound, I must perform a sort of gradual dismembering of what I take the sound to mean, and reduce it, like the schoolboy his fraction, to its lowest terms. It means, I believe, 'Get away,' and might be reduced thus: 'Get away, ge' away, ge' a'ay, ge' a'a', 'e' a'a'.' A sort of retaining of vowel-sounds. Say this steadily and continuously with a strong, deep vibration in your throat, and a powerful anger in your heart, and you may come to it.

Paul never spoke. He often gave vent to a shrill, scarcely audible whine, like a gale through thin wires, expressive, as a rule, of infinite boredom and a desire for change or movement. Passing along the sun-ridden, dusty Flemish roads, he never replied to the dogs that yelped their greetings or hate, but simply made a whirlwind rush for his enemy. Then the dogman would wield tongue and stick, and often heavily booted foot, and reduce Paul to a more pacific condition.

He hated particularly the Belgian dogcarts. To see his own kind between the shafts of a tiny vehicle, pulling some large, fleshy Belgian along, used to rouse in him an almost ungovernable fury. The dogman had his work set out, and the front four would join in the battle. The sergeant's foot would catch him in the ribs, and Paul's great clashing jaws would meet as he snapped aside momentarily at the unexpected blow. The corporal's rifle-butt would land on his brown, shapely head with a horrid thud. The keeper's knobkerrie thwacked here and there and everywhere. His nimble tongue reeled off insults, and his throaty growl punctuated what his angry voice uttered. And the weight of the platoon tramping behind, the long vista of dusty

boots implacably bearing down upon him, carried him along, still straining magnificently to achieve his end. In the meanwhile his yapping enemies had gone, and the Airedale, singularly silent during the whole affair, would resignedly trot ahead, tongue lolling and twitching, breath coming in husky jerks, with a hoarse, wheezy whistle in his throat. The dogman, after a few admonitory tugs, would glance rearwards, correct his step and pace, and jog along until the next passing dog called forth his powers of control.

The dog was a company possession, and each man had theoretically his share. In private life the dogman was a fancier, and he had the animal's true affection. If love means ownership, then Paul belonged to the dogman, as events plainly proved. When the dogman objected to being sent on working-parties, Paul was given over to an old man named Sims, and Ben went to the ranks. Paul appeared on parade, and for the first and last time I heard him speak. Sims held him back with both hands. With his forelegs in the air, Paul strained and tugged, and barked furiously, trying to reach Ben in the ranks. The marching that day was damnable. Paul was too much for the old man, who was already burdened with the weight of a hot sun and a full pack. The roads were bad and the dog unmanageable. Sims mopped his aching head with a red 'hanky' in his quieter moments, whilst Paul retarded progress, and broke the front of the platoon time and again. Cries for Ben arose. He took Paul over, and from then onwards was excused working-parties and certain parades.

He often beat Paul, and in his blunt way made me see that to conquer the dog by sheer physical strength was task enough for the heftiest of men. That he loved the dog I shall always believe. I remember the awfullest of days when men cursed and swore, and made me uncomfortable by the extent of their grousings. The day was tropical, and we were in our heaviest uniforms, tramping with packs along mud roads. The dust arose in choking clouds. We perspired copiously. Our heavy steel helmets weighed on us like the sins of the world. The men were blasphemous and mutinous. I cursed their cursing, but trudged along again in a semi-stupor.

'*Halt!* Fall out on the right of the road!' Men sank into the long, luscious grass, and continued cursing the pitiless sun. Their water-bottles were long since empty, and it was impossible to procure more. Belgians object to men draining pumps, and it is an easy matter to remove a pump-handle.

Paul, dusty and miserable, made frantic efforts to find liquid mud in the dry, grass-choked ditch. He grovelled low down, and thrust his nose into the roots in search of damp and coolness. The dogman, equally thirsty and weary, had kept his bottle full. He removed the cork and poured a little into his palm. Paul licked eagerly. Then Ben deliberately poured the remainder over the animal's head. The dog lapped noisily as it trickled amongst the hair round his mouth. In answer to my interested look, Ben said, 'Best thing for a dog on a hot day, sir—water on 'is heed.'

Paul lay quiet and content.

He always accompanies us into the trenches. The time came when Ben was amongst those left behind. He lay under a little wooden cross, beside others, in a neglected field behind the line. For many days Paul was very uneasy, and gave infinite trouble. Ben had been away before, and had returned. Paul knew this. He would gaze in all directions, listening for the step that came not, and for the voice he knew. Men said, 'He's wantin' Ben;' and my corporal, 'It 'd be a kindness to shutt that dog.'

Did he know that Ben was gone from him for ever?

A gradual change came over him. Dogs yapped at him, but beyond his quick, instinctive turn of the head, he gave no sign that he heard or cared. His fighting propensity died. He trotted along with drooping head, the picture of dejection. Boys and girls pointed him out to each other, and ran alongside to admire him; but them he never heeded. I watched the change creeping upon him, and a great pity for the lonely brute came on me. Long I tried for his esteem and love, but failed. Perhaps he was too sorely smitten, or it may be I was the wrong man. He wanted the ruddy-cheeked, rough-tongued, stick-swinging Ben. My heart often ached for him. He took all the kindly advances of the men in moody resignation.

He still trots ahead along with my platoon. The old man Sims leads him like a lamb. In his poor dumb way he tells me that his spirit is in sorrow, and in his heart is a great desolation.

THE METAL OF THE FUTURE.

WHEN first exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1855, aluminium was regarded as a mere chemical curiosity, 'silver made from clay,' as it was popularly termed. When, however, severe tests demonstrated its superiority over other metals wherever lightness is synonymous with economy, the methods of manufacture were continually improved, until, in 1914, the price had fallen from fifty-six pounds per pound to about three pounds per hundredweight. The characteristics of the now well-known, shining, tin-white metal are such as to render it increas-

ingly useful in all branches of the arts and sciences. It is not brittle like glass or porcelain, or poisonous like copper; it needs no enamel, does not rust, and, bulk for bulk, weighs but a fraction of other metals. These properties render it of the utmost value in aviation, in electrical engineering, in science, and in the home.

Aluminium is an essential constituent of all clays, felspars, and granites. It occurs also in cryolite and bauxite, and in many precious stones. It is thus one of the commonest and most widely distributed of elements. Practically the only source, however, is bauxite, a more or less impure oxide. The manufacture of aluminium divides itself into two stages—first, the purification of the bauxite; and, secondly, its electrolysis in a bath of fused cryolite. The purification of the raw material is a costly and laborious process, to which is very largely due the comparatively high cost of the metal. The electrical smelting in Héroult or similar tilting-furnaces is now carried on very cheaply by the utilisation of water-power. Pure aluminium is in large demand as a base for heat-resisting paints, for cooking-utensils, and for ornamental fittings. Aluminium wire is favoured for long-distance electrical transmission, since for a given conductivity it is not so heavy as copper wire. Thermite, a mixture of aluminium powder and certain metallic oxides, is used in welding, and now finds a place in the manufacture of incendiary bombs, since, by its combustion, temperatures as high as six thousand degrees Fahrenheit are easily obtained. In metallurgy aluminium is used for promoting soundness in steel ingots, and in the production of chromium and similar metals in a carbon-free state. The pure metal is now being to a large extent replaced by certain of its alloys, the addition of only a small percentage of various metals, notably magnesium, producing a disproportionate increase in the tensile strength and resistance to corrosion. Magnalium is very extensively used in aeroplane, torpedo-boat, and submarine fittings. Aluminium bronze, containing only about 5 per cent. of aluminium, ranks in strength with cast-steel, and is hard, light, and elastic. Aluminium and its alloys can only be soldered with difficulty, but may be welded by autogenous soldering.

As has been indicated, the most serious obstacle to the cheap manufacture of aluminium is the preliminary purification of the native bauxite. A new method, which promises to oust all others, has been devised by Dr Serpek. By this method, which is in use at the works of the Société Général des Nitrures in Savoy, the recovery of a most valuable by-product is made to pay very nearly the whole cost of purification. Natural bauxite is heated in the electric furnace with small coal or coke. Over the mass a slow current of nitrogen passes, resulting in the formation of aluminium nitride. The latter is then treated either with water under pressure or superheated steam, yielding pure alumina and giving off ammonia-gas, which is absorbed in sulphuric acid. The sulphate of ammonia thus made is about twenty-five tons per twenty tons of alumina, reducing the cost of purification from fifteen pounds to two pounds per ton. Incidentally, this is by far the cheapest method of 'fixing' atmospheric nitrogen, the cost for current being only one-half that of the 'nitrolime' process and a fifth that of the arc process. Serpek's method constitutes a most important advance in the manufacture of aluminium. But as yet no economical and practical process has been devised for the extraction of aluminium from clay. Boundless possibilities lie before the research metallurgist in this direction. Such a discovery once made, the manufacture of aluminium will proceed on a scale commensurate with the steel industry; and while, of course, it cannot hope to oust iron as the most useful metal, aluminium will become a serious rival to it.

TO MY MOTHER.

When you were once a little girl,
  And came downstairs at eight,
I wonder if you liked to see
  Just porridge on your plate;
I wonder if your nurse had toast,
  And marmalade as well,
And bacon—curly, crisp, and hot—
  While you got just the smell!
I wonder if you thought it fun
When she ate all and left you none?

When you were standing on the swing
  And flying through the air,
And some one called, 'Be quick! come down!
  Your grandmamma is there!'
I wonder if you ever gave
  A weeny, teeny sigh
To think you had to go inside
  Just when you'd got so high;
Or did you really never mind
To have to leave the swing behind?

When you were just about to eat
  Some bread and jam at tea,
And some one said, 'Run off at once,
  What dirty hands I see!'
I wonder if you wished that soap
  Could cost at least a pound,
Then every one would only wash
  Just once the whole year round;
Or did you quick as lightning fly
To wash your hands and wipe them dry?

When you were playing at a game
  Of robbers on the stairs,
And some one hiding by the clock
  Had caught you unawares,
I wonder if you liked to hear
  Your nurse say, 'Come to bed;
Or if you thought how nice 'twould be
  If she could go instead;
Or were you always good as gold,
And only did what you were told?

EDITH L. ELIAS.

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SEVENTH SERIES

'NEW' HEROINES—AND OLD.

By GERTRUDE MOUNT, Author of *St Martin's Summer*, &c.

IN a recent contemporary there was an article dealing with the new kind of books we shall read after the war, and one eminent authority was quoted as prophesying that our future literature will be less realistic in character, more ideal and imaginatively beautiful.

On looking over some of the novels written immediately before the war, the immense difference between then and now is brought home to us with startling vividness. There was in them a constant straining after the unusual in plot, setting, and character. The *bizarre*, the fantastic, the frankly disagreeable, were seized upon by the jaded novel-reader as something new, and therefore desirable; but the pages once turned, the book joined the huge pile of its predecessors, the impression faded, and the quest for another began. Once more the strings were pulled, and the puppets danced in ever-varying combinations.

As a character in one of the most arresting ante-war novels said, 'What difference does it all make? We all dance to the same music;' and that music was the lightest.

Then what streams of talk went on inside the books and out of them; talk on all great subjects—religion, art, democratic and social ideals—vague, disturbing, yet leading to nothing!

There was a popular chorus in those distant days which young people were fond of singing as they rushed from one pleasure to another—from tea-party to tango, from 'Boston' to 'Ragtime'—'Everything, everything ends in smoke!' And what a smoke all that has ended in! The music suddenly stopped, the puppets were swept away into the box, as men and women came face to face with real primitive things—bloodshed, death, heart-break, beggary.

Then came a quick outflow of simple human documents: letters from the Front—stories of pathos and pain; verses, fresh and sad as field-flowers crushed by guns; poems like the haunting minors in martial music; all the chords of human emotion have been struck again and again, and are echoing through our land still.

We have had war-books by the score; policy, tactics, commerce—our own and our enemies'—are still being discussed with fiery zeal and earnestness, for difficult problems confront us, to be dealt with by the fit and few.

But for those larger visions of the new life after the war, those dear human histories of love and suffering, defeat and triumph—'finely touched to fine issues'—which known and unknown novelists will reveal of the fresh depths and heights and ranges of mortal experience—for these we must still wait and hope. We know they will come one day, and we know that, as a natural sequence, we shall have a new sort of heroine.

Gone into the limbo of dead and forgotten things will be the 'smart woman,' the professional beauty, the society siren, the shrieking sister—all those fleeting and tawdry types which danced and glittered and stormed through the pages of a thousand novels in the past. There was the woman who was *called* 'new' nearly a generation ago, but she was only learning new customs and doubtfully venturing into new ways. It is only now, after a long and laborious growth, and having cast off petty trammels of custom and caste, that she has emerged, a serene and capable figure, with a heart for any fate, and a hand for every load, to show us in this hour of stress 'how divine a thing a woman may be made.'

Three names in the past stand out pre-eminent amongst our female novelists. Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot, and their heroines—offspring of each author's individuality, as of her age and social environment—differ not more from each other than will the new type of heroine from all three.

We have travelled a long way from the Elizabeths and Emmas, who wore 'peaked sarsenet caps' at assemblies, cried 'Oh la!' and swooned on emergencies. Nevertheless, they had a limited good sense of their own, though philanthropy and social problems never touched them; while their wit, 'archness,' and good looks furnished them with a charm like lavender, wherein they lie enshrined to this day.

The Jane Eyres and the Shirleys, the Maggies and the Dorotheas, take themselves more seriously; they are the intense and passionate young women of a later and more complex day. Charlotte Brontë from her desolate moorland parsonage was voicing the cry for freedom—for a right to live and speak and act according to the light within her.

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Shirley is throughout an impassioned protest against conventionalism and ignorant prejudice, a plea for education and emancipation for the starved lives of countless unregarded women. Of the two heroines in the book, gentle Caroline Helstone stands out, to my mind, as the more natural and convincing type. She has such invaluable common-sense, which connects her, as by a living string, with the practical maidens of to-day. All through her sad little love-story —and it was very pathetic until the 'happy ending' came—she bears herself bravely and with true dignity. No one ever sees or hears her tears and longings; she does not go about making moan over her spoilt life, crying out that all is failure and vanity, like many more modern heroines who have double and treble her advantages. But she moves quietly through her village ways, doing her daily tasks and her best for everybody, only puzzling over the pathos and failure of many women's lives (not her own in particular), and wondering if somehow, or some day, there could not be a wiser and better outcome of it all. But then 'Caroline was a sincere Christian,' we are told, and, like the practical girl she was, took her faith into her daily life, and honestly tried to live by it.

Many later heroines have thought themselves too 'advanced' for such old-fashioned ideas, and have lost themselves groping in the mazes of strange 'cults' and vague unsatisfying 'new' religions. Perhaps these too will pass with the war! But I love to think of the enthusiasm with which Charlotte Brontë would have greeted the higher mental and physical training and the wonderful opportunities granted to the women of recent days, who, endowed with her dainty Caroline's loving heart and sane mind, may leave a record of honourable effort and achievement of which their strong-souled pioneer would be proud.

George Eliot has given us some interesting portraits of women; but Maggie Tulliver, dear and charming as she is, does not get beyond her emotional crisis; the discords were never resolved into harmony, and she dies, as we feel, 'with all her music in her.'

Dorothea Brooke in *Middlemarch* may be taken as a more representative specimen of her time and class; but she is touched with the introspective spirit of her day, and strikes an uncertain note. As her creator puts it, she 'sobs after an unattained goodness,' and leaves us rather sad and hardly wiser. Indeed, some irreverent male critic might well wonder what all the pother of emotion was about, and cast a backward glance of longing for the light hearts and smiling eyes of Miss Austen's generation.

Mr E. V. Lucas has said in one of his delightful books that the real emancipation of women came when she mounted the bicycle and rode away on it! Certainly she rode into the fresh air, which was so desirable a thing for herself and the world in general!

Many cobwebs have been cleared away since then, and from that memorable date a new note of gladness may be recognised in the record of woman's experience. We have less morbid self-analysis, fewer outpourings from the superfluous women. Many of them have found their work, and the blessedness that comes from doing it. Some, it may be, made a little too much fuss over this 'work,' and so drew down vials of masculine scorn; but that phase too has passed.

Evolution is a slow process; and for many a long day in quiet backwaters, far from the flood of town and city life, there lingered innumerable enforced idlers, longing to be swept into the busy human tide, but condemned, as it seemed, through circumstance and lack of opportunity, to a stagnation they abhorred. But if we think for a moment of any girl of to-day dwelling in the sleepiest village of England, and compare her lot with that of one even a quarter of a century ago, we see the pace at which we have moved. The alert, often khaki-clad figure, in short skirt and practical boots, with her day filled up by depot, canteen, or hospital work, would have caused her grandmother's pencilled eyebrows to lift in amazement. The trumpet-call of war has summoned our women, as our men, throughout the length and breadth of the land. Gladly they have offered time, service, blood—even life itself; and according to a recent confession of one of them, 'Never have the days been so full and happy—never has life been so interesting before!'

Sad that *war* was needed to set free such a tide of energy; yet sadder still if war had found our women useless mourners in empty homes instead of the toilers they are—working with men and for men, linked together by love of kindred and country—yes, by love of right, justice, and freedom *everywhere*, in a union cemented by blood and tears that time can never break.

Now, if ever, woman has

> Made herself her own,
> To give or keep, to live and learn and be.

And when the agony of this strife is over, and much of the past in ruins, it may be that we shall realise the poet's dream in those old melodious days, that man and woman, 'these twain, upon the skirts of Time,'

> Sit side by side full-summ'd in all their powers. . . .
> Then comes the statelier Eden back to men; . . .
> Then springs the crowning race of human-kind.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER IX.—WHICH RECOUNTS THE END OF AN EPISODE.

MIDWAY down he beheld two burly policemen, who mounted one behind the other, their gray helmets, blue coats, and silver buttons seeming to fill the narrow stairway.

'Anything wrong?' he inquired as they drew level.

'Not wid you dis time, bo',' answered one, blandly contemptuous, and strode on up the stair, twirling his club in practised hand, his fellow-officer at his heels.

Thus rebuked, Mr Ravenslee looked after them with quick-drawn brows, until, remembering his broken hat-brim and shabby clothes, he smiled and went upon his way. Reaching the dingy lower hall, he beheld the solitary gas-jet aflare, whose feeble light showed five lounging forms, rough fellows, who talked together in hoarse murmurs and with heads close together.

He was passing by, when, in one of these deep-throated talkers, he recognised the long limbs and wide, sloping shoulders of the Spider. Mr Ravenslee paused, and nodded. 'Good-evening,' said he, but this time kept his hands in his pockets.

The Spider eyed him somewhat askance, shifted his wad of chewing-gum from one cheek to the other, and spoke. ''Lo!' said he.

'Do you know where Spike is?'

'S'pose I do—then what?' demanded the Spider, with a truculent lurch of his wide shoulders.

'Then I shall ask you to tell me where I can find him—or, better still, you might show me.'

'Oh, might I?'

'You might.'

Now here, the feelings of the Spider waxing beyond mere words, he looked at the speaker, viewed him up and down with a glance of contemptuous hostility, whereat Ravenslee's whole expression melted into one of lamb-like meekness.

'Say,' quoth the Spider at last, 'there's only one thing as I can't stand about you, an' that's—everything!'

'Sorry for that,' murmured Ravenslee, 'because I rather like you, Spider. I think you could be quite a decent fellow if you tried very hard. Come, shake your grouch and let's be friends.'

'Say,' growled the Spider, 'what you're sufferin' from's a hard neck. You ain't no friend o' mine, not much you ain't—savvy? So crank up an' get on yer way like a good little feller.'

'But, you see, I'm anxious to find Spike, because'——

'Well, say, you keep on bein' anxious, only do it somewhere else; I don't want youse around where I am—see? So beat it while de goin''s good.'

'Why—er—no,' said Ravenslee in his laziest tones—'no, I don't think I'll beat it. I guess I'll stay right here and wait until you are so kind, so—er—very kind and obliging, as to show me where I can find Spike.' And he sighed plaintively as he lounged against the wall behind, but his eyes were surprisingly bright and quick beneath the shadow of the battered hat.

'Hully chee!' exclaimed the Spider, expectorating contemptuously; 'hark to the flossy-boy, fellers!—Aw, run away now,' said he, scowling suddenly; 'run away before ye get slapped on th' wrist.' And, while divers of his companions laughed hoarsely, he turned a contemptuous back on Mr Ravenslee; but even then he was seized in iron fingers that clutched his shoulder, and in that painful grip was jerked suddenly round again, to behold a face, vicious-eyed, thin-lipped, square-jawed, fiercely out-thrust; and, recognising the 'fighting-face,' the Spider, being a fighter of a large and varied experience, immediately 'covered up,' and fell into that famous crouch of his that had proved the undoing of so many doughty fighters ere now. Then, like a flash, his long arm shot out; but, in that same instant, Ravenslee, timing the blow to a fraction, moved slightly, and the Spider's knuckles bruised themselves against the wall at the precise moment that Ravenslee's open hand flipped lightly on the side of the Spider's square, lean jaw.

The Spider drew back, staring from Ravenslee's tall, alert figure to his broken knuckles and back again, while his companions stood by in mute and wide-eyed wonder.

'Spider,' said Ravenslee, shaking his head in grave reproof, 'you were rather slow that time; very foolish to leave your point uncovered, and offer me your jaw like that, you know.'

Five pairs of eyes stared at the speaker with a new and sudden awakened interest, and, beholding in him that lithe assurance of poise, that indefinable air, that bespeaks the trained pugilist, and which cannot be mistaken, the spectators nudged their elbows and wagged their heads knowingly.

Ravenslee's gray eyes were shining and his pale cheeks tinged with colour. 'Ah, Spider,' said he, 'life is rather worth while after all—isn't it? Spider, I like you better and better. Come, don't be a surly Spider; shake hands!'

'T' hell wid youse!' growled the Spider, covering up again, and, though his face was sulky, yet was no trace of contempt there now.

'I suppose,' mused Ravenslee, looking him over with knowledgeful eye—'yes, I judge, as you are now, you would fight about seven or eight pounds over your ring-side weight. Spider, you 'd have to give me twenty pounds! Spider, I could eat you! Come, shake hands and let 's go and fetch Spike.'

Now, speaking, Ravenslee smiled with eyes as well as lips; beholding which, the Spider grew slowly upright, his knotted fists unclenched, and, staring Ravenslee in the eyes, he reached out slowly and by degrees and grasped the proffered hand.

'Say,' said he, falling to violent mastication of his eternal chewing-gum, 'who 'd you have de mitts on with last, an' when?'

'Oh, it seems ages ago!' sighed Ravenslee. 'But where 's Spike?'

'Say, bo', who wants him, an' whaffor? Spike 's me pal, see—so I jest shore wants ter savvy who wants him, an' why.'

'His sister.'

'Hully chee! why didn't youse say so at first? When Miss Hermione wants anythin' she 's gotta have it, I guess!—Ain't that right, fellers?'

'You bet,' chimed the four.

'So, if she wants de kid, I guess I'll jest have to fetch him for her. Come on, bo'! S' long, fellers.'

Hereupon, having acknowledged the friendly salutes of the four, Ravenslee followed the Spider out into the court, empty now and silent.

'Say, bo', where 'd you meet up wid Spike anyway?' inquired the Spider, as they strode along Tenth Avenue. 'You don't belong around here, do you?'

'No. Do you know where he was last night?'

'You can search me, bo'. All I savvy is he was off on some frame-up or other.'

'Who with?'

'Well, not wid me.'

'Did you see any one with him beside M'Ginnis at O'Rourke's?'

'No; there was only them two.'

'Ah, I guessed as much,' said Ravenslee, nodding; 'he went away with M'Ginnis—good!'

'Say, bo',' questioned the Spider when they had gone some way in silence, 'I ain't seen you fight anywheres, have I?'

'No; but I've seen you, Spider. I saw you beat Larry M'Kinnon at 'Frisco.'

'Which sure was some fight,' nodded the Spider. 'Them half-arm jolts of his sure shook me some. He 'd have got me in the third if I hadn't clinched.'

'He was a terror at in-fighting.'

'He sure was, bo'.'

'It was your jabbing and foot-work won you the fight, Spider, one of the best I've ever seen—very little clinching and clean breakaways.'

'Larry sure was game all through—yes, right up to the knock-out. A good, clean fighter. N' say, bo', I was real sorry to see him counted out.'

'It meant a big purse for you, I remember.'

'Oh, sure, I had money to burn. I ain't got much left now, though,' said the Spider ruefully.

'You came pretty near being a world's champion, Spider.'

'Aw—jest near enough t' miss it, I guess. Talkin' o' champeens, the greatest of 'em, th' best fightin' man as ever swung a mitt, I reckon, was Joe Madden, as retired years ago. Nobody could ever lick Joe Madden.'

'Did you know him?'

'Not me, bo'; I wasn't in his class. But I seen him fight years ago.'

'Do you think Spike will ever make a champion?' inquired Ravenslee suddenly. 'I mean if he were given every chance?'

'Well,' answered the Spider slowly, 'he sure has th' grit; there ain't nothin' on two legs he 's afraid of except—himself, bo'. He 's too high-strung—nerves is his trouble, I reckon. Why, chee! when he 's in de ring he can't be still a minute, can't let himself rest between rounds, see? He kinder beats himself, I guess.'

'I know what you mean,' nodded Ravenslee, 'and I 'm sure you 're right. By the way, have you ever seen M'Ginnis fight?'

'I seen him scrap once or twice. He 's sure ugly in a rough-house, but in th' ring—well, I dunno.'

'Has he a punch?'

'Bo', he 's got a sleep-pill in each mitt if—if he can land his wallop right. Yes, siree, if Bud can hit a guy where it 'll do most good, that guy 's sure goin' to forget his cares an' troubles for a bit. But he 's slow an' heavy, Bud is, though I ain't never seen him mix it in th' ring, mind.'

'H'm,' said Ravenslee thoughtfully. 'Ha! M'Ginnis seems to have it all his own way around here—why?'

'Well, because Bud 's Bud, an' because Bud's old man is a Tammany boss—which gives Bud a big pull wid de police—'nuff said, I guess?'

'Quite,' nodded Ravenslee, and walked thereafter deeper in thought than ever. 'Where are you taking me?' he inquired as they turned a sudden corner.

'To de river.'

'This is Eleventh Avenue, then?'

'Yep! Watch out you don't trip on de railroad tracks.' And now the Spider seemed to have become thoughtful also, and somewhat gloomy, judging by his face as seen by an occasional feeble light as they traversed the unlovely thoroughfare.

'Bo',' said he suddenly, 'I 'm thinkin' there 's some guys in this world as would be better out of it. I 'm thinkin' of some guy as got a little girl

into trouble—an' left her to it. Her kid died, an' her folks turned her out, an' she 'd have died too, I guess, if it hadn't been for Miss Hermione an' old Mother Trapes—ye see, she was all alone, poor little kid! Now a man as would treat a girl that ways ain't got no right t' live, I reckon. I should like t' know who that guy was! I should like t' meet that guy—once.' After this the Spider became more gloomy than ever, and spoke only in surly monosyllables. Suddenly he turned off along a narrow, ill-lighted alley-way that led them between divers small, mean houses and tall, dark warehouses, and brought them suddenly out upon the misty foreshore, beyond which the dim and mighty river flowed. On they went, the Spider's depression growing perceptibly, until at last their feet trod the rough planking of a narrow causeway which ended in a dark, raft-like structure moored out in the river. Here was a small and dismal shack, from whose solitary window a feeble ray of light beamed.

What was it?

Ravenslee shivered suddenly and stopped to stare about him, while his listless hands changed to tight-clenched fists.

What was it?

What was there about this dismal, silent place that seemed to leap at him all at once from the dimness, he knew not whence? Was it the shack with its solitary light, or the broad river lapping with soft sighings and low weeping sounds among the piles below; or was it something in the altered aspect of the guiding figure that led him forward, slow and ever slower, as if with dragging feet, and yet with feet that trod so softly?

'Spider,' said he at last, speaking in a hushed and breathless manner—'Spider, where are we?' and, speaking, he shivered again even while his clenched hand wiped the sweat from his brow. The Spider made no answer, for the feeble light was blotted out by a very solid something which, approaching softly, resolved itself into a burly, blue-clad form whose silver buttons and shield showed conspicuous.

'What 's doin'?' demanded a voice. 'Who is it?' The voice was hoarse and authoritative; but the gruff tones were schooled, it seemed, to an almost unnatural softness.

''S all right, Micky,' answered the Spider in the same subdued tone; 'it 's only me come for de kid.'

'Who you got wid you there, Spider?'

'A pal o' mine an' de kid's—he 's all right, Mick.' Then to Ravenslee, 'Come on, bo'!' Slowly they approached the shack; but, reaching the door, the Spider hesitated a long moment ere, lifting the latch, he led the way in.

A fairly large room, lighted by a lamp that stood upon a rickety table, where sat a young-faced, white-haired man, very industriously writing within a small account-book; upon the table before him were a number of articles very neatly arranged, among which Ravenslee noticed a cheap wrist-watch, a hair-comb, a brooch, and a small chain purse. He was yet gazing at these, and at the white-haired man, who, having nodded once to the Spider, continued to write so busily, when he was startled to hear a long-drawn, shuddering sigh. Turning suddenly sharp about, he stared toward a certain dark corner where, among a litter of oars, misshapen bundles, boxes, and odds and ends, was a small stove, and, crouched above it, his head between his hands, he beheld Spike.

With the same instinctive feeling that he must be silent, Ravenslee approached the boy and touched him on the shoulder. Spike started and glanced up, though without lifting his head.

'Your sister is anxious about you. Why are you here?'

'Don't you know, Geoff? Ain't no one told ye?'

'What do you mean?'

'I 'll show ye!'

The boy took a hurricane lamp from the floor beside him, and, having lighted it, brought Ravenslee farther into that littered corner, where, among the boxes and bundles and other odd-ments, lay what seemed to be two or three oars covered with a worn tarpaulin.

'Look, Geoff—you remember—only this mornin'!' Very gently Spike raised a corner of the tarpaulin, and as he looked down Ravenslee's breath caught suddenly.

A woman's face, very young and very placid-seeming. The long dark hair framing the waxen features yet oozed drops of water like great, slow-falling tears; then, beholding this pale, still face, Ravenslee knew why he had shivered and hushed voice and step, and instinctively he bowed his uncovered head.

'You remember Maggie Finlay, Geoff—this mornin' on the stairs? She—she kissed me good-bye, said she was goin' away; this is what she meant—the river, Geoff! She 's drowned herself, Geoff! Oh, my God!' and letting fall the tarpaulin, Spike was shaken suddenly by fierce hysterical sobbing.

Whereat the man, looking up from his writing, spoke harsh-voiced: 'Aw, quit it, kid; quit it! Here I 've just wrote down three rings, and she 's only got one, an' that a cheap fake. Shut up, kid; you 'll make me drop blots next. Cut it out—it ain't as if she was your sister.'

Hereupon Spike started and lifted a twitching face. 'My sister!' he repeated; 'my sister!—watcher mean? My God, Chip! Hermy could never—come to—that;' and, shivering violently, Spike turned and stumbled out of the shack.

Once outside, Ravenslee set his long arm about him, and felt the lad still trembling violently.

'Why, Spike,' said he, 'buck up, old fellow.'

'Oh Geoff, Hermy could never'——

'No, no, of course not.' So, very silently, together and side by side, they crossed the narrow causeway.

'Gee, but I'm cold,' said the boy between chattering teeth as they turned along the wide avenue. 'I—I guess it's shook me some, Geoff. Ye see, I used to go to school with Maggie once —an' now, my God!'

Reaching Mulligan's at last, they beheld numerous groups of whispering folk who thronged the little court, the doorway, and the hall beyond. They whispered together upon the stairs and murmured on dim landings. But as Ravenslee and Spike, making their way through these groups, mounted upward, they found one landing very silent and deserted, a landing where was a certain battered door whose dingy panels had been wetted with the tears of a woman's agony, had felt the yearning, heart-broken passion of a woman's quivering lips, such a very few hours ago. Remembering which, Geoffrey Ravenslee, turning to look at this grimy door, beheld it vague and blurred and indistinct as he turned and climbed that much-trodden stair.

Upon the top landing they found Mrs Trapes, who leaned over the rails to greet them. 'So you found that b'y, Mr Geoffrey. Hermy 'll be glad. You 'll have heard of poor little Maggie Finlay? Poor lass! poor lonely lass! 'Twas her father drove her to it, an' now he 's had a fit—a stroke; the doctor 's with him now, an' Hermy of course. She 's always around where trouble is. I guess there won't be much rest for her to-night, long past midnight now. I 'm glad you found that b'y; I said you would. I 'll just go down and tell Hermy; she 'll be glad.'

Spike stood awhile, after Mrs Trapes had gone downstairs, very silent and with head adroop; then, slow and heavily, turned and opened his door, but paused to speak over his shoulder in a hoarse whisper. 'Geoff, if ever any man made my sister go through what Maggie Finlay went through I 'd shoot him dead, by God in heaven I would!'

(*Continued on page 132.*)

A WINTER'S RIDE: TAYSIDE.

BIRD-WATCHING is apt to be considered a pastime for the spring and summer; but this is not so, for one of the delights of nature study is that it is to be approached from a different aspect with each season. To the naturalist the circling year of nature begins on the 1st of January and ends on the 31st of December. There is no more enjoyable way of spending an autumn afternoon than to 'ride abroad' and note what birds are to be seen.

Though the month of November is the herald of winter-tide, yet it contains many a 'delicate day' of which one is wise to profit. Let the would-be bird-watcher partake of an early luncheon; and then, booted and spurred, let him sally forth on his favourite pony early in the afternoon. To study birds in comfort one should be astride a thoroughly quiet and well-mannered steed, one that is sure-footed and steady, and above all a pony that will stand quietly and not fidget. The fidgety, prancing 'blood' is not for the bird-watcher; rather let him choose a small, quiet, and sturdy hill-pony. Thus suitably mounted, his other desideratum will be a really good pair of binoculars. Here, of course, as in all matters, the personal note comes in. One will prefer this type of glass, and the other that. It is sufficient to say that they should be a prism lens of a first-class make, and with a magnification of six to eight diameters. The owner should accustom himself to use his binoculars at all times, especially when he is in the saddle. Thus equipped, the bird-watcher may sally forth; but if he cares to add a light waterproof overcoat, a small haversack, and a note-book, as well as a few slabs of chocolate, he will find these are all well worth carrying.

For our ramble let us choose a quiet, still afternoon in late autumn or early winter, and let us be in the saddle and away by 2 P.M. Our choice guides us to the high, rough grounds of the whins. So, leaving the vicinity of the riverside and garden, we turn eastward, and commence a brisk ascent of over half a mile. As we near the summit of the grassy track which has led us upward, and which opens on 'to a little winding road that leads to the hill and back again,' we are sure to see both linnets and pipits flying overhead. Had our journey been in summer instead of winter we should certainly have heard the 'clarion call' of the lark; but at this season of the year this bird has shifted its quarters. A wood-pigeon clatters out of the wood which lies to the west of the track; and occasionally a huge capercailzie-cock flaps off too, interrupted in his repast of fir-tree tops, a diet which gives a resinous and piny flavour to the flesh of this bird.

We now reach the summit of the hill and gain a wondrous view of the landscape. Beneath us lies the valley, with the river Tay winding its course with a sinuous silver curve; in the distance is the haze of the smoke of the Fair City of Perth; and yet farther is the range of the Sidlaw Hills, with the two sugar-loafed tops of the Lomonds on the far southern horizon. To the

north and east hills again shut in the Carse, and to the west the valley narrows into a hollow which is overlooked by the high, purple-shaded hills of the dim distance. A little patch of marshy ground lies close to us now, and may likely harbour a snipe or a mallard; whilst a mixed flock of lapwings and golden plover are flying overhead. The last-named birds have but recently arrived from their summer residence off the hills, and their lonely piping cry is sweet music in one's ears; whilst their wondrous swiftness and precision of flight reminds one of a well-drilled battalion of soldiers, so promptly do they wheel and turn, and yet observe an unbroken formation, following the tradition of our famous British soldiers.

Farther afield we espy our winter thrushes—namely, fieldfare and redwing—birds which regularly winter with us, and then return in spring to nest in the northern territories of Europe. In the neighbouring field our binoculars reveal to us the stormcock, or mistle-thrush, flying at a swift rate, and crossing the hedge with his dipping and rising type of flight, closely followed by a covey of partridges, whose low skimming and rapid flight is equally typical of them, as is the ponderous 'high in air' flight of 'my lord the pheasant.' As we left the path by the wood we both saw and heard some titmice, of which every species winters with us, saving the crested tit, which is *an entirely local bird* only to be found in certain districts—to wit, Speyside. The marsh titmouse is also a *rara avis*; but the cole, the great and blue, are all to be seen throughout the winter. Should there be prolonged frost they will most likely band together in company with linnets and finches, and harry the farmyard for any stray barley or oat straws, or any other accessible titbit.

The long-tailed tit is the least of all the titmice, and by rights belongs to a different group from his confrères afore-mentioned, these being of the family *Parus*, whilst our friend 'bottle Tom' holds the surname of *Acredula*. He too is restless and active, as are all the tits; and with the advent of winter these little birds band themselves together and scour the countryside in flocks, wandering through the woods and the surrounding country in little parties. This habit of *banding together*, or 'packing,' is one of the features of winter bird-life; as one rides about in winter one constantly sees quite large flocks of various birds all 'packing together' and winging their way from wood to covert, from covert to farmyard. Gilbert White was of the opinion that two great motives regulated the proceedings of the brute creation, and that these were *hunger* and *love*. Be this as it may, a sure sign of approaching autumn is to be seen in the flocking of birds.

Now we have reached the higher ground, and here in a marshy pool we flush yet another snipe, which darts off with its zigzag course of flight; and at the same time a party of wild duck (mallard) wing their way overhead, adhering, as is their wont, to a V-shaped formation of flight. At the loch, which lies a little to our west, our binoculars tell us that both mallards and teal are on the water, as well as a solitary water-hen and coots. The rabbits and hares have been disturbed by now, and again we come across the stormcock, fieldfare, and redwing. The last-named bird is the most delicate of all our thrushes, and is the first bird to suffer from a prolonged frost; hence it is no wonder that, in company with the fieldfare, the redwing annually retreats from the severity of a Scandinavian winter. The fieldfare comes in flocks with the dusk of the evening, and it is a typical sight of a gray December day with a northerly wind blowing to see a flock of the gray-blue birds passing overhead and giving voice to a throaty *chock-chaak* note. Both these birds must have but lately reached our shores, and spring-time will have reappeared ere they wing their way to their breeding-haunts in the far north.

The first sight of the redwings and fieldfares is always a seasonal landmark recalling episodes of past years, and reminding one that the summer is truly over and past, and that the grip of winter is close at hand. The fulvers, or bluefelts (for such are the local names of the fieldfares), like to haunt open country, and to travel in little parties or large flocks, being here to-day and gone to-morrow. On their arrival food is plentiful; but as the grip of winter tightens its hold on the land, 'and Boreas's rude, rough winds do blow,' these little visitors feel the pinch very acutely, and, alas! often succumb to the pangs of hunger. Very specially does this apply to the redwings. Now we listen to the *chacking* cry of the bluefelts as they wing their way to their roosting-quarters, a contrast to the whispering notes of the redwings, as a migratory flock of these latter birds also pass overhead. The redwings move in flocks over the country, being wary and shy of approach, and loving to roost and perch on the bushes. And now, to our delight, we have flushed a woodcock, most surely a foreign immigrant from Norway or Sweden. This bird, like the snipe, adopts a zigzag course of flight, and, thanks to the russet-brown hues of its plumage, is strangely hard to see or follow.

The afternoon has also already passed so quickly that we realise we must turn our face home again, first resting a little while we refresh ourselves (and Dobbin the pony) with a few pieces of chocolate, followed by a cigarette. As we stand idly gazing around we hear the swish of wings overhead, and the lordly heron flaps by, winding his way toward the distant burn that flows in the cleft of yonder gully.

Slowly we turn and begin our descent of

the hill. Little companies of cock chaffinches pass us, reminding us of the fact that Linnæus christened these birds *Fringilla cœlebs*, or bachelor finches. Again, we notice a noisy party of daws, whose evening parliament has duly assembled at such an hour. When we reach the end of the road the glorious sunset is slowly flooding the western horizon with rich hues of pink, saffron, and purple, and we realise the day is drawin close.

When the golden day is done,
Through the closing portal,
Child and garden, flowers and sun,
Banish all things mortal.

As the blinding shadows fall,
As the rays diminish,
Under evening's cloak they all
Roll away and vanish.

'MOHAMMED'S COFFIN.'

CHAPTER III.

THE Squire's turn came next. The apathetic Selma had so far bestirred herself as to mount upon the high back of a library chair, to reach down the second volume of a novel she was reading. Isolation upon this pedestal displayed the lines of her fine figure to admiration, and, though he would dearly have liked to stay and feast his eyes on them, the Squire slipped noiselessly out of the room instead to summon Edwin, who was just outside. 'That should bring him to the scratch though nothing else does!' meditated the artful old boy, his thoughts becoming legible on his countenance. 'Here, Edwin! I want you.'

The young man's pleasant voice replied from a recess in the corridor. 'All right, dad! I'll be with you in a moment, as soon as I have helped Ruth to wind this skein.'

And, sure enough, the operation did not take long. Yet, long before it was completed, Selma had stepped down from her perch; and so the Squire was put to the trouble of inventing a reason for having summoned his son.

Things were beginning to grow serious. Days became weeks, and weeks were stretching to months, and still the three young people continued to live on together, side by side, in undisturbed amity. Though by nature a lover of peace in the household, there was nothing that Mrs Fairfield now so eagerly looked out for as the symptoms of tiffs, of bickerings, feuds, and heart-burning. How inhumanly glad she would have been (the unnatural mother that she had become!) to see her Edwin distrait, downcast, absorbed in melancholy thought! For the first and last time in her life, the failure of his appetite would have been a joy to her. But he remained the picture of serenity, inclining, alas! to joyousness far more than sadness, and obviously appreciating home cookery. The girls were no greater comfort to her. What would she not have given to see Selma's eyes flash? And though habitually sleepy, one felt that they *could* flash. But, like the spark in the flint, or the glow in an opal, their fires remained latent. Of Ruth, too, she knew that, unself-assertive as that maiden was, so long as all went smoothly, she was quite able to hold her own when called upon. The tones of Ruth's voice could be f ay, more than firm; but at present they uniformly gentle. So the lover of peace i household caught herself longing for an a tion, or exchange of felinities, and immed afterwards was ashamed of her own unregen

Meantime her husband's thoughts were m in the same direction as her own. He re this by remarking to her one evening, i privacy of their sanctum, 'Look here, this is not going to answer—any fool ca that.' The tones of his voice and the expr of his features were alike preternaturally and she felt that it would be affectation o part to feign ignorance as to what he referring to.

'Whom do you blame?' was all she said.

But Mr Fairfield's mood had passed beyon point whether of teasing or recrimination. reply was sober, and for once admirably sen 'Wouldn't it be better to leave that qu unanswered for the present, dear,' he said, to join our forces in considering how the mi that has been made may be rectified?'

His unwonted seriousness was not lo appealing to his wife, who, meeting him way, made answer warmly, 'With all my h

'That is right, my dear,' returned he; pro ing, 'And now, Joan, I do not mind confe to you that this matter, lightly as we may treated it, lies a good deal nearer my heart I have allowed you to guess.'

Mrs Fairfield was by this time as serio her husband. 'Let me understand you, if please, Squire—do you refer to Edwin's ma with Selma?'

'To Edwin's marriage!' he replied, a loudly—testily. 'To Edwin's marriage—wh to Selma, Ruth, or to the Lord knows What do I care, so long as she is a good one of the right sort, and he loves her?'

Mrs Fairfield's eyes grew moist.

'What I want,' the plain, elderly man on earnestly, 'is to see our son settled. H chosen his career, and he chose like the unselfish lad he is. But if once we allow to go back to that *estancia* alone, particu after what he wrote to you, we cannot tell w

he may cast his eyes. You do not know what an obsession marriage is to a young man, Joan, when once his mind is given up to it. It is a sort of fascination, not to be resisted, and you may stake your bottom dollar now that marry he will, though there were but one single woman in the countryside and she was a mixture of wolverine and women's rightist!' Some of the Squire's prejudices were painfully antiquated.

'What is to hinder him from marrying—will you tell me that, John?' answered the good lady, just a trifle nettled by her husband's last allusion. 'What is to hinder him from marrying, if he wants to marry? Here are two nice girls in the house, for him to play with all day long; and if there is not a larger choice, it is no fault of mine; for he not only declines to go into society, but has repeatedly discouraged me from asking other girls here.'

'Has he so? Well, I can quite understand it.'

'Then, *que faire?*'

'That is what we have now to consider.' And the worthy man composed himself, very much as he might have done previous to laying some weighty statement of policy before the members of a Parish Council.

'The position of our son at this moment,' he went on, 'is exactly that of "Mohammed's Coffin," which, according to the Eastern fable, hangs for ever suspended between heaven and earth, being acted on by equal and opposite attractions.'

He paused. In despite of herself, Mrs Fairfield hung admiringly upon his words. It had been a dream of her early life that he should enter Parliament. He noticed this, was gratified by it, and proceeded—his manner, as he did so, preserving an even balance between talking down to his audience and declining to take himself too seriously.

'What we have to aim at, then, is to put an end to this unprogressive state—this undesirable condition of equilibrium, rest, or, as I may call it, virtual paralysis. But how is that to be done?'

Mistaking what was merely a rhetorical device for an actual question, his wife, in her simplicity, was about to answer him.

But he prevented her. 'It must be done, in the first place, as the classical author puts it, *suaviter in modo*'——

'You know, John, I do not understand Greek.'

'That is, without upsetting the apple-cart.'

'All-important, indeed.'

'And, secondly, it can be done in one of two ways—either by withdrawing a factor from the situation, or by adding one.'

'I follow you. You mean, either by sending one of these girls away, or by inviting another?'

Mr Fairfield nodded.

But the momentary fascination of his oratory had already palled, leaving his wife in renewed possession of her old independence of judgment.

'Then I do not agree with you,' she objected, 'for to invite another girl would merely complicate things; whilst if we are to send one away, how on earth decide which one it is to be?'

The Squire was silent; he had not reckoned upon opposition.

'Can you honestly tell me, Squire, that you have, on the whole, observed a grain of preference on our son's part for either of these young women?'

'I believe he likes them both very well,' answered Fairfield lamely.

'Granted! But do you believe that he likes one better than the other?'

'I can't say I do.'

So this council ended, as so many councils do, very much where it had begun; except that it had promoted a better understanding, if not actual unanimity, between the Squire and Squiress.

CHAPTER IV.

THUS the old course of things was resumed. The two girls continued to appeal to each other, to confide in one another, to be the best of friends; whilst, on his part, Edwin continued to divide his attentions between them as impartially as does Don Ottavio, in the opera, between the ladies Anna and Elvira. The three young people were happy, there was little doubt of that—as happy as the day is long. But the two elders were not.

The Squire, who had many different ways of being tiresome, had embarked on an entirely new rôle. He became plaintive, whilst refusing to complain. Thus, after standing in silent contemplation by the window, he would turn to his wife and say gently, 'It has been in our family close upon two hundred years, Joan, the old Demesne has; and I *should* have liked to see an heir to it—one of my own blood. Ah, well'—— There he broke off.

The words hurt Mrs Fairfield almost as much as if she had been a childless woman and they had been addressed to her by way of reproach. What could she do? She had even gone so far as to withdraw to her own room, lock the door, and ask herself this question, not without tears. What could she do? The voices of the two girls, heard from without, seemed an ironic comment on her question.

'Edwin! Edwin!' she heard one say, 'I am not nearly ready yet;' followed by the other's, 'Edwin! Edwin! you *must* wait for Selma.'

They were about to start on a picnic expedition in the pony-carriage, taking fishing-rods and sketching materials with them, and the pony did not relish standing. 'Why, oh, why could not Edwin, just for once in his life, forgetting all courtesy and chivalry, whip up and drive away, with the punctual Ruth at his side, as if bound

for Gretna Green? There would be some romance in that!'

But through the open bedroom window, she could hear her son's equable tones, as he replied, 'Take your own time! The day's still young, and I'm quite comfortable here.'

Mrs Fairfield, however, was not the sort of woman to give way to idle tears, or find a solace in them. Whilst there's life there's hope, was one of her maxims; so she must e'en be up and doing. Edwin was leaving home for a day or two, to meet Tom Coxeter, another of the partners in the *estancia*, who happened to be in England, and she determined to profit by his absence to 'pump' Selma. (Though theoretically abhorring slang, she would sometimes condescend to it, as a concession to the rising generation.) Somehow she did not think this would be difficult. And though bound to Ruth, as much by opposition to the Squire as by original preference, she chose Selma as the subject of her experiment.

Confident in her own tact and clever way of dealing with girls, she called Miss Durell into the boudoir, and put the question to her almost point-blank, 'Selma, my dear, I want you to tell me—has Edwin said anything to you?' The tones of her voice were insinuating, replete with covert meaning—surely irresistible!

But, to her astonishment, Selma was quite equal to the occasion. Her features became almost hard, and her voice toneless, as, feigning obtuseness, she made answer dully, 'Naturally, he has said a great deal to me—he and I and Ruth have been so much together.'

There was silence. Then, repulsed though she felt herself to be, Mrs Fairfield persisted, though with less confidence than before, 'Dearest Selma, you know what I mean!'

The Juno-like beauty remained obstinately silent.

Mrs Fairfield went on: 'I feel that, as his mother, I have a right to ask you this.' Surely that would bring her to book?

Not a bit of it! All that Selma said was, 'Very well, then, dear Mrs Fairfield, all that I can say is this—that I also feel I have a right not to reply unless I choose.'

The tones of her voice were now no longer colourless—there was coldness, hauteur, arrogance in them. And, for a moment, relations between the two women were dangerously strained.

But Mrs Fairfield's dignity came to her rescue. 'As you please, dear,' she answered, as if unperturbed; 'I dare say you know best.'

And the storm passed by without breaking. But it left poor Joan Fairfield terribly *intriguée*. From the attitude Selma had taken up, it seemed perfectly certain to the poor perplexed mother that there had been a passage of courtship, of some sort or other, between her son and the Junonian. She would have given worlds to know its precise nature! Could Selma possibly have refused—repulsed her own Edwin? It was unthinkable. And yet, basing her inference upon the girl's manner, that was the conclusion to which she was driven. At her wits' end, as it were, and 'carried about by every wind of doctrine,' there was a moment when she would fain have made a confidant of the Squire. But here her pride stepped in. What! was she to allow her lord and master the satisfaction of crowing over her, even though his triumph were to prove ill-founded and short-lived? No, she could not bring her mind to that!

And here let me interpolate that, as a matter of fact, she was astray in her deductions. For Edwin had not proposed to Selma, whose manner towards Mrs Fairfield had been determined solely by the resentment provoked in her by what she was pleased to consider the unwarrantable interrogatory to which she had been subjected.

As for Mrs Fairfield, that night she slept little. Next morning, while they were all at breakfast, a telegram was brought her. In country-houses of the more old-fashioned kind telegrams are public property.

'From Edwin?' queried the Squire, glancing across the table at his wife; whilst, of the two young ladies, neither made the smallest effort to conceal her interest in the answer.

'Yes, from Edwin,' replied Mrs Squire; adding, with all the pride engendered by a monopoly of interesting information, 'He is returning here to-night, and bringing Mr Coxeter with him.'

(*Continued on page 134.*)

MEDICINAL HERBS IN THE OLDEN TIMES AND NOW.

By William Layton.

ONE of the minor British poets—Blackmore—in writing a poetical description of the Creation, invites his readers to observe that,

> Sprouting plants enrich the plain and wood;
> For physic some, and some designed for food.

Now, in one or other of these categories some in both, every plant may be ranged, although in regard to many of them the world may still be ignorant of either their medicinal or their alimentary qualities. This is greatly to the world's detriment, since a large number of plants possessing one or both virtues—the stinging-nettle, for instance—grow wild on the roadside, and may be had for the trouble of gathering; and, in regard to the nettle, the Germans were

reported to have discovered that a tissue may be woven from it.

This ignorance, at least in respect to medicinal herbs, did not prevail in the good old times; necessity then, as now, was the mother of invention, and mankind went direct to nature to find a remedy for nature's ailments. In those days there were no fat physicians of whom it was said, '*Dum bene nummati Lares suos repetunt;*' which, being freely translated, meant, 'No fat physicians with well-filled fobs.' Nor were there chemists' shops debiting *aq. dist. col. sacc.* as a carry-over until a correct diagnosis could be made of the patient's malady. The countryman, and especially the countrywoman, became an expert in the use of plants containing a curative drug, the recognition of this virtue having been gained probably by mere chance. The knowledge was spread abroad by the gossip of old women; and some of these crones in time came to be regarded as witches simply because of the apparent miracles which the use of their drugs sometimes worked. But, nevertheless, the credulity of the sick was a large factor in effecting the cures, as, for instance, when Fracastoro, in the sixteenth century, cured a man, supposed to be *in extremis*, simply by administering an Armenian bole mixed with vinegar. Belief in the gipsies' power to pry into the secrets of futurity was doubtless largely due to their cures—effected by means of herbal remedies—of gripe, sores, burns, warts, and other ailments common to the countryside.

It is possible that the gipsies gained their knowledge of the medicinal value of plants when first they began their wanderings. Driven by hunger in search of foodstuffs, they made experiments as to the edible value of any likely plant they found by the wayside. That they 'pinched' what they could, even in the early part of the sixteenth century, and caused much annoyance by their depredations, is evinced by the fact that in Henry VIII.'s time an Act was passed against their itinerancy (1530). They could not in those early days, here in England, help themselves to much garden produce, as it was only about this period that the lettuce, cabbage, carrot, and turnip were introduced into this country. Of edible roots there were none; so that if the vagrant had a craving for vegetable food, he could only gratify it by delving in the hedgerows for roots or by munching berries and possibly foliage.

It is also possible that the connection between the 'herbarist' and the fortune-teller among the gipsies of earlier times was not very remote, since the supposed sidereal influence on plant-life and on man's destiny was extensively exploited by the charlatans when victimising their too willing dupes. But the use of astrological nomenclature as bombast was not confined to the Bohemian professors of the healing art. Nicholas Culpeper, a famous herbalist, who died in 1654 at Wakehurst, a fine Elizabethan manor-house in Sussex, amassed considerable wealth by the publication of his *Complete Herbal*, a work which 'displayed the Medicinal and Occult qualities of Herbs, physically applied to the Cure of all Disorders incident to Mankind.' The book ran through several editions, to an earlier one there being annexed *The English Physician enlarged, and Key to Physic, with Rules for compounding Medicine according to the true System of Nature.* This book was intended to be taken as a complete family dispensatory, and included in its pages some special recipes left by their discoverer as a legacy to his wife.

That Culpeper believed in the sidereal influence on plants, or found it profitable to pretend that he did, is manifest from the opening pages of his work. In a preface to the above-mentioned edition the author says: 'I always found the disease vary according to the various motions of the stars. Then to find out the reason of the operation of Herbs, Plants, &c., to the Stars went I.' Consequently, in writing of the common cowslip, Culpeper gravely informs his readers that this flower 'is under the sign Aries, and that Venus lays claim to this herb as her own.' It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that readers of the book were informed that water distilled or an ointment made from its petals would add considerably to a woman's beauty of countenance, or restore the same to its original state if it should have been damaged by the ravages of time. And the author naïvely adds that the fact was, as the French say, 'the secret of Polichinelle,' inasmuch as 'our city dames know it well enough.'

If we put aside the apparent charlatanism of Culpeper's method, there is much information of practical value in the work, and from it the modern herbalist even might glean some hints for the better practice of his calling. But if he would make himself acquainted with the virtues of all the herbs mentioned in the book much time will be required. The original issue of the work treats of some four or five hundred plants; and in the new edition above mentioned another hundred are introduced to the reader's attention. But when we are told that there are no less than three hundred varieties of one particular plant—namely, the liverwort (ord. *Marchanticeæ*)—it will be readily understood that a *Complete Herbal*, like the city of Rome, was not built up in a day!

We have said above that Culpeper lived in Sussex, and the reason why he chose this 'blessed county'* as a place of residence was probably because 75 per cent. of the plants known by herbalists as possessing medicinal qualities were indigenous to this particular part

*The county is still spoken of as 'Silly Sussex,' but the epithet has nothing to do with the mentality of the natives. It is a perversion of the Saxon *sælig*, which meant 'holy,' and therefore 'blessed,' an allusion to the number of religious houses established throughout the county.

of England. Without going far from his home, therefore, he was able easily to obtain herbal specimens for laboratory research.

There is a tradition extant in Sussex that Culpeper did not acquire possession of Wakehurst by inheritance or by purchase. As an apothecary in London, his services were much in request by sufferers from the Great Plague, and one of them, the owner of the Sussex estate, was temporarily staying in town. He was carried away by the terrible disease, and on his deathbed made a will and appointed his medical attendant his testamentary executor. But in spite of every effort made by Culpeper to find the rightful heirs, none came forward, and he remained in the undisturbed enjoyment of the whole property until the day of his death.

It was in this same county of Sussex that the writer of this article first had his attention called to the potentialities, from a medicinal point of view, of roadside vegetation. Wandering one warm August day down Rocky Lane—aptly named, since it cuts through the sand-rock between Hayward's Heath and Burgess Hill—he saw a carter who was having trouble with his horse. The poor brute, like the donkey of the nursery rhyme, wouldn't go. The kindly carter, with many a persuasive 'Whoa, old gal!' was gently rubbing down the flanks of the animal, but to no purpose. Suddenly the man's face was illumined with an idea; and, exclaiming, 'Darned if I don't think the old gal 's got the gripes!' he proceeded to unharness the horse and straightway to lead it to the hedgerow. Presently the poor brute began to eat greedily of the leaves of a kind of wild vine which was ramping freely amidst the hawthorn and blackberry hedge. 'Now she won't be long,' said the cheery carter; and when the animal had finished its feed it was once more harnessed into the cart.

In reply to interrogations, the man said that the vine was the bryony, or 'briney,' as he pronounced it, and added, 'Nothing like briney for gripe in horses.' In further conversation, the writer was informed that the berries are 'dead on warts and chilblains,' and that the root, when scraped and applied as a 'pultess' (poultice) to the part affected, is a sovereign remedy for lumbago.

Culpeper, in his *Herbal*, grows quite eloquent in dilating on the virtues of bryony, or ladies' seal. He tells us that 'it is a furious, martial plant;' may be used as a purgative; is good for palsies, convulsions, and stitches in the side; that a decoction of the roots, drunk in wine, is most useful in certain phases of maternity; and that an electuary, also made of the roots and honey, is good for chest complaints. He goes on to say that this same root, 'mixed with hog's grease,' is a cure for every sore, burn, sprain, or bruise known to humanity.

That our ancestors had much faith in the curative qualities of herbs, when used in the bath, is shown in the pages of *The Boke of Nurture folowyng Englondis gise*, by John Russell (edited from the Harleian manuscripts by Frederick Furnival). According to this old writer (he was Marshal to the Good Duke Humphrey, *circiter* 1408), the preparation of the 'bathe medicinable or stewe' must have been rather a formidable operation in his time. Into it was thrown a decoction of about a dozen different herbs, each one of which was supposed to possess a special curative value. The principal were the hollyhock, the marshmallow, the camomile, and the pyrethrum or feather-foil, this last since it abounds in nitrate of potash. As a preliminary to the bath, 'sheets full of herbs' had to be hung around the room in which the 'stewe' was taken; and the attendant was specially instructed to have a basin of rosemary held in readiness for the final sponge-down.

The carefully culled knowledge of the seventeenth century apothecary and of practical experience, such as that of the gipsy and the Sussex carter, finds expression to-day in the *British Pharmacopœia*, and for medicines people rush to the chemist's shop rather than to the hedgerows. But it may be asked whether it would not be in the national interest if the medicinal and other qualities of our plants and herbs were properly taught in our schools. The elements of botany already form part of the curriculum in some of them; but it is generally looked upon as a dry subject, and one of interest more to girls than to boys. Instead of writing on the blackboard certain facts about the Latin name of a plant, the order to which it belongs, the stamen, petals, and pollen, let the teacher take the class out of doors, or in towns have a live specimen of the plant at hand, and endeavour to awaken a living interest in its hidden qualities. Take the foxglove, for instance. Let the children be taught its Latin name if you like; let them be told that all parts of the plant contain poison; but also let them know and understand that from it may be extracted matter that is most useful for the service of man in the exercise of his arts and crafts. Then children would have some respect for what they now regard simply as a pretty flower to be picked, carried home, and next day consigned to the dust-heap. With such an interest awakened in plant life, a stimulus would be given to the proper development of a child's natural curiosity, and there would of itself accrue a practical, because a scientific, result of its earlier education. We should no longer be wholly dependent upon Germany or on any other country for the drugs necessary for our medicines and for our manufactures.

The Herb-Growers' Association, started in February 1916 (7 Queen Anne's Chambers, Westminster, London, S.W.), was a pioneer in the work of systematising the efforts of collectors, and the value of its work may be judged from

the fact that, with the assistance of eighteen hundred workers, it had by September marketed one hundred tons of herbs gathered from our fields and hedgerows. The next step is to sow the seeds for an increased crop next year, and with this in view fifty thousand leaflets conveying instructions have been already distributed. (The subject was introduced here—*Chambers's Journal*, July 1916—by Mary Holdsworth in her article, 'The English Herb Industry.')

'THE DOCTOR.'

By James A. Manson.

LONG years ago I came across a couplet which somehow or other I have never forgotten, though the name of its author has slipped from my memory. It expressed the sentiment:

> A wise physician skilled our wounds to heal
> Is more than armies to the commonweal,

and might have been inspired by such a man as John Abernethy (1764–1831), by whose foresight and virility medical treatment and surgical practice were immeasurably advanced. For though the whole art and science of healing has been revolutionised since his time, yet the foundations of the coming change were laid by him and his master, John Hunter, and others of his sagacious colleagues. He was a pioneer rather than a reformer, for the latter term implies that things had once been well, and only needed to be put straight again; whereas in Abernethy's day rule-of-thumb was still largely the guiding principle of his profession.

Having been surgeon to St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, for forty years, he acquired a remarkable knowledge of human nature as well as of the ailments and accidents which flesh is heir to. It is true that he was often rude to his patients—Sir Astley Cooper said his manners were worth one thousand pounds a year to him (Cooper); but this was due partly to the pressure of an enormous practice, partly to a heart trouble which rendered him irritable, partly to temperament (for he was passionate and irascible as a boy), and partly to his clients themselves. For he was a man of sturdy common-sense, who preferred to call a spade 'a spade' and not 'an agricultural implement,' and would stand no tomfoolery or the 'putting-on of airs.' But he was seldom hasty with the helpless and indigent. 'Private patients,' he avowed, 'if they do not like me, can go elsewhere; but the poor in the hospital I am bound to take care of.'

To the purse-proud he was a terror. A wealthy, lazy man consulted him, in fear and trembling, about a cure for gout, a disease caused by his visitor's fondness for the pleasures of the table. 'Live on sixpence a day,' was the doctor's advice, 'and earn it.'

Asking his counsel about her complaint of forty years' standing, a long-winded lady began to describe its progress from the very first. 'By the by,' interrupted Abernethy, 'how long will it take you to tell me? For I have a patient to see in the next street.' 'Twenty minutes.' 'Ah, well, go on,' he replied; 'and I hope you will have finished by the time I get back.' This sounds so uncouth that one must suppose the doctor had already detected that all the lady was suffering from was loquacity.

Another lady who lamented her low spirits was bidden not to come to him, but to 'go and buy a skipping-rope.'

Those patients, however, who knew his failing could manage him well enough. A woman, aware that least said was soonest mended, called one day, and, holding out her hand, remarked, 'Burn.' His answer was, 'Poultice.' Next day she called, and said, 'Better.' 'Continue poultice,' quoth Abernethy. At the end of a week she paid her last visit, and said, 'Well. Your fee?' 'Nothing,' she was told; 'you are the most sensible woman I ever saw.'

One day a man suffering from a very painful affection of the shoulder visited him. He hardly had time to open his case when Abernethy abruptly observed, 'I know nothing about it.' 'How should you?' retorted the man. 'But if you will have patience, perhaps you may.' At once came the reply, 'Sit down,' and the doctor heard him with the utmost kindness and civility.

On another occasion the wife of a distinguished musician consulted him, and, resenting his discourtesy, said, 'I had heard of your rudeness before I came, sir, but I did not expect this.' Abernethy having handed her the prescription, she asked what she was to do with it. 'Anything you like; put it in the fire if you please.' Taking him at his word, the lady threw the prescription on the fire, placed his fee on the table, and hurried from the room. Abernethy followed her into the hall, and begged her to take back the fee, or let him give her another prescription. But she would not listen to him, and left the house.

Once a mother brought her daughter, smartly gowned and tightly laced, for his opinion about her health. In recounting the interview, she, too, complained of the doctor's rudeness. But what was the head and front of his offending? Only plain speaking. 'Madam,' he had said, 'do you know there are more than thirty feet of bowels squeezed beneath your daughter's girdle? Go home and cut it; give nature a chance, and you will have no need of my advice.'

'Mr Abernethy,' explained another patient, 'there's something wrong with my arm. There, oh!'—making a particular movement with the limb—'that gives me a great pain, sir.' 'What a fool you are to do it, then!' was the doctor's soothing comment.

When the Duke of York called to consult him, Abernethy stood with his hands in his pockets, waiting to be spoken to, and calmly whistling the while. His Royal Highness, taken aback, remarked, 'I suppose you know who I am?' 'Well, what of that?' answered the doctor. Then he went on: 'If your Highness wishes to be well, you must do as the Duke of Wellington often did in his campaigns. You must cut off the supplies, and the enemy will soon quit the citadel.'

Some doctors kept cases on their hands for the sake of the fees. Abernethy detested such sharp practice. Having been called in to advise in a case of so-called tumour, which he saw was an aneurism, he pointed to a plaster. 'What is this?' he asked. 'A plaster!' 'Pooh!' he exclaimed, as he took it off and flung it aside. 'That was all very well,' said the doctor to him later; 'but your "Pooh!" took several guineas out of my pocket.'

Near Winterslow Hut, some seven miles north-east of Salisbury, a gentleman met with a serious accident to his ankle, for which the usual treatment then was amputation. Mr Davis, a surgeon of Andover, was summoned, set the parts, and then said, 'When you get well, you will probably have a stiff joint, and friends will tell you, "That comes of having a country doctor." So you had better send for a London surgeon to confirm or correct what I have done.' Abernethy, accordingly, was sent for immediately, and reached the place at two in the morning. After examining the limb very carefully, he said at last, 'I am come a long way to do nothing. I might pretend to do something; but as any avoidable movement of the limb must be harmful, I should only do mischief. You are in very good hands, and will do very well. You may have a stiff joint, but that is better than a wooden leg.' Then he took his fee of sixty guineas, and returned to town.

Not long afterwards a clergyman in the same locality was attacked with erysipelas in the head and arm. His alarmed family wrote to his brother in London, and asked him to request Abernethy to visit the patient. 'Who is attending your brother?' 'Mr Davis of Andover.' 'Well, I told him all I knew about surgery, and I *know* he has not forgotten it. You may be perfectly satisfied. It is not necessary for me to go.' With which remark he lost a fee of sixty guineas.

He strongly condemned the too common use of the knife by many of his fellow-practitioners. A workman having fallen from a scaffold near his house, several surgeons were hastily summoned, Abernethy among them. When he arrived he found the man on a mattress. He was suffering from a compound dislocation of the ankle-joint, which was completely exposed, the torn skin overlapping the edge of the bone. The parts having been adjusted and the skin drawn out of the wound, it looked really as if there were little the matter. 'Do you think I shall ever get well?' asked the man anxiously. 'But why not? Many of these cases do well.' 'But, sir,' remarked the man, 'they have sent for the instruments.' Not until then did Abernethy learn that two surgeons had already seen the patient, and had decided to amputate the foot. Though placed in a rather delicate position, he could not retire. When the surgeons returned they were surprised to see the man in some degree of comfort. Then, noticing Mr Abernethy, they inquired whether he could assure them the case would progress favourably. 'Certainly not,' said Abernethy. 'But should it not do well, you can still resort to amputation; so far, my reputation is pledged. Moreover, I assure you that no immediate mischief will ensue to endanger the man's life. You may,' he proceeded, in pre-Asquithian phrase, 'wait and see how he does. But as I am got rather into a scrape, you must allow me to manage the case in my own way.' So he put the limb in splints, varnished the plaster, and instructed the attendants to sponge constantly, in order to prevent any rise of temperature. He knew there were two holds on a patient's mind—hope and fear—and he made frequent use of both. Before leaving the man, he said to him, 'If you lie perfectly still you will do well; but if you move one jot you will do ill. That's all.' As the man made a good recovery, his limb was saved.

Dr Thomas Rees once called on Abernethy on behalf of a poor author, who greatly desired the surgeon's opinion, but, owing to the stories he had heard, was actually afraid to see him. 'Besides,' added the visitor, 'he is not able to pay you. He has been ill a long time, and earns a living as best he can.' 'Where does he live?' Dr Rees named a place two miles away. Abernethy at once ordered his carriage, visited the sick man of letters, and behaved most kindly towards him.

Abernethy became noted for the gentleness with which he examined cases of fracture and dislocation. His opinion was requested in a case of injury to a boy's elbow. The joint continued to be stiff, and, fearing lest it might remain so permanently, the doctor in attendance called in his famous colleague. Handling the arm very tenderly, Abernethy found everything in its natural place, the boy meanwhile suffering no pain. 'Now, my lad,' said the doctor, 'bend your arm a little, only just as far as to reach my finger, and not as far as that if it hurts you.' This was done duly, and the boy was next bidden bend it a little more on similar conditions,

and so on until, in about ten minutes, the arm had been completely bent. What had happened was plain. The boy was alarmed, and the muscles, growing responsive to his fear, kept the parts rigidly taut. Beyond this there was really nothing amiss.

People who harped upon Abernethy's rudeness never knew of his consideration for others. He had undertaken a serious operation in a case of Dr Barnett's, who was extremely anxious that all should pass off well. When the great surgeon arrived he went into the room where the operation was to be performed to see that everything was in order, the instruments handy, and so forth. 'I think I have all I shall need, Barnett,' said Abernethy. Then, after another look round, he added, 'But you have forgotten one thing.' Whereupon he threw a napkin over the instruments, remarking, 'It's bad enough for the patient to have to go through the operation; never let him see the terrible tools.'

Comedy and pathos alike informed a singular scene which Abernethy once witnessed in St Bartholomew's. As he was walking through the wards one day, at the head of his pupils, a poor Irishman leaped out of bed and flung himself at the surgeon's feet, pouring out all the time a flood of rude thanks, and pointing to and slapping his leg. 'That's the leg, yer honour!' he shouted. 'That's the leg, and yer honour's the bhoy to do it! May the heavens be yer bed! Long life to yer honour! Bad cess to the spalpeens who said yer honour would cut it off!' Paddy had, it seemed, entered the hospital some three months before with a diseased ankle, which the surgeons proposed to amputate. Abernethy, however, had insisted upon first trying rest and treatment, with the best results. When the patient got into bed again, Abernethy took advantage of the prevailing interest to review the case, with reference especially to the wisdom of constitutional treatment. Pat confirmed every statement emphatically. 'Bedad, an' that's thrue!' 'Divil a lie!' 'His honour's the great docthor!' were a few of his ejaculations; while at every allusion to the limb the blanket was cast aside and the leg thrust up in the air. 'That's the leg, be jabers! and a better one than the leg the gossoons wanted to cut off!' As Abernethy ended he stooped down to the patient, the laughter the incident had evoked not yet subsided, and earnestly said, 'I am glad your leg is doing well, but never kneel except to your Maker.'

He was once sent for to attend a captain in the army. The home was humble, and he thought his patient was in reduced circumstances. Really the officer was pretty well off, but lived frugally because he had honourably taken upon himself the burden of supporting some poor relations. This Abernethy was not aware of, and, under the impression of his client's poverty, he refused the proffered fee. But the captain was a gentleman, and begged the doctor not to be misled by appearances. Still trusting to his own observation, however, Abernethy withdrew towards the door. 'I insist upon your taking your fee,' cried the captain. 'Then, sir, I will not!' exclaimed the doctor as he left the room. Consequently the captain was obliged to call in another medical man, who, deceived as Abernethy had been, also declined the fee. 'Stay, sir, I must ask you to take it,' protested the patient in such a tone that the doctor felt it impossible to refuse. Then the captain told him of his experience with Abernethy.

But this was by no means the sole occasion when, like other folk, Abernethy jumped to a wrong conclusion. Called in to see a literary man whose face suggested heavy drinking, but who was really a dyspeptic, he gave great offence by his blunt speech. 'My stomach is out of order'—— the patient began. 'I see that by your nose,' gruffly broke in Abernethy, and the interview terminated in explosive wrath.

It pleased a seasoned fox-hunter to abuse Abernethy so roundly that he was asked why he was so bitter. 'Why,' explained the hunter, 'I no sooner entered the room than Mr Abernethy said, "I see you drink a good deal." Now,' added the patient in an injured tone, 'suppose I did, what on earth was that to him?'

Second thoughts often promptly undid the momentary irritation to which at first Abernethy yielded too easily. He was stepping into his carriage one day to visit a certain duke, who had sent for him in a hurry, when a stranger came forward, and said he would be very glad if Mr Abernethy would see Mr —— of Somers Town, a poor gentleman whom he had already visited and advised. 'I can't go now,' he answered with a touch of annoyance; 'I am going in haste to see the Duke of ——.' Then, closing the carriage door, he looked up at the coachman and added quietly, 'Somers Town.' His better nature had asserted itself within a few seconds.

It happened that a woman came into the hospital for an operation. Abernethy decided that she was not in a fit state, and sent her to one of the beds to nurse her strength. When her health was sufficiently improved, an early day was fixed for the operation. Then the 'dresser' informed Abernethy that she was about to leave. 'My good woman,' he remonstrated, 'what a fool you are to come here for operation, and just when we get you fit for it you want to go away!' Some one whispered to him that her father was dying, and she desired to see him. Darting an angry glance at the 'dresser,' the surgeon inquired why he had not been told so at once. Then, turning to the patient, he said very gently, 'You shall go out immediately, and shall come back when you please, and I will take every care of you.'

Frequently it was imperative to be plain-spoken. A gentleman who thought he might make up for temperance in drink by intemperance in food, and who had already suffered for his gluttony, sent for Abernethy again. The doctor saw that the merchant—for such he was—had been at his old tricks. 'What would you think, sir,' he asked, 'of a man who had made a fortune in business and then risked it all in imprudent speculation?' 'I should call him a great ass.' 'Nay, then,' answered Abernethy, 'thou art the man.'

As lecturer and teacher Abernethy shone supreme. He amazingly disliked the jargon of science. For his students' sake he could not help using it; but whenever he could, he gave a hard name its popular equivalent as well; thus he would speak of the pancreas 'or sweetbread,' cartilage 'or gristle,' and so on. He held that people were always interested in what was positive and precise, and he spoke less as if he were telling his hearers what he knew than what they did not know. And there was a total absence of any kind of display.

Many muscles in the neck have forbidding names, and when Abernethy had to describe them 'he used to chat a little; he called them the little muscles with the long names, but he would add that, after all, they were the best-named muscles in the body, because their names expressed their attachments. This gave him an excuse for referring to what he had just described, in the form of a narrative rather than a dry repetition. Then, with regard to one muscle that he wished particularly to impress, the name of which was longer than any of the others, he used to point it out as a striking feature in all statues, and then, repeating its attachments, and pointing to the sites which they occupied, say it was impossible to do so without having the image of the muscle before us.' This is the testimony of one of his students, Dr George Macilwain, who lived to become his biographer.

He had a happy knack of sympathising with a student's difficulties. 'If he were about to describe a bone or anything which he knew to be difficult, he would adopt a tone more like that in which a man would teach it to himself than describe it to others. For example, he would say, perhaps, "Ah! this is a queer-looking bone; it has a very odd shape, but I plainly perceive that one may divide it into two parts." Then, pointing with a probe to the division he proposed, he would begin, not so much to *describe* as to *find*, as if for the first time, the various parts of which he wished to teach the names and uses; the description being a kind of running accompaniment to his tracing of the bone, and in a tone as if half talking to himself and half to his audience.' But he demanded work and attention from the hearers. He once publicly rebuked a student indifferent to what was going on: 'Sir, if the lecture does not interest you, I must beg of you to walk out.'

Abernethy allowed scarcely anything to interfere with his lecture. At 2 P.M. by the clock his formula might be heard: 'Gentlemen, to-day,' &c. He was once seen in Smithfield just before two, smartly dressed and in a white waistcoat, making for the hospital. 'You are very gay to-day, sir!' 'Ah! one of my girls was married this morning.' 'I wish her every happiness. But you should have taken a day off in honour of the occasion, and not come to lecture.' 'Egad!' he exclaimed with a laugh, 'I came to lecture on the day *I* was married.'

Eager to attend his lectures, a gentleman from the country waited upon him to enter his name. In the course of conversation Abernethy discovered that his visitor doubted whether he could afford the fee, his income being an uncertain quantity. Thereupon the doctor gave him a perpetual ticket for all his lectures, and, what was singular, appeared to show him rather more attention than the rest of the students by inviting him to his house, and so forth.

In their practice he urged that doctors should explain the principle or reason for their treatment, with a view to gaining the intelligent co-operation of their patients. 'If a medical man,' he held, 'thinks he has done his duty when he has written a prescription, and a patient regards his as fulfilled when he has swallowed it, then both are deceived.'

Discussing the functions of the brain with Spurzheim, one of the founders of the so-called science of phrenology, Abernethy inquired where he placed the 'bump' of common-sense. 'There is no such bump,' was the answer; 'for common-sense depends on the equilibrium of the other organs.' This nicely adjusted balance of senses and organs explained why John Abernethy was a doctor distinguished above most as a physician of practical sagacity and common-sense.

TO NOTRE DAME AT NIGHT.

How many years since first thy Gothic form
Perfected stood upon a day of days,
Square-towered, buttressed! Neither time nor storm
Has claimed thee victim; rather Nature pays
Thee homage that so delicately strong
Arisest from the formlessness of stone
Unshaped by her. What mystery of song
Weft in thy subtle massiveness has grown
Into harmonic beauty? for it seems
That music haunts thee when the midnight moon
Plays with thy shadows while the river dreams,
Or when on clouded eves the breezes croon
A lullaby among thy tracery.
All art is thine; yet he whose brain conceived
Thy germ, whose hand designed thee lovingly,
Is gone. It matters not, for he achieved,
And thou remainest. See, thy tapered spire
Points to the arching neavens slenderly;
Mute prophecy, for thy forgotten sire
Has found in thee his immortality.

COLIN HURRY.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

IT happens to be ten years this month since first the present writer was privileged, under the title of 'The Heart of Things,' to offer in this time-honoured *Journal* such thoughts and morsels of information as came to him in the city where he mostly dwells. He had written for the *Journal* many times before; but it is exactly ten years since he was permitted to revive, with some essential change of manner and method, a feature that had once been conducted by the famous novelist the late James Payn. Ten years make but a speck in time. Despite all the happiness and pain their passing causes, they are less than a moment in eternity. In the history of a *Journal* that itself is almost centenarian, they are but a short period. Yet in personal circumstance, above all for the associations they have produced, they make a period of such consequence that at this moment one cannot pass it by unobserved. Ten years ago, at the beginning, there was occasion to make a note in these pages upon our old river Thames, whose bridges then were widening once again. It is the Thames, after all, that makes of London the heart of the world, the old stream upon which the wild and ancient forerunners of our race paddled themselves about in coracles, creeping up its reedy creeks for their fowling and their rude pursuit of that commerce which so developed, in later ages, to the glory of the One Square Mile. Ten years ago, when changes were thought of, who could have imagined the river of these warring days, or pictured its bridges blotted out in darkness, its banks as still at nights as they were more than a hundred years ago? For the contemplation of great change history need no longer wait for the coming of that New Zealander of Macaulay who should stand on London Bridge and marvel as he pondered on a vast upheaval. The New Zealanders are here in their tens of thousands now; they, with their honest eyes and their loyal hearts, have seen and felt something of wonder and empire on London Bridge across the Thames. And they have felt something of the new beginning. The truth is that in this short period, because of the war, but not the war only, the world has changed far more than we are apt to realise. It occurred to me in this connection that it would be of interest and consequence to look into the files of the great daily newspapers for that very week in February ten years ago when this series of notes was first begun. The result was interesting indeed. There were some facts that leapt like fire from these already musty-smelling pages, stored away with the journals of our ancestors in the dusty cases, rarely to be disturbed. You shall see.

* * *

Naturally you would begin such a perusal gently. You might, for example, look at the theatres, for the amusements of the people are significant. The impression that such an examination made was of a period of flatness. One was happy to see that Sir George Alexander was giving one of the best of the Pinero plays, *His House in Order*, at the St James's; and the farce *When Knights were Bold* was doing well. Mr Fred Terry and Miss Julia Neilson were stirring suburbia's romantic heart with *The Scarlet Pimpernel;* and for Shakespeare there was *Antony and Cleopatra*, with all the colour and ornament that His Majesty's could give to it. A famous conjurer was mystifying the people by 'producing a living woman from his side,' the wrestler Hackenschmidt was at Olympia, and so on. Not much of it of any account. But one thing does please us in this contemplation, and it is that there was no 'revue' in London ten years ago; so sometime there may be none again. For light music at the theatre there was that sparkling *Miss Hook of Holland*, one of the best, as it was one of the last, of the sweet and reasonable musical comedies. It will be something when our producers and audiences grope their way back to such simple beauties. For the present it does not appear that there are enough theatres in London to contain all the revues that the managers would place before the people. In this matter at all events there is a good point scored to 1907. Odd little things were happening then, and in the journals they looked like mountains of occurrence. You may remember some of them. It was not the newspapers only that made them seem so big; you yourself spoke of them and discussed them much. You considered they were of consequence. For example, one of the strongest and most persistent features in the daily newspapers of that first week in February, being

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granted many columns by the best and the most serious, was discussion of the Music Hall Strike, as it was called. There were differences of opinion, you will recall, between the more or less minor comedians and their employers, because, it appeared, the 'stars' had such enormous salaries that the humbler mortals found their lot specially difficult in consequence. Other points were involved, but that is the lingering impression of the whole affair. The comedians insisted upon their right to live, and, furthermore, with the assistance of the trade union system, just then showing itself more indefatigable than ever, their right to strike. They struck. The halls were without their proper turns. The managers were surly and defiant, the people were petulant and despairing, and the comedians made speeches in the public places. It seemed that there was a great and portentous upheaval in the social system; but, as always happens, the excitement faded, the people grew tired of the quarrel between managers and comedians, and then the feud was settled, and the comedians went back to the stage. Honour was satisfied in every quarter. In looking through the history of this affair I am interested in the remark of one of the leaders in the strike. He exclaimed to his audience, amid cheering, that if they wanted peace they must be prepared for war—they, the comedians. Alas! we have heard it said since then. It is a fateful phrase. Some harassing doubts about the philosophy it embraces are creeping into the minds of men in these sad days of disillusion. But, as you see, at that time it was a maxim for constant and comfortable application to many circumstances, and the comedians made use of it. Another matter which was given liberal space in the papers of that week, a topic which, indeed, on one or two days was the leading feature, was the famous trial of Harry Thaw, the wealthy New York murderer. What a trial! How pathetic was the story it told of human weakness! But the majority of the people here, one fears, read the tale of that trial for its sordid details, and not as a bitter satire upon a great people. The British reader desired as much Thaw Trial as he could obtain. It is not a pleasant reflection.

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At the same time, and by a coincidence, one sees that one of the greatest foreign affairs of that very week was a scare of war between the United States and Japan. There were many difficulties and unpleasantnesses about that time; the nerves of these two nations (new to the greater world of power) that faced each other across the Pacific were in a trembling state. In such cases a veritable danger of war is often created by sheer nervousness, even though the circumstances of the times may not justify the original anxiety. Anything might happen at such a time, and both Japan and America were saying irritating things. Do you recall a naval officer of the name of Hobson, the hero of the Cuban war, whom all the women of America wished to kiss because of his exploit? Hobson was listened to in many matters for years afterwards, for he had done well by his country, although there might be little connection between his act of heroism and the affairs with which he was subsequently associated. Now at this tense crisis out came Captain Hobson to say that he himself had seen a copy of an ultimatum from Japan declaring that Japanese children must be admitted to the San Francisco schools, or the United States must take the consequences! But the State Department declared positively that no such ultimatum had been received or was in existence. It was insisted that the noble Hobson was mistaken. Perhaps he had dreamt of such an ultimatum. So this tumult died away. But from the same spring of jealousy and fear that caused it there have arisen other scares since then, and more will come anon. The menace, whatever it may be, is an increasing thing, and America has cause to think in these days. Her life is not a rosy hour, as is imagined by those who do not understand. And in the same newspaper in which we read of this scare we find the speeches on Anglo-Saxon unity made by ambassadors and others at a great banquet in London of the Pilgrims' Society. They were fine speeches the sentiments were noble; it was declared with impassioned vehemence that blood is thicker than water, as always it shall be shown. And surely blood is thicker than water. In the same newspaper you will see that Goschen is just dead Who does not remember the great Lord Goschen who, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, busied himself with reforms in our national finance, and took the old Consols most particularly under his mantle of gold and black? But until the moment I had not realised that he was descended from a German publishing family. That was a fact in biography that was passed over without reflection ten years back. However, Lord Goschen, who was the first man to speak Britain's 'splendid isolation,' was no worse that. He was a great Chancellor in the days when it was a great thing to be Chancellor, and statesmen held the office with pride and persistence. N the Chancellor has a task of vaster conseque and it seems, perhaps, that it is too big a for any man. In our imagination now we committees and cabinets and regiments of manent officials like small black devils brew tax poisons for an unhappy people in the reg below and behind the Chancellor's own a ments. So the Chancellor himself matters than when Goschen lived. Again, as ruminates among these old sheets, how tre dous seems the significance of much that happening then, small as may have been events themselves, and how harshly does in this short space seem to have made upon them! It is reported on this da

years back that Sir Oliver Lodge was lecturing at Whitefield's Tabernacle on the subject of the Ascent and Fall of Man, and that he spoke hopefully. He said: 'This is the most hopeful time. We are beginning to realise our responsibility. People are beginning to take control of themselves. They will make mistakes, but if they will only learn to act wisely, and do the best they can, the race will advance faster than ever before, and we don't know what we shall be. There will be no end to our power and our responsibility.' Here are words for thought.

* * *

Sometimes I have thought, and may have said, that if a real journalist—to whom the most necessary gifts are the news-sense and imagination, which includes the application of surrounding circumstance to a central fact—could take one copy of an old newspaper of any date and age, he would have there sufficient material to occupy his busy pen for the remainder of his life; and his son, if so unwise as to become a writer too, could continue effectively with the same fine story. Time and history breed such wonders in that old soil of past events! The trifling incident of to-day may be as a flaming brand of significance ten years hence. One must needs feel deeply the truth of this when looking upon such a newspaper as was in my study ten years back. The selection clearly has been made only by special occasion and circumstance, and personal choice has nothing to do with it. Yet one feels that if all the files of all newspapers had been searched from their beginnings, nothing more burdened with heavy significance, with morals, with warnings, and with writings on the wall, could ever have been discovered than the journals of that particular week. I have left to the last the item of news which, in spite of Thaw, and the comedians, and the anxieties of America, was made the big thing that week. It was given pride of place on the chief centre page. If I show you first what were the headlines you will not need to be told to look carefully upon it. Those headlines in one of the greatest London newspapers were 'Great Victory of the Kaiser. Socialist Rout. Midnight Speech by his Majesty. The Empress present. Frantic Enthusiasm of the People.' What was this, reported in the newspapers on the morning of 7th February, the telegrams being sent from Berlin on the night of the 5th? It was nothing less than the first beginning of the last phase of the new German movement which is completed by the present war. These horrors of to-day were virtually, if vaguely, determined then. For some time previously it had seemed that Socialism was undermining Imperial Germany. The number of Socialists, or 'Reds,' returned to the Reichstag at previous elections had increased most ominously for the Imperial party. They were a threat and a defiance to the Kaiser group, with all its ambitions of expansion by militarism and force of arms. These Socialists were for peace and sweet reason, and the belief that Germany could accomplish her mission by more humane methods than those of the mailed fist and the unsheathed sword. The Kaiser and his men, especially the Chancellor, Prince Bülow, saw the menace to their methods and their ideals. They risked all in a throw. They challenged the Socialists, who seemed to be so fast increasing in power. They made a political campaign. They appealed earnestly, and with all the political machinery possible, to the people, stirred up their inferior instincts, dazzled them with a vision of Germany overlording the world. And, alas for Germany! that appeal won them from reason and human good. Kaiserism conquered then. The Socialist advance was not only checked; its vote in the Parliament was cut down by half, and Germany was settled upon her militarist destiny with all its fateful consequences.

* * *

The people were maddened by the vision that had grown up in their minds, and upon the result of the elections being made known they ran first to the Chancellor's house, and then, at midnight, to the palace of the Kaiser. The Chancellor made a speech to them, saying that Germany had been placed in the saddle, and the world would see how well she could ride. It was nearly sixty years since a prince had spoken to the people from the palace window; but now, the mob insisting and shrieking the '*Deutschland über alles*,' the Kaiser, with the Empress beside him, appeared in the night and spoke to them. I must give you in full what he said then; it is of consequence. He said: 'I thank you, gentlemen, with my whole heart, for the fair homage which you have offered us. It springs from the feeling that you are proud that you have done your duty toward the Fatherland. The expression used by our Chancellor is true; Germany can ride if it will. I am of rock-firm conviction that if, as hitherto, all classes, high and low, of all denominations, stand united together, then we shall not only ride, but ride down everything that opposes itself to us. And now I will close with the phrase that our great poet Kleist has uttered in his *Prinz von Homburg*, where old Kottwitz says to the Great Elector something like this: "Why trouble about rules for beating the enemy so long as he is beaten? We have now learnt the art of conquering him, and we are full of ardour to put it to further practice." Therefore this must not be a merely momentary passing patriotic wave, but a rock-firm determination to continue farther in this path.' There was a mighty shout, and the roaring song of Germany at the end of this speech. In London the leader-writers set it down in comment that whatever else might be said, this much must be admitted by friend and foe, that from the first moment of his reign up till then

the Kaiser had scorned the cowardice that democracy never forgives; he had shown the courage that he worshipped, he had secured by confident and decisive leadership the national mandate he had won, and the result was likely to have its unmistakable influence upon the prosperity and power of that great people whose ideal was 'the strong man armed.' But in a day or two most of our people seemed to have dismissed the subject from their minds. They may think upon it now. The next time the Kaiser spoke from the balcony of his palace was on the night when war was declared. I must add to this a note upon another act of that same week, from which note a thousand thoughts may flow. While the Kaiser and his Prussians were exulting and dreaming of Germany riding o'er all the world King Edward and his queen were in Paris, and our wise king then was strengthening the links of the Entente chain. Paris was joyous in his presence, and there was the feeling on two sides of the English Channel that this kind of intimacy and understanding was very good for both of us.

* * *

This glance at the old newspapers has been worth the while. If the indulgence is permitted, one would like to close upon the personal note again, for after all, with ten years' even continuity a sense of community is established in particular pages as cannot be done in other ways. Always for such writing one's mind is directed, as now, from the heart of London, within sight of our ancient Abbey; but of necessity, in the case of one who likes to look about and wander, the preparation has been often made at far-distant places, and sometimes these notes have been set out in strange and difficult circumstances. They have been written in Paris, Rome, Madrid, New York, and other far-off cities. I have read my proofs in the great library at Washington, at a railroad depot in Canada, and in the shadow of the old cathedral at Toledo, in Spain. There is a happy complement to such vagabonding work as this, and it is a great remembrance and joy for all time. Hardly a month goes by but letters come to me from readers unknown, but friends for all that, from all parts of the world. I have had them frequently from every continent. In one week last summer there came one from Australia, one from New Zealand, another from South Africa, and a fourth from Canada. No question of modesty can hinder any writer from mentioning such a wonderful circumstance as this, for the pride of his *Journal*, and something even for himself. I had intended this month to quote from these letters; but they fill a large case, and the task would be too great. They are precious. Sometimes they are critical, often they are suggestive, and nearly always kindly. Less than a year ago I received from a gunner in the Royal Field Artillery at the front a letter having reference to something written about the famous Earl of Chesterfield, and asking questions concerning the authorship of certain books the gunner possessed. He wished to know the answers while he was there with the roaring guns. Thoughts of books—and the roar of guns! Letters upon which remembrance often returns with greatest pleasure are one or two that came, spontaneously like all the rest, some four or five years ago, from a British officer stationed with the Military Police, the Goorkhas, at a lonely frontier outpost in Upper Burma. He told me some of the wonderful activities of their life out there, and a kindly human inspiration moved him at the close of his letter to say he was a F.Z.S., and to enclose two tickets for the Zoo in London in case I knew a little child who would like to go there one day with me. I was able to tell him later that when a little girl with silvery hair had looked upon tigers that came from India, the lions, and other handsome beasts, she was made to think of the Captain Stuart away in the lonely Burmese hills who made her happy for an afternoon. I remember only one correspondent writing to me in bitter complaint, and I have often wondered at his grumbling. I could not answer him. I had been writing years ago upon some of the old beauties of Biblical language, and specially upon the Psalms of David. I had said that even one who had nothing to do with Christianity must feel the beauty and the majesty of that sweet and simple diction. The reader wrote furiously to say that it was wrong to break in with such a controversial matter. Controversial! I cannot understand. 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul.' The music of language has no finer phrases.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER X.—TELLS HOW MR RAVENSLEE WENT INTO TRADE.

IT was a week later, and Mr Ravenslee leaned from the window of his room observing the view, which chiefly consisted of dingy brick walls and dingier windows, swaying vistas of clothes in various stages of dampness, clothes that fluttered from many lines stretched across the court from window to window, at different altitudes; for to-day it had been washing-day in Mulligan's, also the evening was warm. So Mr Ravenslee lounged and smoked and gazed upon the many garments, viewing them with eyes of reverie. Garments these, of every size

and hue and shape and of either sex, garments that writhed and contorted themselves in fantastic dances when the soft wind gently stirred them—a small, cool wind which, wafting across the river from the green New Jersey shore, breathed faintly of pine-woods. He was yet in absorbed contemplation of the aerial gambols of these many garments when to him came Mrs Trapes, clutching a hot iron in her hand.

'Mr Geoffrey, what'll you eat for supper?' she demanded.

'Mrs Trapes, what do you suppose I'm worthy of?'

'How about a lovely piece o' liver?'

'Liver!' he repeated, rubbing a square, smooth-shaven chin. 'H'm! liver sounds a trifle clammy, doesn't it? Clammy and cold, Mrs Trapes?'

'Cold!' said she, staring; 'cold!—of course not. It would be nice an' hot, with thick gravy an' a tater or so. An' as for clammy, whoever heard o' liver as wasn't? Calf's liver, mind! They can't put me off with sheep's; no, siree! Skudder's young man tried to once, he did so.'

'Foolish, foolhardy young man!' murmured Ravenslee.

'Mr Geoffrey,' sighed Mrs Trapes, and her elbows were particularly needle-like, 'I jest took that piece o' sheep's liver an' wrapped it round that young man's face.'

'Unhappy young man!' murmured Mr Ravenslee.

'Ye see, Mr Geoffrey, though a widder, an' therefore 'lorn, I ain't to be trod on in the matter o' livers or anythin' else.'

'I'm sure of it, Mrs Trapes.'

'But if you don't kind o' fancy liver, how about sassiges? Sassiges is tasty an' fillin', an' cheap. What d'ye say to sassiges?'

'Sausages!' answered Mr Ravenslee, shaking a grave head. 'Sausages demand such unbounded faith in the—er—sausagee, or should it be sausageor?'

'Oh, well, a chop cut thick an' with a kidney in it? What d'ye say to a chop now?'

'Yes, a chop in an hour, Mrs Trapes, or say two hours, will be most welcome. Are you very busy?'

'Washin''s all done; but there's a lot o' your shirts waitin' to be ironed, an' me here lettin' me iron get cold.'

'Oh, never mind the shirts, Mrs Trapes. Pray sit down; I need your counsel and advice.'

'But me iron?'

'Give it to me. There!' and Mr Ravenslee deposited it outside on the fire-escape.

'Now, Mrs Trapes,' said he, 'first of all I must find work. "Man is born to labour as the sparks fly upward," you know.'

'Born to trouble, you mean,' she corrected.

'Precisely,' he nodded. 'Work is trouble and trouble is work; at least I know a good many people who think so.'

'More fools them,' quoth Mrs Trapes, folding her arms.

'My own idea exactly,' he answered, lazily tapping out his pipe on the window-sill.

'I ain't noticed you sweatin' none lately,' quoth Mrs Trapes sarcastically.

'Alas, no! Mrs Trapes, there being no wherefore to call forth the aforesaid—er—moisture. Still, "man is as grass that withereth" unless he "goeth forth unto his labour."'

'An' quite right too,' nodded Mrs Trapes. 'If I had my way I'd make 'em all work.'

'That would be rather hard on our legislators and Fifth Avenue parsons, wouldn't it? Anyway, I want work, that's sure.'

'Ye mean as your money's all gone?'

'Very nearly,' sighed Mr Ravenslee with a suitable air of dejection. And he did it so well that Mrs Trapes, viewing him askance, frowned, bit her lip, wriggled her elbows, and finally spoke. 'Are ye up against it good, Mr Geoffrey?'

'I am.'

'Well,' said she, frowning down at the vivid-coloured hearthrug, 'I got twenty-five dollars put away as I've pinched and scrinched to save; but, if you want the loan of 'em, you can have 'em and welcome.'

Her lodger was silent; indeed, he was so long in answering that at last Mrs Trapes looked up, to find him regarding her with a very strange expression. 'And you will lend me your savings?' he asked softly.

'Sure I will.' And she would have risen then and there but that he stayed her.

(Continued on page 151.)

THE MANUFACTURE OF ARMOUR-PLATE.

By 'FERRUM.'

THE manufacture of armour-plate has developed considerably in recent years, and in no branch of the steel industry is there greater opportunity for engineering and mechanical skill, coupled with metallurgical knowledge, than in the operations of forging and rolling, followed by the exact heat treatment essential to produce the almost conflicting properties necessary in modern armour.

The plate must be hard, glass-hard, to resist penetration by heavy projectiles moving at tremendous velocities, yet tough and fibrous enough to take up the momentum without cracking or distortion. Mechanically, then, the

plate must have an extremely hard surface and a fibrous backing. These requirements were attained, in part, by the old 'compound armour.' Molten steel was poured on to a wrought-iron plate and cooled. The slab was then reheated, forged, and rolled to the required dimensions; if the operations were successfully carried out, the line of demarcation was scarcely visible.

Recently a modification of this process was introduced to cheapen and render less tedious the production of armour. A layer of hard steel was poured into a cooled mould, the underside quickly setting; on to the still fluid or pasty surface a thicker layer of soft steel was poured. By careful manipulation the union of the surfaces was almost complete, and it was impossible to detect the break in composition on viewing the fractured section. This method of manufacture was undoubtedly an improvement on the old compound method.

The increasing size, velocity, and hardness of modern armour-piercing projectiles have necessitated the introduction of the modern armour. The process of manufacture essentially consists in case-hardening to a depth of about two inches the surface of a homogeneous tough nickel-chrome steel. Special air, or self-hardening nickel, and more complex steels are used for lighter armour, gun-shields, and cast armoured structures.

The steel is made in Siemens furnaces, and carefully cast into ingots up to eighty tons in weight; these ingots are then slabbed under powerful hydraulic presses (eighteen thousand tons) or rolled direct to the required dimensions, depending on the power of the mills and appliances. During the rolling operation, which lasts about an hour, the slab is reversed and inverted to attain uniformity of working, and scale is removed by wood-faggots and water-jets. After rolling, the plate is usually quenched.

The next operation is that of case-hardening, and in this two plates are put face to face, separated by a layer of the carburising reagent if it be solid, or if gaseous hydrocarbons be used, the plates are slightly separated, to allow free passage for the hardening gases, by bricks, arranged in rows. The plates are maintained at redness in a car furnace for three weeks, and withdrawn after the hardening carbon has penetrated to the required depth. The plates are thus carburised and so made capable of being hardened, but they are not yet actually hard. At this stage all holes are drilled and plugged, and any bending or machining necessary is carried out.

From this point onwards the treatments differ. Some makers, especially the Continental ones, insist on heating and quenching in oil or water to remove any coarse structure that may have been formed during the long annealing whilst carburising. The next essential operation is that of 'hardening,' and this is usually carried out in one of two ways. Either the plate is uniformly heated to the hardening temperature and quenched by series of water-jets playing on the upper surface with sufficient force to prevent the formation of steam, or by a process known as 'differential quenching,' by which the carburised surface is heated to a temperature from which it will harden, and the underside kept well below, so attaining a gradual fall in temperature from the top to the bottom. The whole plate is then immersed in water, the hotter surface alone being hardened, whilst the back is toughened. Further mechanical operations can only be carried out by grinding or cutting with oxy-acetylene, as the plate has now undergone the treatments conferring maximum hardness.

In *résumé*, it will be noted that there are three distinct operations in modern methods of manufacture—the mechanical working of the plate to the required dimensions; the carburisation of the surface; quenching the carburised surface to harden it. These operations call for exact manipulation, supervision, and control; for the skill of the engineer and metallurgist may be put to the severest tests, not of the laboratory or the testing-machine, but out in the 'gray northern mists,' when failure of a unit may imperil the safety and cohesion of the whole.

'MOHAMMED'S COFFIN.'

CHAPTER V.

NOW, uncommunicative as in most matters Edwin was, he had said enough, at one time and another, to convey to the minds of the sojourners at the Demesne that Tom Coxeter was a great man. Tom it was, they knew, whose resource and energy had smoothed away difficulties in the early days of the *estancia;* Tom whose liveliness and plausibility had promoted friendly relations with the Spaniards. Then it was noticeable, also, that in discussions or arguments with the Squire, if Edwin could support his own contention by a quotation from Tom, he regarded *that* as final. In his estimation, evidently, there was no appeal from the pronouncements of Coxeter.

Of a man thus heralded, it could not be but that the Squire and the ladies should await the arrival with curiosity. Yet it is not too much to say that, when at last he appeared, the first feelings he awakened were disappointment and dislike. Of that repose which is held to mark the higher breeding, Tom was destitute. He entered the house, if not like a tornado, at least like a sudden squall. He talked too much, and laughed too loud. As for what strikes the eye—

though of commanding stature, he was large-boned rather than finely built, and he wore whiskers. Even whilst laughing at his jokes, demure Ruth Davenport, thinking her own thoughts, conceived that, stimulating as he was at first, such a man might in time become tiresome.

Meantime, within herself, Mrs Fairfield was wondering if he was quite a gentleman; whilst she evidently thought it desirable to explain to each of her girl-guests that he had been a long time abroad.

Squire Fairfield was inclined to write him down 'a bit presuming.' 'I shall not be surprised,' he confided to his wife, 'if he should want to show us how things ought to be done, or to break in on our routine.'

'If he should,' replied Mrs Fairfield anxiously, 'we must tolerate it for Edwin's sake! After all, it is not likely to be for much longer than a week at most.'

Upon the whole, the graceful languor and impassivity of Selma seemed to agree best with Tom Coxeter's great animation. More than once he had singled her out as the person to be directly appealed to; and as Selma had a readier wit than you might have given her credit for, she was always equal to the occasion. And so, more than once, she quietly turned the laugh against him, which pleased every one, but him most of all. She, at least, did not seem to realise a possibility of his becoming 'tiresome.'

Meantime Edwin came quite out of his shell, and more than once grew almost eloquent in the praise of his friend. 'He 's the most successful man I know, dad, in getting his own way,' he was heard to say emphatically. And, again, 'What we should have done without him in those first days, I shouldn't like to have to tell you!'

'He does seem a capable, go-ahead sort of fellow, Ned,' replied the Squire, by way of concession, salving his conscience with the afterthought that they would probably like him better when they came to 'get the hang of him.'

And so, indeed, it happened. Unlike most boisterous men, Tom Coxeter was not boisterous in season and out; and before many days were gone by, the Squire was fain to acknowledge that he had excellent good sense; whilst Mrs Fairfield credited him with depth and strength of purpose, and was glad to realise that Edwin had so firm a friend to lean on. If I must own the truth, Tom himself had been a little flustered on arriving at the Demesne; for, notwithstanding his assurance, and the fact that he was a great admirer of the fair, he had got rather out of the habit of associating with nice girls. Hence he had been betrayed into slightly overdoing his own mannerisms. Even Edwin had noticed that, and had taken advantage of being alone with his chum to reassure him.

'You may take my word for it, old boy, that they are the right sort—no nonsense about either of them.'

Tom's face was in the wash-basin at the moment, but that didn't prevent his hearing. None the less did he answer, 'Just say that again, Ned, will you?' When Edwin had complied, he would have liked to ask, lightly, yet significantly, 'No fear of my *poaching*—eh, old chap?'

But experience of life had taught him the value of reserve; so he remained silent, brushing his thick hair vigorously. Tom was much too busy a man, had too many irons in the fire, to have time to pay more than flying visits. On the fifth day after his arrival at the Demesne he was due in Belfast, to meet a certain shipping magnate. He was sorry to go, and the Fairfields were sorry to lose him; but such an engagement could not possibly be postponed.

'Why not come back, then, later on, to finish your visit?' urged hospitable Mrs Fairfield. She spoke in perfectly good faith, and yet scarcely expecting to be taken at her word.

'I should love to do that,' replied the parting guest, without a moment's hesitation. 'Let me see—the boat-train leaves Fleetwood'—— And he proceeded to consult a pocket time-table.

In brief, it was settled that he was to be back on Thursday. This was on Tuesday afternoon, so that a large amount of travelling would have to be accomplished against time. But Tom seemed to think nothing of that. He calculated to have three hours at the Belfast Métropole, and that would be enough.

Upon his departure from the Demesne there succeeded a flatness. Everybody missed him, and they now realised that during his brief sojourn among them he had been the life and soul of the party. More than that, though antecedent conditions were exactly reproduced, the old pleasant life of a week before seemed somehow to have lost its savour.

Ever watchful, Mrs Fairfield sustained little short of a shock when she came upon Edwin on Wednesday forenoon playing billiards by himself. The tripartite alliance appeared to have been broken up—dissolved; and what new combinations might be imminent Heaven alone knew! The day was wet, and in a cosy corner of the drawing-room were seated Ruth and Selma, working and exchanging confidences.

'Pray don't let me disturb you,' said the Squiress politely when she saw how the land lay.

'Not at all, dear Mrs Fairfield,' answered Ruth, rising to her feet. 'We were merely discussing Mr Coxeter.'

Selma yawned. 'Ah, yes, poor Mr Coxeter! I fear that, unless the weather changes, he will have a disagreeable crossing.'

But when she was in her own room once more, Mrs Fairfield's mood changed. Indignation rose in her breast, and the words came to her lips, 'Disloyal! to cut out his friend. I heartily wish I hadn't asked him back. Oh dear, oh dear! another mistake—it is just my luck!'

What would not the Squire have given to over-

hear this little soliloquy? And yet, if the good lady had been called upon to say who had cut out whom with whom, she would have been puzzled!

Slightly creased, perhaps, but with energy unabated by his two nights out of bed, Tom duly reappeared. The result of his mission had to be communicated to Edwin, who accordingly led the way to the privacy of the smoking-room. To his surprise, however, Coxeter began, not by supplying information, but by demanding it. In a man of whose life the adage *business first* had always been the Alpha and Omega, this was, to say the least of it, unexpected.

'Well, and how has everything been going on since I left?' he asked, with interest, just as if there had been no shipping magnate in question or great issues in suspense.

'Oh, very much as usual,' answered Edwin, with indifference. 'The mater had one of her headaches yesterday. But what about the concession?'

'I believe I have got that fixed up all right—the boss was nothing like so awkward as you had anticipated.'

'Ha! I guess that was your clever management.'

'Well, I don't say no—but I will give you details after dinner. Your news first. What have the girls been doing?'

For the first and perhaps only time in their acquaintance, Edwin felt, when he heard this question, that he was the knowing one of the twain. He had actually to avert his face to conceal the meaning smile which flitted over it. Many there are who, in his place, would have made this an occasion for banter. Not so he. Perhaps his slightly exaggerated respect for Tom's abilities acted as one restrainer. But there were others too.

So, giving his mind to the subject, he embarked on a conscientious reply to his friend's question. 'Well, you know, it rained pretty nearly all yesterday. The mater said the damp made it chilly; so she had a fire lighted in the hall, and the girls sat over it.'

'And you with 'em.'

'No, you're out there. I looked in on them once or twice, in passing, that was all.'

'What were they about?'

'Selma—that is, Miss Durell'——

'I know' (impatiently).

'Selma was laying the foundations of a waistcoat she was going to work. She had never made one before, and Ruth, who had made several, said she was making it too large. They insisted on trying it on me, and it was *much* too large. It would have fitted you, old chap! But Selma, who likes to have her own way—I dare say you have noticed that'——

'Indeed, I have not. I should have described her as most ready to give way to the wishes of others.'

'Well, at any rate, Selma stuck to her point, saying that it was always easier to cut a bit off than to add—— But I say, Tom, aren't we playing it rather low down? You won't thank me for this twaddle.'

Coxeter answered, inconsequently, 'This is a jolly comfortable chair, Edwin! I believe I could do forty winks here before time to dress for dinner. Wake me, will you, at the half-hour?'

Edwin agreed, and turned over the pages of a magazine, whilst his guest, as he believed, slumbered.

But presently Coxeter spoke. 'I have been thinking precious hard the last few days,' he said solemnly.

'Ah! I was afraid that concession would cost you no end of bother.'

'Confound the concession! We have always been good friends, Edwin.'

Young Fairfield nodded cordial assent. 'The very best.'

'Then I want you to tell me, as a friend, for you know her better than I—do you think I have any chance?'

All in a moment, as it were, the atmosphere of the smoking-room was grown tense. Edwin Fairfield beheld his friend in an aspect, and in a relation to himself, which he had never hitherto conceived of as possible. Tom was positively hanging on his lips. To pretend to misunderstand him would have been affectation. Yet there was one point which was not clear.

'Chance with whom—with which of 'em?' he asked, with dry lips, the situation being so unaccustomed, so impressing him.

Not for the first time in their acquaintance, Tom rebelled against his friend's dullness. 'Which of 'em?' (with the most consummate disdain). 'As if any man in his senses could have eyes for little Miss Davenport, when—Selma'—— Here, under stress of strong emotion, his voice broke off.

Simultaneously Edwin winced—winced, but a moment later felt immeasurable relief. The situation, hitherto so perplexing, had begun to clear.

And what was thus begun continued. Grass will grow whilst we are asleep; and though Selma and Coxeter had been mere acquaintances when they had parted on the Tuesday, it was not very difficult, on seeing them together now, to discern that they were lovers. In cases such as theirs, a little separation will sometimes work wonders.

It had been after separation only that they had realised how much they were to each other. That Edwin's sight was not of the sharpest will be no news to any one. But having been taken into Tom's confidence, he was now in a position to perceive a significance in many a word and look which escaped other members of the party. And as he did so, 'Mohammed's Coffin,' which had remained so long suspended, in a state of rest, determined by two equal and opposite attractions, began at last to move.

And so that evening, whilst the old Squire

dozed, whilst Mrs Fairfield palpitated and deliberately effaced herself, whilst Tom modulated his stentor-voice to a murmur, to which Selma listened looking upon the ground; whilst all this was taking place in the shaded light of the drawing-room, after dinner, Ruth's bird-like soprano pealed clearer and more flexible than ever, and Edwin simply surpassed himself in the character of sympathetic listener and turner of music-leaves.

When the dull Squire at last closed *Baily's Magazine*, and asked his wife if she intended sitting up all night, there were four at least of the company who doubted the evidence of the clock. Yet there were the hands pointing unmistakably to ten minutes to eleven!

There was the usual business with bedroom candlesticks, hot and cold drinks for the ladies, wishing of 'Good-nights;' and then Tom and Edwin rushed upstairs to change their coats, for a final pipe with the Squire in the smoking-room.

No keenness of vision was required to see that Tom was simply suffocating with suppressed information. 'My dear boy,' he burst out,' congratulate me—I 'm the happiest man in Britain!'

Possibly Edwin scarcely rose to the full height of the occasion. I believe that male confidants rarely do. Besides, he seemed to be a little preoccupied.

'Oh, she consents, does she?' was his reply. 'You have not been long about it! Well, my dear old boy, I do congratulate you. But what about the *estancia?* What about "papa's" consent?'

'I am to see Mr Durell to-morrow afternoon,' replied the happy man, reverting to the business manner which had become his second-nature. 'Selma goes home in the forenoon to prepare him.'

'I rather fear there may be difficulty,' continued Edwin thoughtfully. 'I have heard that old Durell has rather lofty views for his girl, who, you know, is an only child and a bit of an heiress. If I were you, dear boy, I would not let my feelings carry me away in the meantime. No doubt the *estancia* is all very well and very romantic; but there ain't much romance about old Durell, I 'm telling you.'

'Why, you old wet blanket! of course, Miss Durell is making a huge sacrifice; we all know that. But she and I have been into things in cold blood already, and she tells me that she has never known her father to hold out against her wishes where her happiness was really involved. Tell you what, Ned, you ought to follow suit.'

Edwin looked as if he thought the advice was by no means wanting in good sense. But he answered nothing. And with a hand upon each other's shoulder, the two young men hurried downstairs to join the Squire.

And now, reader, my story is told. For I have never been one who cared to insist upon what may easily be guessed. It is the solution of the crux that interests, not the elaboration of the same.

Selma Durell had not overestimated her influence with her parent. How she worked it I do not undertake to say; but, without pretending to be highly pleased, her father was brought to the condition of being willing to make the best of things. And that was all she cared about at present. It may be that, with feminine insight, she had already realised how much he and Tom had in common, and hence was relieved of anxiety as to the future.

Tom left the Demesne again almost immediately, to stay with the Durells; and then it was only natural that Edwin and Ruth, being left to themselves, should draw closer together. They did so, under the fostering care of the approving Squiress.

Mrs Fairfield would scarcely have been a woman if she had neglected so good an opportunity for taking some change out of her husband.

'Is Edwin engaged to Ruth, wife?' he asked her one day. 'If he isn't, it seems to me he ought to be. Why, they are never apart!'

With crushing superiority of manner, Joan replied, 'They have been engaged for some little time.' (The engagement was of that morning; the announcement of it to Mrs Fairfield was just thirty minutes old.) And, strong in her present unassailable position, she added, 'If it hadn't been for you, Squire, and your perversity, this would have happened months ago.'

'Oh, come, Joan, draw it mild—the boy has not been home six weeks yet! Well, I dare say it is all for the best. The two young wives will keep each other company abroad. And, come to think of it, it seems to me that everything has turned out very happily, and that I deserve most of the credit for it!'

Seeing that he was incorrigible, and being in her own mind perfectly satisfied with the turn things had taken, Joan Fairfield wisely let the matter drop, and carried off her husband to wish the young people joy.

In his mother's room that night, Edwin was a boy again. The reserve of years had yielded before the glow of his new-found happiness.

'It was so clever of you, mummy, to find me the right girl!' he murmured. He was seated on a footstool at her feet, with head against her lap. 'Did you remember what I once said to you about Ruth, after a ball?' he continued. 'I think you can scarcely have remembered it—it was so long ago. I had half-forgotten it myself!'

Although alone, they spoke in undertones.

'Yes, I remembered,' returned the mother tenderly.

'She is the only girl I ever cared *that* for,' pursued the enamoured, with expressive gesture.

Now, though she was the best of mothers, Mrs Fairfield was not without a spice of mischief in her composition. I hope the reader has realised that.

'You never did justice to poor Selma,' she rejoined quietly; 'yet Selma had been a good deal admired, even before your friend Mr Coxeter fell over head and ears in love with her.'

Edwin pondered for a moment; then he said, 'You are not quite right there, mother. Selma is good to look upon, and by no means a bad sort of girl. In fact, I don't mind telling you that there was a moment—— No, what I mean is, that, if there had been no Ruth, and' (recollecting himself) 'no Tom, it is not altogether impossible that Selma might have had me.'

'You have done better as things are, my boy.'

'And, of course, Ruth being there, I never really cared for any one but her.'

I fully believe that he fully believed his own words.

And so 'Mohammed's Coffin' found substantial rest at last.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SIMPLE KINEMA APPARATUS AND RECORDS FOR THE HOME.

THE kinematograph is now used by private persons for amusing their friends to a considerable extent, and it is only the cost of the films which prevents a much wider adoption of home apparatus. In order to overcome this difficulty, a New York inventor named Bettini has recently devised a system whereby glass plates, instead of films, can be used successfully. Moreover, these glass plates are easily produced from negative plates by similar processes to those employed in ordinary photography. Each glass plate contains nearly six hundred views, which would require between seventy and eighty feet of film. The views are, of course, very small, and the plates measure about eight inches by five inches, the images being in horizontal and vertical rows. An ingenious mechanism moves the lens backward and forward along the rows, a step down to the next below being made at each end. It might be supposed that this step down would cause a flicker, but the movement is so perfect that the changes cannot be detected. Provision is made for passing a succession of plates through the apparatus, the change over from one to the next being done automatically and without disturbing the continuity of the views. In another type of machine by the same inventor, non-inflammable discs are used, having the views arranged spirally. This apparatus is much simpler than the glass plate type, and consequently can be sold at a lower price; but the number of views is limited to the capacity of one disc. These plates and discs can be made in quantities from standard films, and sold or hired, as is done with gramophone records.

TORPEDO STEERED BY PILOT.

Although the torpedo has proved very successful when practising up to ranges of ten thousand yards, in actual warfare attacks have to be made much closer to enemy ships; hence destroyers and submarines have to approach near enough to run grave risk of being sunk by gun-fire before they can launch their torpedoes with a reasonable chance of hitting. With a view to overcoming this difficulty, according to the *Scientific American*, several different forms of torpedo have been invented in which a compartment is provided for a man who steers the torpedo nearly up to its quarry. In the early inventions the steersman was supposed to abandon his post when a hit was assured, trusting to a life-belt to keep him afloat until picked up. Later types have a false stern for the pilot to sit in, with a small conning-tower having glass port-holes, through which he can see his objective as he skims along at the surface. The front end of this false stern slides into a short tube at the tail of the torpedo, and is blown off at the last moment by compressed air, which forms the motive-power of the weapon. This false stern is in reality a small boat in which the heroic pilot can paddle himself along in the hope of reaching a friendly ship before being hit by guns on the vessel attacked. Whether the device will be actually used seems a little uncertain, in view of many apparent difficulties.

COLOSSAL BATTLESHIPS FOR THE UNITED STATES.

It is scarcely surprising that the United States should now be making a strong bid for sea-power both as regards her navy and her mercantile marine. Shipowners were doing very well before the war, owing to a wave of prosperity all over the world; and when a large number of merchant ships had been sunk by German raiders or pirates, shipping freights rose to previously unheard-of figures. This feature, together with the impossibility of obtaining ships from British builders, gave an immense impetus to shipbuilding in the United States, where it had until that time been a dying industry. At the present moment an enormous number of ships are being built across the Atlantic; in fact, the builders have orders in hand for years ahead. As regards fighting-ships, friction with Germany and the possibility of future enemies to the westward have stirred up the American nation to demand sea-power, and her naval programme for the next few years is of a very ambitious description. In this connection we must remember that the United States is

becoming enormously wealthy, and can therefore afford to maintain a powerful navy; while her coastline is of great length, and requires a large fleet to defend it. Whether battleships will become obsolete for future sea-fighting, owing to the increase in power of the submarine and her chief weapon, the torpedo, is a vexed question; but at present the American naval authorities are convinced of the need for very large vessels of this class. The first-fruits of this attitude are the three battleships *New Mexico*, *Idaho*, and *Mississippi*. These vessels mount twelve 14-inch guns in four barbettes, so that there are three guns side by side in each, against the two in similar European craft. Torpedo defence guns to the number of twenty-two are also carried, mounted high up above the water-line, where they will be most effective. As regards the armour, a belt fourteen inches thick by seventeen and a half feet wide goes right round each ship at the water-line, while for the conning-tower and the gun barbettes it is no less than eighteen inches in thickness. The vesels are 624 feet long and 97 feet wide, while thirty feet of water is needed in which to float them. Their weight is thirty-two thousand tons, and each has four large submerged torpedo-tubes. Colossal as these ships appear to be, they will look small beside the battle-cruisers projected for the United States navy next year. The principal features of the new ships will be: oil fuel without any coal at all; electric driving, which means a huge power-station on board for generating electricity to be used for turning the propellers; six or more enormous funnels; and a speed of fifty miles an hour when stripped for action, which demands two hundred thousand horse-power. It should also be added that effective protection will be provided against torpedoes of the largest size. The United States naval programme also includes submarines of five thousand tons and numerous cruisers and destroyers.

NOVEL FORM OF WATER-PUMP.

So many different forms of pump have been devised for lifting water and other liquids that the invention of any novel form of appliance for this purpose would seem almost an impossibility. Yet this has been done, and the device is of a very simple character. Most of us in our youth have stirred water round and round in a basin, and have noted how it rises at the edge while sinking in the centre. The new pump is based upon similar principles, an inverted cone-shaped pipe taking the place of the basin. If the small end of such a pipe is dipped into a stream and rapidly revolved, the water inside will rotate with it and rise to a certain extent. A plain pipe, however, slips through the water instead of getting a grip of it; and to obviate this drawback it is fitted internally with radial vanes which compel the water to rotate at the speed of the pipe, when it rises upward and overflows into a trough at the top. This effect is intensified by a screw propeller at the small end, which starts the water on its upward journey. These pumps are said to be very efficient for raising water a few feet, as is required for irrigation purposes; while their simplicity makes them eminently suitable for service abroad in upcountry districts where it would be impossible to effect repairs in more complex appliances. The pumps are fitted with telescopic legs which can be pushed into the ground at each side of a stream or dike, and adjusted to immerse the bottom ends to the correct depth.

VACUUM STREET-CLEANER.

Considering the length of time since vacuum cleaners first came into use, it is surprising that their application to street-cleaning has only lately been attempted. The first vacuum street-cleaner was recently put into service with marked success at Sandusky, Ohio, U.S.A. One could hardly expect air-suction to draw up tenacious mud without some foregoing loosening agent, and it has been found necessary to retain the revolving broom, which sweeps the dust or mud toward the long, narrow mouth of the vacuum appliance. The mechanical part of the cleaner is mounted on a four-wheeled vehicle provided with a petrol-engine which drives the revolving broom, a centrifugal fan which causes the vacuum, and the gear for propelling the cleaner along the road. At the back is a three-wheeled trailer which receives the dirt, and which can be tipped to empty it. The dirt drawn up by the cleaner is discharged into the trailer, whence it is tipped out on to the town's rubbish-heap, thus saving the squads of men and carts which have to follow up the ordinary street-sweepers to sweep the rides of dirt into heaps and remove them. Even when tried in streets just cleaned by ordinary methods, this cleaner took up nearly four tons of dirt from twenty-seven thousand square yards of street surface.

REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IN THE COLOURS OF RAILWAY SIGNAL-LAMPS.

We have become so accustomed to the use of certain colours for signal-lamps on railways to indicate 'line clear,' 'caution,' or 'danger,' that any change seems almost revolutionary. It is generally admitted, however, that the employment of white lights to indicate 'line clear' has the grave disadvantage that they are often difficult to distinguish in places where many other lights are to be seen. With a view to overcoming this drawback the Pennsylvania Railroad in the United States is altering its system of night signals. In future a bright-yellow light on this railway will indicate caution, while 'line clear' is to be denoted by green, red lamps still being used to indicate 'danger' as heretofore.

This development has been delayed by the difficulty of producing a yellow shade capable of rendering the lights easily distinguishable from adjacent white lights. A satisfactory glass having been recently invented, the lamps over the whole system, numbering many thousands, are to be altered. Railroads in the United States are not interconnected; consequently a change of this character can be carried out much more easily there than in this country. In fact, any alteration in the colours of night signals on British railways could only be effected by joint action on the part of all the companies having running powers over each other's lines.

THE FIRST PASSENGER SERVICE BY AEROPLANES.

Some difference of opinion exists as to whether airships and aeroplanes will be commercial vehicles in future apart from the carrying of passengers who are willing to pay handsomely for the novelty of being conveyed through the air. In this connection the establishment at Newport News, in America, of the Aeronautical Transportation Company, which undertakes to carry passengers almost anywhere by aeroplanes or flying-boats, is of interest. The company's air services are widely advertised in a similar manner to those of steamships, the fares and routes being standardised; while regular lines of aircraft have been established to such towns as Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Atlantic City. Two or three passengers are carried by the larger machines, while a certain number of small, fast aeroplanes carrying one passenger each are available for those in a hurry to reach their destinations. The company's hangars are situated on the foreshore at Newport News. It will be noted that the fares are at present very high; but with improved craft perhaps capable of using paraffin instead of petrol, they will no doubt be reduced. A more important difficulty is the weather, as, although aeroplanes can fly in strong winds, these, if adverse, vastly reduce the speed, which is the main advantage of travel by air. We believe this is the first attempt at a public air-service by aeroplane, although airships were employed for carrying passengers in Germany before the war. There is little doubt, however, that public air-services will be established in this country when the present war restrictions are removed; but the fares must always be high compared with those for conveyance on the land or overseas.

VOLCANIC STEAM AS A SOURCE OF POWER.

Having no coal of her own, Italy has to import this necessary commodity from other countries, her main supply being derived from Great Britain. Owing to the shortage of shipping and the high freights obtaining, coal, even at the ports, costs over eight pounds a ton, while inland any price up to ten pounds is charged. In these circumstances it is only natural that every other possible source of power should be exploited. The volcanic region in Tuscany affords enormous supplies of natural power in the form of jets of steam at very high temperatures, which issue from numerous cracks in the ground over an area of many square miles. According to *Engineering*, these steam-jets have long been used in the manufacture of boric acid and borax, which abound in this district; while the heat from them is also employed for warming houses in the winter. Some years ago attempts were made to use this steam for generating power, and it was at first tried in a steam-engine. The acids mixed with the steam, however, had a rapidly corrosive effect upon the moving parts, and the plan was then tried of passing the steam through an ordinary boiler in place of making a coal-fire. So great is the heat of the steam as it comes from the earth that the water in the boiler was quickly turned into steam, which was used to drive a turbine of three hundred horse-power in the usual manner. By these means only clean steam came in contact with the engine, so that there was no corrosion, the natural steam being simply employed as a source of heat. This application was carried out before the war, and proved entirely successful. Recently a much more ambitious scheme, referred to in an article in our January issue entitled 'The Problem of Fuel,' has been carried out by Prince Ginori-Conti, bore-holes being sunk in the ground to a depth of three hundred to five hundred feet, where the source of the steam is tapped. These bore-holes are lined with steel pipes measuring from twelve to twenty inches in diameter, and the steam is delivered at the surface at pressures ranging up to over seventy pounds per square inch, and at very high temperatures. The boilers in which the steam is used are full of aluminium tubes surrounded by clean water, as in any other boiler having coal-furnaces. This clean water is boiled by the heat from the natural steam, and generates clean steam, which is used to drive electric dynamos through the medium of turbines, the electricity being delivered by overhead wires to Florence, Leghorn, and other cities. At present only about twelve thousand horse-power is obtained by these means; but the supply of steam is almost unlimited, so that we may expect to see a very large development of this natural source of power in the near future.

GAS *versus* PETROL FOR MOTOR-CARS.

The effect of the shortage of petrol and the restrictions on its sale has been to revive sources of power which were tried and discarded years ago. Among these is coal-gas, which, owing to the development of the internal-combustion engine, can now be used under much more favourable conditions than were the case when attempts were made

to employ it for propelling tramcars some twenty years ago. It may not be generally known that a petrol-engine can be run by coal-gas without any alteration whatever beyond connecting a gas-supply pipe. Admittedly there is a loss of power on gas when compared with petrol; but as the engines of motor-vehicles generally give much more power than is actually needed, this feature is of little consequence. A more important difficulty is the storing of enough gas on a car or a van to run it between points where fresh supplies are obtainable. At present two methods of storage are employed, the one taking the form of a gas-bag upon the roof, while the other consists of strong steel containers in which the gas is stored at high pressure. The first method is, of course, only suitable for vehicles with roofs to them, such as covered vans, single-decked buses, &c. Several motor-buses have been fitted with these gas-bags, which hold enough gas to run them for about twelve miles. This plan is, therefore, suitable for urban bus services, or even for buses between towns where gas can be obtained. The system is safe, clean, and simple, and the bags can be charged in a few minutes. Gas at high pressures is not nearly so easy to arrange for; but it has the advantage of taking up far less space, so that the storage containers can be placed under the seats or body of a vehicle, while the mileage for each charge is greatly increased. On the other hand, gas companies do not supply at high pressures; hence compressors must be carried on the cars for filling the containers under existing conditions. Moreover, the filling process is a comparatively long operation if the gas has to be compressed at the same time. It is by no means unlikely, however, that the more enterprising gas companies will shortly lay down compressing plant of their own, and store the gas at high pressure ready for use on cars. This development would make the high-pressure system a practical proposition by reducing the time of charging to a few minutes. As regards costs, three hundred feet of gas gives about the same mileage as one gallon of petrol; consequently gas at two shillings and sixpence a thousand feet is equivalent to petrol at ninepence a gallon. Therefore, not only is the shortage of petrol overcome by using coal-gas, but money is saved into the bargain.

THE BARRACOOTA.

Mr Tate C. Regan, one of the specialists on fish on the British Museum staff, has made, in a memorandum just published in the British West Indies, an interesting suggestion about certain fish which are occasionally poisonous when eaten. There is no doubt that this is the case with the far-famed barracoota, or barracuda, of the genus *Sphyræna*, of which there are three species in the West Indian waters. The flesh of the barracoota is usually excellent food; but at times it is so poisonous that not only severe illness but death itself has resulted from its consumption. Similarly with the 'jack,' *Caranx plumieri*, belonging to the horse-mackerel family, *Carangidæ*. It is fine food for the table at most times, but at certain seasons is poisonous, and, as has been noted in Barbados, specially so when caught in a particular parish. At such times two small red lumps are to be observed in its gills. Poisonous also at certain periods is the grouper, one of the sea-perch family, *Serrannidæ;* while the yellow-billed sprat, an important food-fish of the herring family, *Clupeidæ*, is extremely poisonous when taken in some localities. The idea is prevalent generally in the West Indies that such fish are poisonous when feeding on certain food, and old sailors declare with emphasis that the barracoota becomes so by eating the copper from ships' bottoms. Mr Regan suggests that in some cases —as, for example, the cavalla (a fish of the horse-mackerel family very much resembling the barracoota, and with flesh that is generally a fine human food)—the fish's flesh is subject to extraordinarily rapid decomposition, and the mischief is done by people eating it unsuspectingly after decay has actually begun. In other cases he thinks it probable that the fish secrete a poison during the breeding-season, while in still others they may be attacked by an infectious disease. The memorandum is published to invite information that may bear for or against these suggestions.

BRIQUETTES FROM ASH-BIN REFUSE.

A paragraph on 'A Cheap New Fuel' in our December issue dealt with the possibility of making briquettes from ash-bin refuse. The engineer to the Market Harborough Urban District Council, Mr H. G. Coales, gives further particulars regarding this proposal in the *Surveyor and Municipal and County Engineer* for December 11, 1916. This gentleman has taken out a patent, which has now lapsed, for what he calls coalesine fuel, which is really refuse transformed into briquettes. As he works the matter out, the product is a relatively cheap fuel. Mr Coales estimates that ten million tons of ash-bin refuse are produced annually in the United Kingdom; and in the search for other probable material for the manufacture of briquettes, coal-dust, sawdust, shavings, peat, and garden refuse are not to be overlooked. The binding substances for these briquettes are tar and pitch, which increase their heating value. Ash-bin refuse cannot be briquetted in its crude state, but after being screened must be pulverised to a fine material by a crusher. This pulverised refuse is heated and delivered to a steam-heated revolving receptacle, where it is incorporated with a hot mixture of pitch and tar. The mixture is allowed to cool, and is then briquetted. The briquettes of highest calorific value are those mixed with coal-dust as well as with tar compounds,

and they burn with a good flame and comparatively little smoke. The cost of manufacture is given at from four shillings to nine shillings per ton, and if sold at from six shillings to eleven shillings a ton, they would meet an urgent demand for a cheap fuel. In these days the scheme seems worth a thoroughly practical trial.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

APOSTOLOS THE UNEXPECTED.

By Captain A. W. Bird.

APOSTOLOS the Unexpected they called him, and indeed with good cause. Was not his very nationality unexpected? For Apostolos was a Greek—he told many people so himself—and yet it was in the Sea of Marmora that he had learnt to swim, and his aged father lived at Eregli, which is certainly in Turkey, and always had lived there.

Apostolos the Elder sold sugar and salt and tobacco to the country-people. Not very much of them, because of the competition of Meia the Jew, who seemed to know by instinct when to buy, and sold at almost no profit at all. But at least Apostolos the Elder made a living.

Apostolos the Younger found sugar and salt and tobacco all equally uninteresting—to deal in, that is, for he liked sweetmeats and cigarettes as well as any other boy. Salt-water he liked too, and he became the finest swimmer on all that coast. But the unequal struggle against Meia the Jew did not interest him at all; and when his military service was ended he drifted to Smyrna, and there, through the good offices of his uncle the merchant, became clerk to M'Fie the Englishman.

M'Fie was the representative of several great English business houses, and the orders that he obtained were written in a book by Apostolos. The tale of M'Fie's adventures should be written some day, and how he obtained those orders which Apostolos wrote in that book; but this is not the place. All we are concerned with here is that he taught Apostolos to speak and to read English. Whether because Apostolos was peculiarly apt, or because M'Fie was a teacher born, it is impossible to say—perhaps because of both—but Apostolos learned his lessons remarkably well. M'Fie's unconscious example may possibly have influenced him in the way of nationality as well. Though M'Fie was always called 'M'Fie the Englishman,' he actually was, as you may have guessed, a Scotsman.

Early in the year 1915, when M'Fie somewhat abruptly closed his office and slipped down to Egypt, Apostolos moved up the coast, and found himself in due course upon the island of Lemnos, having during his journey unexpectedly (as I hinted before) become a Greek.

The island of Lemnos is rather arid in appearance. Its yellow soil produces olives and grapes in moderate quantities, and sufficient corn to nourish three villages. One geography book says that the climate is temperate; but that is flattery, for, as a matter of fact, the climate is intemperate. All this, however, was of as little interest to Apostolos as sugar and salt and tobacco in a warehouse at Eregli; and of what interest could they be to a Greek on the island of Lemnos? It was foolish to mention them here at all.

There was one thing about Lemnos, however, which interested Apostolos very much indeed, and that was the harbour of Mudros. It is small wonder that it attracted him, for it is a fine harbour, and Apostolos was in good company, for it attracted many others. I do not mean only swimmers like himself, to whom its blue waters would naturally make a special appeal. At least one Englishman and one Frenchman had been greatly attracted by it shortly before it came under the notice of Apostolos. So far as I know, neither of these gentlemen was interested in natation. They were interested in navigation, however, or so it would appear; for on the waters of the harbour lay many great ships and innumerable small ones.

On a morning in early May, Apostolos put off from the shore of the harbour in a small sailing-boat. In the stern were set out oranges and grapes, which were doubtless for sale to the troopships and warships should opportunity occur. In company with Apostolos was a young lad of Mudros. The sun was very hot, the sky very blue, the water bluer still; ships' pinnaces danced over the water, and little sailing-boats glided before the light breeze.

Apostolos stood up in his boat, and, casting his loose garments, prepared to dive into the clear water. Standing there, with one foot upon the gunwale, he looked, as they say, like a young Greek god. A foolish saying, perhaps, for Apostolos was no god. He was a fine, handsome young man, lithe of body, quick of mind, and accounted brave of heart, I think, even among a nation of brave men. But he was no god; merely a human being doing sometimes worse, and sometimes better, than he meant.

Apostolos dived into the water, and, swimming strongly, bore southward towards the great battleships anchored there; while the lad—it must be supposed through incompetence, though truly the lads of Mudros can mostly handle a boat—steered a course east by north, and quickly put a quarter of a mile between them.

I think I have said that Apostolos was a fine swimmer. But I have also said that he was called 'the Unexpected.' It was indeed unexpected that so fine a swimmer should be in difficulties in so sheltered a spot as Mudros harbour; and yet that is exactly what did occur, and Apostolos, after casting anxious glances in the direction of his now distant boat, was forced to call for help to a steam-pinnace which was hurrying across the harbour. He called for help, waving his arm and crying in Greek that he would drown. It must have been a nasty moment for Apostolos. Then those in the pinnace saw him, and altered her course. It is noteworthy that, though Apostolos could speak English very well, it does not seem to have occurred to him to use it in this emergency. The pinnace was flying a white ensign, and one would have thought—— But, then, Apostolos was ever 'the Unexpected.'

In the pinnace were two naval officers and two seamen, and Apostolos was quickly hauled aboard, shivering and gasping out his thanks and fears, though, as his rescuers were ignorant of the modern Greek language, they could not understand him.

One of the officers, casting his mind back not so very many years, remembered some words of ancient Greek, and tried them upon Apostolos. The latter, crouching in the bottom of the pinnace, smiled and shook his head. He could make neither head nor tail of them.

As a matter of fact, even in modern Greek he was not too strong. Indeed, for a Greek, he spoke it remarkably badly. But the inhabitants of many of the islands speak with strange accents; we must attribute it to that.

Whether Apostolos, crouching there, retained sufficient presence of mind after his misadventure to understand what the officers were saying, and whether, even if he understood, they spoke of anything more interesting to him than sugar and salt and tobacco, I cannot say. But I incline to the belief that nothing was said upon that voyage which could possibly be of use to the friends of a man of rather unexpected nationality. And I base my belief upon the fact that Apostolos, having been transferred in due course to the boat of another purveyor of oranges and grapes, never again fell into difficulties while swimming in the harbour of Mudros; but, after sundry minor activities upon the water and on the shore, which I need not here chronicle, was at length enlisted in a gang of labourers and moved to Gallipoli itself.

The gang of labourers in which Apostolos figured as a humble and, as he hoped, an inconspicuous unit was enlisted for the purpose of making roads. The ganger was a Greek, and all his workmen were Greeks; so the fact that Apostolos belonged at this time to that nationality was of no disadvantage to him. Quite the reverse, for the military authorities were insistent that all the workmen should be Greeks.

The work assigned to these gangs was the making of roads over which supplies might pass from the landing-stages along the shore to the firing-line ahead. The work was undoubtedly hard—for those who worked hard at it. Apostolos did work hard at it; but one who had been likened, even erroneously, to a young Greek god was not likely to feel the strain very severely.

Apostolos was not, at any rate, so exhausted as to prevent him from taking an intelligent, though unobtrusive, interest in what went on around him. Not that the labourers had much opportunity for observation. It was, indeed, expressly arranged that they should not. But certain things did come within his vision—trifling things in themselves, perhaps, and yet of great influence upon the actions of one whose actions must be guided by the exigencies of the moment.

The first incident was in connection with certain Turkish prisoners incarcerated within a wire entanglement, near which the gang passed from their encampment to their road-making.

Apostolos, taking, as I say, an intelligent interest in what went on around him, observed the prisoners in their entanglement. His glance, passing hastily over the faces of those he could see, fell upon one whose arm was heavily bandaged. For an infinitesimal part of a second a gleam of recognition seemed to light the face of Apostolos. It had passed, however, almost before it had appeared, and he strode on, his face averted. If he had recognised the prisoner, he evidently had no desire that the prisoner should recognise him. And there he was wise, for it is a little compromising for a Greek labourer to be greeted with a shout of joy by a Turkish prisoner. I admit that only a very guileless Turkish prisoner would utter a shout of joy under such circumstances. But Xanos, the cousin of Apostolos, was very guileless—that is, perhaps, why Apostolos liked him so much. And the Turkish prisoner with the bandaged arm was Xanos, and Apostolos was taking no unnecessary risks.

That day seemed a long day, and road-making an extremely arduous labour. Moreover, during the afternoon shells from the gun called 'Asiatic Annie' fell uncomfortably near the gang of Greek labourers. But Apostolos had not forgotten the prisoners in their entanglement; and when evening came at length, and the gang passed that way once more, he was relieved to see that Xanos had his back towards them.

Two private soldiers had stopped on the road, and were looking at the prisoners.

'There 's a dirty-looking devil,' said one of them, referring to Xanos. Apostolos understood the words, but no doubt took them literally, for his hand tightened upon his spade as the soldier stepped up to the barbed wire.

That the soldier had any intention other than to do Xanos some injury did not occur to Apostolos for a moment. Had he not called

him a devil? Then the soldier tossed a little packet containing a couple of cigarettes to Xanos. As the latter stooped to pick it up with his uninjured hand, the gang passed round the bend of the cliff.

Had Apostolos been an ordinary Greek labourer, it is probable that this incident would either have escaped his notice altogether, or have made but a momentary impression upon it. He was not exactly an ordinary Greek labourer, however, and Xanos was his cousin, and the fruits of the incident were of great moment for one at least, as you shall hear. But first I must tell how Apostolos came upon another acquaintance.

Upon the following day, as the gang went forth in a fresh direction to make yet other roads, Apostolos heard a voice he knew. He did not look round—he did not need to; it would have been very foolish of him if he had. It was extremely undesirable to be recognised by Xanos, his cousin; it was a thousand times more undesirable to be recognised by M'Fie. For it was the voice of M'Fie which he had heard—M'Fie, who would have been very much astonished to find him in a gang of Greek labourers, and could scarcely be relied upon to keep his astonishment to himself.

The discovery of M'Fie's proximity seems to have caused Apostolos to alter his plans, for that night he disappeared from among the Greek labourers, and was no more seen there. It is probable that this disappearance was premeditated in so far as he had had it in his mind, at his own good time, to disappear in this way. But I cannot believe that, had it not been for his strong disinclination to meet M'Fie, he would have put it into operation thus early in his stay upon Gallipoli. To so fine a swimmer as Apostolos the coast offered great attractions. Swimming in the daytime, except occasionally under strict supervision, was, of course, impossible. But at night, when the vigilance of the guard and other disadvantages had been overcome, what fine swims might he not have had, perhaps meeting friends far along the shore, who knows?

All this he sacrificed, however. I think his spirit preferred a bold stroke to the risk of being caught with no chance of putting up a fight. In any case, he disappeared from among the labourers, and crept forward to where Briton and Turk faced one another.

Fortune must have favoured Apostolos to an extraordinary degree that night, for, greatly helped by a battered service-cap and a rifle, which Heaven knows what chance had placed within his reach, he penetrated the British line, and found himself at length crawling through the scrub of No Man's Land.

And here I have to chronicle that which gives its interest, if I may claim for it any interest at all, to this story.

It was a very dark night; and as Apostolos crept forward, an occasional bullet whistling over his head, he felt rather than saw that some one was moving near him. He lay there, scarcely breathing, clutching the rifle which, though he had no ammunition, might yet prove a useful weapon; and as he lay, some one crawled across in front of him not two yards off.

At that instant a star-shell burst above them, and Apostolos saw that it was an English officer. The officer did not look round, but lay quite still, his head showing clearly against the light. Then the light subsided.

To have clubbed his enemy on the head with the butt of his rifle would have been to Apostolos the easiest thing in the world—and the most natural. It was his duty to do it. But he lay there, and let the English officer crawl on and disappear into the night. For Apostolos remembered those two cigarettes that had been thrown to his cousin, and it had come into his mind to repay them now.

This was, of course, absurdly illogical. It was his hope, I fear, to reach the Turkish trench, and there to impart such information as would result in the killing and wounding of many Englishmen. Whether such information as he had been able to obtain would prove of any value is another matter. It is highly probable that it would not. But he hoped that it would, and had no compunction about it at all. It is certain, however, that Apostolos went forward with a greatly lightened heart. To reach the Turkish trench in safety was an undertaking attended by the very greatest risks. But Apostolos went forward gaily enough, because those cigarettes were paid for.

And there we must leave him. If, as I have said, there be any interest in this story, it is in his curious behaviour in No Man's Land. Curious and illogical, but interesting, I think.

THE EVENING CLOUD.

You stood like an amber mountain,
  Your feet were in the sea;
And then the night came falling—
  Falling on you and me.
And had I sought you in the dawn
  I knew you would not be.

For all night long, these peaks on high,
I heard them falling from the sky;
Thousands of flowers with petals fair
Held out their arms and caught you there.
While the earth breathed forth an odour sweet
And gave you her bosom on which to sleep.

B. Hughes.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st.* All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd.* For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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SEVENTH SERIES

'OLE CAM'RON.'

By Mrs W. F. Irvine Bell.

CHAPTER I.

'GOT any little kitties, suh?' The question, in the high, quavering falsetto of old age, was followed by the appearance of a venerable figure, curiously out of harmony with the surroundings—a negro, his shrunken frame hung about with loose shirt and trousers, and a face, black as ebony and seamed like the rind of a coco-nut, framed in beard and hair, woolly and white as that of a newly shorn sheep. As he stepped out of the thicket of manzañita and buckthorn into the more open spaces of the tall sugar-pines, one noticed a limp in his gait, and where a shaft of sunshine through the lofty green canopy struck upon his forehead, was revealed among the wrinkles an ugly scar, deep and long. 'Got any little kitties, suh?' The strange question was repeated, while a smile of childlike sweetness and a kindly beam in the soft brown eyes, still bright beneath the hoary brows, suddenly illumined the wizened face.

'*What* does he say, Margot?' asked the young man thus addressed, turning sharply in his saddle towards a handsome girl on a horse beside him.

But before she could reply, the old negro spoke again. 'Lil' *cats*, suh—any lil' *cats?* My ole doe,' he went on in a tone of indulgent explanation—'my ole doe, she done got los', suh, and I do miss her terrible—thought mebbe lil' missy dere might have some kitties she wan's to fin' a home fo'.'

A puzzled expression still hovered about the face of the young man, whose British nationality and military 'cut' not even the free-and-easy dress of the Far West, and the bronco-breeding of the horse he sat so well, could conceal.

But over the happy face of the girl beside him a bright smile broke, as she exclaimed, 'He means *kittens*, Ian dear. He is asking whether we have any kittens to spare!' and she glanced at her companion, a mischievous twinkle in her dark eyes.

'Kittens to *spare!* Good heavens! I should think we have! Better give him a baker's dozen, Margot,' he replied. Then, turning to the old darkie standing watching them with ingenuous curiosity, he said, 'Of course—you can have all the cats you want! But come and tell us who you are and where you live; you seem strangely out of your element in this part of the world!'

The negro, however, as though not quite understanding, merely came a little nearer the riders, an inquiring look upon his face; and it was then for the first time the young man noticed he carried a pan and pick such as, in gold-mining countries, prospectors use.

'You, too, on the search for gold, Sambo?' he asked pleasantly, pointing with his whip to the old man's burden.

At the word 'gold' the wrinkled black face took on the expression of a child delighted at the attention some favourite toy has attracted.

'Yes, suh,' he chortled, 'I done got a nice lil' "claim"—'nuf gol' fo' "Toby" an' me; it doan' tak' ve'y much! Would massa an' missy like to come an' see whar I lib? It 's not fa'—jus' t'ru de bush a lil' way.'

The young man glanced at the girl, and she nodded assent. 'Right-o!' he exclaimed, swinging himself out of the saddle, and managing his horse so dexterously that only a close observer would have noted the left sleeve of his coat empty and pinned to his shoulder. Then the girl having also dismounted, and the horses being left, Western fashion, with dragging lines, to graze on the sweet wood grass, the two followed the old man, using his pick as a staff, down an indistinct trail through the 'bush.'

'I never noticed this path before; did you, Margot?' asked the young man.

At the word 'path,' pronounced with soft, broad accent, the old negro turned and said inquiringly, 'Massa not bin ve'y long in dese parts?'

'No, not very,' was the reply, with characteristic national brevity.

And the negro, repressing his evident curiosity at the appearance of strangers in so sequestered a spot, led the way a few yards farther to where the timber suddenly broke on the edge of a deep, shadowy cañon. There, so steeply lodged upon a tiny terrace that, as one approached, nothing was to be seen except a stove-pipe incongruously obtruding among tall bushes of 'California holly' and the mahogany stems of shapely manzañita, stood a diminutive house—a mere cabin, whose shingled roof and log walls were stained and worn by time, and whose small eyes of poor glass winked and blinked in the bright sunshine, filling all that side of the cañon's deep bowl.

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Round and about it, in narrow beds dug in the rich, primeval soil, gay nasturtiums and broad-leaved Dutchman's pipe climbed valiantly by white cotton strings from ground to eaves of the tiny dwelling; on a line close by fluttered and blazed a red flannel shirt; and a spring of crystal-clear water (worth a gold-mine in that country of long droughts), falling musically into a deep tub, gave the whole atmosphere a sense of freshness.

'Small, but not squalid,' was the mental comment of the old darky's visitors.

Having leaned pick and pan against the water-butt, the old negro limped around to the door, and pushing away a stone that kept it closed, said, smiling broadly, 'Heah am de cabin, suh. Doan' need no locks heah! Woan' yo' an' missy come in an' res' yo'selves a lil' while? Den I kin show yo' my "claim" on de way back to de hosses—'t ain't much out ob de way.'

As he threw open the door for his guests to enter the tiny abode—bedroom and living-room all in one—a ball of fur, which the lady's quick eye had noticed in a box near the unlit stove, suddenly unrolled itself, and a beautiful little animal, with bright eyes and whiskered nose, hurried towards the old negro; but at sight of strangers retreated, snarling and snapping its little white teeth.

'Toby! Toby!' called the old man. Then turning towards the lady, 'Doan' be afraid of him, missy—Toby woan' hurt yo'—he's my lil' babby-coon—got him out of a trap, po' lil' t'ing.—Come along, Toby!' And the little creature, thus coaxed, gradually crept towards him, and began poking, with small, deft paws, at his owner's trousers-pocket. 'Smells de figs, de lil' rascal! Heah yo' are, den, Toby;' and the black fingers pulled out a handful of ripe purple figs, which the coon eagerly seized and ate, carefully rejecting any that were bruised or soiled.

'What a jolly little beast!' said the young man. 'But do you and he live here quite by yourselves? Tell us what your name is, and how you come to be here—so far from the "Sunny South," to which you surely must belong.'

'Dey call me "Ole Cam'ron," suh,' replied the negro.

Again the young man, starting perceptibly, turned questioningly to the girl. 'What did he say, Margot?'

But she, too, as though not quite credulous of what she heard, asked, 'Did you say you are called "Old Cameron"?'

'Yeah, missy,' he answered, a half-amused, half-pleased expression on his face. '"Ole Cam'ron," dat's wot my massa done call me. Back Eas', all de folks use' fin' my name strange-like, an' ask about it. But out heah—why,' he went on, drawing himself up with a slight gesture of scorn, 'de folks is all po' white trash—dey doan' know one name from anudder! But my ole massa'—he paused to glance at his visitors, and seeing their look of more than common interest, settled himself on an upturned box, and in the soft drawl peculiar to the negro of the Southern States, continued—'my ole massa, he come from de Ole Country—ub ve'y good fambly—*ve'y* good,' he repeated impressively. 'De big house was all full ub po'trets—all de ladies in bootiful dresses, an' all de gen'lemen in gran' uniforms. Massa use' say dat all his fambly in de Ole Country was in de ahmy—ve'y proud my massa was, an' nevah had nuthin' to do wid de po' white trash in de State. An' he was ve'y good to all de darkies—dey all lub massa and was happy. Well, one day massa bring home a lubbly young leddy as his wife—"de bootifulest leddy in Charleston," dey said. All de darkies lub her an' massa. Den bimeby dere was a lil' babby bawn in de big house—a lil' boy—an' massa call' all de darkies an' tol' 'em how dere was now a *young* massa, an' how he an' missy hoped we'd all lub him an' be faithful to him when ole massa hisself should be dead an' gawn. An' dere was a gran' feast for all de darkies, an' eberybody was feelin' ve'y happy, when all ub a sudden po' missy, she up an' died, an' lef' de lil' babby. It mos' broke ole massa's heart. He couldn't bear de sight ub dat babby; so it was sen' down to one ub de cabins on de plantation fo' my mudder to nuss along ub me—fo' I was bawn jus' few days befo' young massa. Only once in a while ole massa sen' fo' de babby; but he al'us so cry fo' my mudder, dat ole massa would sen' him back again. Well, suh, when young massa was 'bout two-t'ree yeahs ole, dere come a ve'y fine gen'le-man from de Ole Country—a brudder ub ole massa—same reg'ment to which massa hisself b'long afo' he come out to dis country. An' 'cose he wan' see lil' massa, so he an' ole massa, dey ride down to de cabin; an' when lil' massa an' me come a-runnin' out at soun' ub de hosses, ole massa's brudder, he clap his han's an' cries, "Hurrah! Heah be two fine recruits fo' de Cam'ron Highlan'ers!"'

'For the *whom*?' sharply queried the young man; while the girl, Margot, started visibly.

'Fo' de Cam'ron Highlan'ers,' replied the old negro, but so intent upon his story as to fail to notice the rapid glance exchanged between his visitors. 'Well,' he continued, 'dat seem to please ole massa powerful much. An' he laugh an' say, "Good one dat, Geordie! We'll call de lil' black un 'Cam'ron'!' an' so he *did*, suh. Doan' even 'member w'at my own mudder call me—bin jus' "Cam'ron" so long time! But after dat, lil' massa an' me, we lib in de big house, and bimeby I was ole 'nuff to be servant to lil' massa—an' we lub each udder ve'y much. Den one day dere came to de plantation a ve'y rich man to buy cotton an' slaves—he was rich an' gran', but his fambly waan't no 'count, an'

ole massa he doan' like him 'cose he was mean an' cruel. So he woan' sell him any ub us darkies. But it happen dat dey was ridin' roun' by de cabins jus' as my mudder come out o' hers. She was ve'y pretty, was my mudder—not black same as coal like *me!*'—and he made a gesture of disdain—'but mos' all white, wid bootiful eyes an' ve'y long hair—not woolly like de common trash darkies. An' dat gen'leman, what waan't no *real* gen'leman, he say right off he wan' buy my mudder; but ole massa he refuse an' refuse, till at las' de udder man he get ve'y angry, an' say dirty t'ings to ole massa 'bout him an' my mudder. Den massa grow ve'y white—fo' massa he nevah touch no niggah woman—an' dey fix up a duel, an' somehow massa slip on de grass, an' de udder man kill him!

'Well, suh, I doan' 'member how it was, but somehow or 'nudder dat man got hol' ub eberyt'ing ('cose, yo' see, young massa was on'y a lil' boy)—de plantation an' de big house, an' all de darkies. He sol' my mudder after she begin to get ole, an' he was terrible cruel to all de slaves; an' one day, when he got ve'y angry wid me 'cose I tried to preven' his beatin' young massa (he was nevah ve'y strong, was young massa), he struck me 'cross de fo'head wid his heavy whip, an' flung me down de stairs—p'r'aps you an' missy, suh, done notice I'm some lame? Oh! he was a terrible wicked man.

'When young massa was twenty-one yeahs ole, an' eberyt'ing should have bin his, dere waan't nuthin' lef'—dat rascal had spen' all de money! Po' young massa, he stay on at de plantation, an' try to mak' t'ings better. An' den came de wah wid de Nawth, an' massa's home an' de cotton-fiel's was all burn' by de soldiers, an' bimeby all de slaves was set free. Now de darkies dey lub young massa, an' would hab stayed wid him, but de cotton was burn', an' young massa had no money, so dey all wen' different ways.

'But Ole Cam'ron, suh, he stays 'long ub young massa, till one day he says to me, "Cam'ron," he say, "'t ain't no use clingin' to dis heah wreck no mo'—yo' bes' go swim fo' yo'self. Yo' is a free man now," he says, "an' I'm not altogedder sorry fo' *dat*—but I ain't got no money to pay yo' wages, so you bes' go Nawth an' get wo'k." Den I begins to blubber, an' I pleads on massa an says, "Oh, Massa Robin, fo' de lub o' Gawd, doan' sen' me away! I doan' wan' to go Nawth whar de winters is all ice an' snow. An' I doan' wan' no wages. Yo' an' ole massa done tak' car' ub me sence I bin a lil' babby," says I; "an' w'at could a niggah like me do wid money? I'm lame," I goes on, "but, Massa Robin, I'm strong an' kin wo'k fo' yo' an' fo' me." An' so at las' young massa say, "Yeah," I kin stay wid him, an' "We both drown *togedder*," he says—an' he laughs, an' de teahs stan' in his eyes same as de water in dat ole tub out dere. Den bimeby he says to me, "Cam'ron, we'll go Wes'—to whar de gol' grows like de oranges in Florida, an' whar de sun shines all de same as heah in Souf Carolina." So we starts.

'But it was a long, long journey in dose days, an' my po' young massa he got sick when we come to de bilin' hot desert'—— The old man's voice faltered; and presently, with tears running down his wrinkled cheeks, falling unheeded upon the fur of the little coon nestled in his arms, he went on: 'Well, suh, one evenin', jus' as de sun was settin', Massa Robin he lay ve'y white in de tent—we was campin' on de trail—an' he calls me an' says, "Cam'ron, I guess yo'll have to go on alone to de gol' an' de sunshine—I'se agoin' out into de night!" "Oh, Massa Robin," I says, "de night doan' las' always; bimeby comes de bootiful sunrise agin." An' he says, smilin' an' takin' my han' all de same as do' I was a white man, "Yeah, I know *dat*, Cam'ron; I'se not 'fraid ub de night." Den he pulls off de gol' ring from his fingah, de same w'at ole massa al'us wore, an' he says, "Yo' keep dis heah ring, Cam'ron—an' my watch dat was also yo' ole massa's. I ain't got no folks, an' yo've bin a faithful niggah, Cam'ron," says he. I was blubberin' so, I could scarcely heah young massa, suh. An' presently he turn his head to'ards de tent do' an' fixed his eyes on de sun settin' so glarin' red an' hot. Den jus' as it drop out o' sight, my young massa he fall asleep—an' he doan' wake no mo'.'

The old negro stopped speaking, staring dreamily through the cabin door towards the glory of the summer sky, just marshalling its sunset hues above the shadow-greedy cañon.

His visitors, deeply moved by the story, were still hesitating to rouse him from his reverie, when suddenly he resumed: 'All dat happen a long, long time ago, suh, but I kin see young massa jus' as plain as if it was yes'erday. An' I doan' know how it is, suh, but fust moment I clap my eyes on yo', I thought, sho' to Gawd it was Massa Robin come to life! Yeah, suh, I did so—but I'm an ole man, an' my eyes is failin'.'

Then the young man, who throughout the tale had exchanged with Margot looks of suppressed excitement and surprise, said eagerly, 'There's one thing you haven't told us, and that is, your master's name.'

But at this Old Cameron merely passed his hand across his forehead, and said, shaking his head, 'I doan' 'member no mo'. Ole massa, we al'us call him "massa;" an' young massa, he was "Mas' Robin."'

'Yes, to be sure,' replied his questioner, 'that was what you darkies called him. But how did other people speak to him—that fine gentleman, for instance, of whom you were telling us?'

The old man's face brightened as he said, 'Oh, to be sho', suh, de big folks call ole massa "Cunnel"—"Cunnel"—— I disremembe' what mo'.'

'Was it M'Leod, Cameron? Did people call your old master Colonel M'Leod?' now excitedly broke in Margot.

'Yeah, yeah, missy!' cried the negro, trembling with eagerness. 'How yo' know dat name?'

'Wait one moment, Cameron,' she replied; 'we have something strange to tell you. But first, will you show us your young master's ring and watch?'

For a moment the old man hesitated, looking intently into the faces of his visitors; then, as though reassured, he set down the little coon, limped across the cabin, and from a small hollow, cleverly concealed in the log wall, took a metal box, in which, wrapped in a faded silk bandana, lay a gold crest-ring and an old-fashioned hunting-case watch. With shaking hands he laid his treasures in Margot's lap, saying, 'Dese are de t'ings, missy. I nebber befo' done show 'em to nobody; but, some way or anudder, it seems like I wan' yo' an' de gen'leman to see 'em. See, dis am de ring—very bootiful, ain't it, suh?'

For reply, the young man stretched out his hand, on which a plain seal-ring with the same crest and legend appeared. Then, while Old Cameron still studied it with astonishment, they opened the watch-case and read the inscription: 'Presented by his brother-officers, Cameron Highlanders, to Colonel Ian M'Leod, January 16th, 18—.'

Thereupon Margot could restrain herself no longer. 'Cameron,' she cried, 'can you believe that Ian M'Leod is also my husband's name, and your old master must have been his great-uncle, of whom we have heard all our lives?—Show him, Ian dear,' she continued eagerly, before the amazed old negro could find words to speak—'show him your own watch that your company gave you. Oh, how strange and wonderful it all seems!'

Smiling at the girl's enthusiasm, her husband pulled out his watch, and opening it, turned the case towards the open door, so that the light fell strongly upon it.

Old Cameron, stooping down and peering at it, spelled out the words: 'Presented to Captain Ian M'Leod by the —— Company, —— Battalion, Cameron Highlanders,' and the date. Then, his face grown long and taut with astonishment, and his eyes rolled up till only the whites were visible, he raised his hands, exclaiming over and over, 'Bress de Lawd! Bress de Lawd! To t'ink dat dese ole eyes o' mine should lib to see one o' my ole massa's fambly agen! An' de cap'n heah—he am' 'nuff like Massa Robin to be his own brudder! Bress de Lawd! Bress de Lawd!'

While the old negro was thus maundering, his visitors carefully examined the ring and watch, which seemed without doubt to establish the identity of the old slave's master as the brother of Captain M'Leod's grandfather, of whose home among the cotton-fields of South Carolina many souvenirs and traditions survived. At last, rising to go, they handed the treasures to their owner, promising to return soon.

But the old man steadfastly refused to take them back. 'No, no,' he insisted; 'yo' mus' tak' dem, Massa M'Leod. W'at has an ole niggah wid one foot in de grave to do wid such t'ings? Mebbe one day de cabin burn down—den whar would be Massa Robin's t'ings? Dey sho' b'longs to yo', suh, an' I praise de Lawd dat I done foun' yo'. Only yo' an' missy come now an' agin to see me, suh; I 'm ole, an' hab no fren's.'

Seeing that he was quite determined, young M'Leod said, 'Very well, Cameron, if you really wish it, we will take these things home, for they are indeed of great value to us. But remember that we hold them for you only in trust, and if ever you want them back, or need'—he hesitated, then went on—'need anything at all that we can do for you, you can count upon Mrs M'Leod and myself as friends.—And now we must really be off, Margot,' he ended. Then he added laughingly, turning again towards Old Cameron, 'We will come soon again to see you, and bring you some "little cats" in exchange for the watch and ring!'

The old darky, as though loath to lose sight of his loved master's kindred, followed them to where the horses were grazing, and stood staring with tear-dimmed eyes long after they had vanished in the bush. Then with faltering steps he returned to his lonely cabin and the companionship of the little coon, an unwonted feeling of happiness and comfort stirring in the faithful old heart.

(*Continued on page 170.*)

SOME ASPECTS OF NORTHERN SINAI.

By HERBERT T. GRANT.

Ship me somewheres east of Suez,
Where the best is like the worst,
And there ain't no ten commandments
And a man can raise a thirst.

WAS it the uninspiring view which meets the eye from the deck of a liner in its course along that fragile link which forges East and West together which led Kipling to introduce those lines into a poem of which the keynote is the glamour of the East? Doubtless Kipling's Tommy, with a well-stocked wet canteen behind him and all the temptations of the riotous East before him, would find solace in the dearth of moral restriction and facility for beer-shifting as set to rhyme in the above;

but the Tommy of 1917 has sterner work on hand. Sinai to him is a land which offers no inducement. It is no fit country for the ordinary individual without an army commissariat at his back. A bottle of water, not unlimited beer, is the greatest of all treasures here; not the cool and sparkling variety, either, which tumbles from every nook and cranny of his native mountains, but a flat, tasteless, turgid, half-boiled liquid which lubricates but not refreshes. Every day is the same. The first ray of the sun restores the blazing, pitiless condition of the tale of days which has preceded this new one. It is a land which holds out neither hope nor promise of better things to come; a land of everlasting cobalt sky and heart-breaking yellow sand; and old King Sol is lord of all. That is Sinai in the soldier's daily grind. A No Man's Land, where armed Briton and armed Turk skirmish to best advantage to shed one another's blood. A land whose nomadic inhabitants have been squeezed out by the pressure of advancing armies—driven to less molested regions; interned by us as refugees or prisoners of war; embodied in the Turkish army, or turned loose with a modern rifle and a bag of villainously loaded cartridges, with a roving commission against all stragglers, British and Colonial. A land which, as befits the playing-ground of Mars, is staged in death and desolation. Its northern limits are washed by a sea as sailless as that which surrounded Robinson Crusoe's isle of Juan Fernandez. Perhaps in pre-war days the busy steamers plied across the horizon between the ports of Egypt and the Holy Land; now there is never even a straggler to break the ceaseless monotony.

The Turkish dream of a reconquest of Egypt and the progress of our Expeditionary Force in Mesopotamia have led to many interesting articles of late in *Chambers's Journal*. Attention has been drawn to, and pictures painted of, countries which, though little known to the average Briton, teem with historical and Biblical associations; and yet he has blindly and unimaginatively read of them from his earliest Sunday-school days! In July of last year 'Nimrod' provided a most informative article dealing with the Turko-Egyptian Front. Being one of the minor items in that 'admirable scheme of defence for our most vital line to the East,' I naturally took a much deeper interest in it than would the peacefully pursuited reader. Recent happenings in which we have been privileged to play an interesting part have pretty thoroughly exploded some of Nimrod's prognostications. As the Turk, that most versatile of foes, has been responsible for these somewhat rude awakenings, and not some hitherto undiscovered feature in the nature of Sinai which he portrays so faithfully, any remarks along these lines are not intended as criticism.

It will be remembered that on Easter Sunday of last year the Turks made a raid on Dueidar, a post about twelve miles east of Kantara on the Suez Canal. Simultaneously an attack was made by an Austro-German force, in overwhelming numbers, upon a small body of yeomanry which held the Romani and Katia oases. More than a year had elapsed since the Turkish attacks on Suez were driven back in disorder; and, as the possibilities of the Turks being able to cross the peninsula later than March were considered remote, this fresh activity occasioned some surprise. Unquestionably it was an extremely smart piece of work. That a raid was all that was intended became obvious at once, as almost ere the report of the first shot had died away our military machinery burst into motion, and any delay with a view to holding on to await reinforcements would undoubtedly have ended in trouble for our enemy. As it was, he proved himself as slippery as we have learned to acknowledge him; and though for some little time thereafter the Anzacs clashed with him in minor affrays on more than one occasion, our infantry caught no sight of him whatever. 'Nimrod' has already furnished some idea of the capabilities of the camel, and it was due to the remarkable speed and endurance of this native of Sinai that the raiders were able to make their dash and be well on the return journey to their base before our slower-moving troops could get a chance to give them battle. The heroic defence at Dueidar on that occasion by a small force of the Royal Scots Fusiliers is too well known to require further comment. The sharp lesson which they taught the Turks bore fruit in a subsequent peaceful period extending over nearly four months. In the opening lines of this article I drew a picture of Sinai in the soldier's daily grind. His lot has been improved tremendously since those jottings were left to rust, and, with the exception of the proverbial flesh-pots which Port Said, Cairo, and Alexandria alone can provide, he is as well off and contented on a far-advanced front as he could be in any part of the land of the Pharaohs.

In the middle of July it became apparent that the Turks were contemplating an attack on a serious scale. Quietly and unostentatiously our preparations were made to checkmate them. 'Nimrod' particularly emphasised the two chief obstacles in the path of a Turkish advance—lack of water and absence of roads for transporting guns and heavy material. 'The movement of troops is entirely dependent on the rainfall, and no accurate forecast of events can be made until the rains eventuate or otherwise;' and 'metalled roads are essential to permit of heavy guns and transport being brought across the desert wastes, where the going is so heavy from the soft sand that for infantry to accomplish a march of even a few miles per day is a creditable performance.' This had been the generally accepted

theory. We had not seen a single drop of rain for at least five months, and Sinai was still as roadless as at the beginning of hostilities. Judge, then, of the shock to the rank and file created by the screech and bang of six-inch-howitzer shells landing in close proximity at dawn on 4th August!

The Turkish end of the surprise was a grimmer affair. Lured unsuspectingly on by the splendidly engineered retreat of the Anzacs, who had been in contact with them for some hours previously, the attack from the south, intended to cut our lines of communication, swept over the nearest of the barren ridges to our positions, there to be greeted by our waiting artillery. There this, the main, attack ended. How little the Turks knew of our actual strength may be gauged by the results. In the futile attack launched along our front proper (i.e. facing the east) they never got near enough our line to deploy from the artillery formation in which they were seen advancing. And more than one of these squares of fifty learned to their cost with what precision those sinister, unwieldy strangers lying off-shore in the Bay of Tina could launch fourteen-inch death into their midst.

It is with no intention of giving an account of the battle of Romani that I mention the above. I merely wish to emphasise the extraordinary manner in which the Turks surmounted the natural difficulties of Sinai in their advance. From Bir-el-Abd they were dependent for water solely upon the numerous wells which the Katia and neighbouring oases boast. Most of the wells are brackish, and at best are of a quality which even semi-civilised troops could not subsist on for long. The fact that our subsequent offensive drove the Turks out of this district left them with no alternative but to fall back upon their reservoirs at Bir-el-Abd. The Turk would doubtless suffer less inconvenience than the Tommy on such liquid rations; but that even he has a discriminating taste in this direction is evidenced by the joy with which our prisoners indulged in the brand supplied to our own men, once we had them safely rounded up. As for roads, we know of none. The newspaper accounts speak of the guns being dragged over planks by large gangs of labourers. Turkish prisoners, however, stated that the guns were brought across the desert on sledges. As we ourselves frequently adopt this method of transporting heavy material, it is more than probable that this latter version is the correct one. That the Turks had the guns with them we ourselves can guarantee, but how they made away with them in their hurried retreat is still a mystery. Rumour has it that the guns did not go back with them, but now lie buried in the sand somewhere out ahead—a simple matter in such a country.

The northern route of advance on the Suez Canal does not lie along the Mediterranean shore. In all probability use is made of the shore in the earlier stages, but thereafter the Turks advance to the south of the great inundation or Bardawil Lagoon, and even make use of it at points. When the western end of the lagoon was first occupied by British troops, the area still showed evidences of a recent flood. The surface was a sticky black mud, which emitted a nauseous odour, and in which one sank over one's ankles. Gradually it dried up until it presented a sound footing, as it does to-day. Now it is rough and salt-encrusted. In places one can walk on a bed of solid salt as smooth and hard as a concrete pavement, a welcome change from the heavy sand. Some of the arms and detached portions present an extraordinary spectacle. Acres and acres of salt-crystals lie glittering under the fierce desert sun. Here one would think some giant and careless sower had scattered with a lavish hand untold millions of glass pins—tiny spikes which would create woeful havoc on unshod feet. At another place a conglomeration of mud and salt, with long crystals dangling from each furrow, gives the appearance of a ploughed field in the iron grip of Jack Frost. Only that merciless sun overhead puts a check to one's imaginings along these lines.

It is an oasis belt through which runs the ancient highway from Africa to Asia which makes the feat of crossing Sinai possible. By this route the Turks could at least count on an abundant water-supply, of a kind, for a considerable part of the way; and by breaking off to north or south at Oghratina, they would be in a position to strike at either Port Said or Ismailia. South of that the country develops into a succession of terrible barren ridges, where no army could survive. The terrain throughout the watered belt is undulating; and provided aerial reconnaissance or cavalry patrols did not disclose the proximity of a hostile force, it could advance in mass under cover of the wadis, palm-clumps, and general scrub of the district very close upon our positions without attracting attention. The popular conception of an oasis is a tiny palm-fringed island with a crystal pool of purest water in its midst rising from a limitless sea of sand. As a matter of fact, it is a series of little clumps of palms scattered over a wide area, connected by stragglers here and there, singly and in twos and threes. The Katia oasis which has figured prominently throughout the present campaign is quite an imposing affair, however, consisting, as it does, of two distinct virtual woods. Huge bunches of dates hang in abundance upon the palms. September is the season for harvesting, when the date is black or golden-brown. Throughout the various stages until they are ripe they present a welcome and varied assortment of colour. All these oases are amply supplied with wells, but the water bears no resemblance either in appearance or flavour to our own home supply. Water is plentiful all over this section, and by digging a hole a few feet

in depth and the same in circumference it is possible to procure a cool bath at short notice.

Life in the army precludes a proper appreciation of any country where the soldier's duty may lead him. The thus-far-and-no-farther attitude of the whipping of exhausted bodies into further activity which war necessitates is apt to make the victim look upon the country itself as the bane of his existence. So Sinai does not appeal to the average Tommy. And yet there is poetry in every line of it. Where in all the wide world could one find greater freedom and breathing-space than here? With the passing of the warring Red Man the boundless Canadian prairie has become one gigantic farm, and the only claim to respect it can now boast of lies in the lavishness of nature viewed from a commercial standpoint. Sinai, on the other hand, as it is to-day, is the wilderness of the Book of Exodus. Somewhere among those barren ridges the sands of four thousand years cover the footsteps of Moses and his flock as, guided by the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, they journeyed through the wilderness to the land of their fathers. Scattered along the coast lie the remains of camps and cities famous when Cæsar and Boadicea were yet undreamt of, and that tiny island which is to-day the heart and pulse and brain of our mighty Empire was peopled by savages as crude and ruthless as the animals which clothed and fed them. What shades of mighty men of valour, bearers of the sword of strife and the word of 'glad tidings of great joy,' throng that ancient caravan route connecting West and East! It is a land for a poet with the set purpose and determination of a pioneer, and the courage of a Mungo Park. Its people know no law save that which serves to protect each small community, and a stranger is their rightful prey.

We have unearthed in the course of our wanderings here many strange implements for the reception of the unwary or the undefended. Hidden amongst the palms in the oases we come across fetters, leg-irons, extraordinary rifles of the gas-pipe type, and burlesque scimitars, which these warlike nomads could doubtless put to unpleasant practice.

[Since the above was written a British advance in Sinai has taken place, marked towards the end of December 1916 by the recapture of El Arish, a position on the coastal route held by the Turks for over two years, and by a victory at Magdhaba between the coast and the central route. This advance was rendered possible by the construction of a desert railway running eastward from El Kantara to a point whence a dash could be made to El Arish. It is expected that by a continuation of this railway into Palestine it will be possible after the war to make the journey between Cairo and Jerusalem in a few hours.]

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By JEFFERY FARNOL.

CHAPTER X.—*continued.*

'GOD bless you for a generous soul!' said he, and laughed rather queerly; also his gray eyes were a little brighter than usual. 'Why should you trust me so far?'

'Well, you look honest, I guess. An' then we all help each other in Mulligan's now an' then, one way or another; we jest have to. There's Mrs Bowker, third floor—the tea an' sugar as I've loaned that woman! an' last week a lovely beef-bone. Well, there; but if you want the loan of that twenty-five'——

'Mrs Trapes, I don't. Things aren't so desperate as that yet. All I need is a job of some sort.'

'What kind o' job?'

'I'm not particular.'

'Well, what have you been used to?'

'Alas! Mrs Trapes, hitherto I have lived a life of—er—riotous ease.'

'That means as you ain't worked at all, I guess. H'm!' said Mrs Trapes viewing him with her sharp hawk's eye; 'and yet you ain't got the look of a confidence man nor yet a swell crook; consequently I take it you was the only son of your father, an' lost all he left you, eh?'

'Mrs Trapes, you are a truly wonderful woman!'

'T' be born the only son of a rich father is a pretty bad disease, I reckon,' she continued. 'Yes, siree, it's bad for the child an' worse for the man; it's bound to be his ruination in the end—like drink. An' talkin' o' drink, I'm glad to see that b'y Arthur's so fond o' you.'

'Oh! Why?'

'Because you don't drink.'

'Well, I don't go to bed in my boots, do I, Mrs Trapes? But then I promised you I wouldn't, and, for another thing, I'm not a poet, you see,' said he, and yawned lazily.

'Hermy says she's glad too.'

Mr Ravenslee cut short his yawn in the middle. 'Hermione! Did she say so? When?'

'Ah, I guessed that would wake ye up a bit!' said Mrs Trapes, noting his suddenly eager look. 'It's a pity you're so poor, ain't it?'

'Why? What do you mean?'

'I mean, if you had been in a good situation an' makin' good money—twenty-five per, say—you might have asked her.'

'Asked her?' repeated Ravenslee, staring. 'Asked her what?'

'Why, t' marry you o' course,' nodded Mrs Trapes. 'You love her about as much as any man can love—which is sometimes a thimbleful an' sometimes a bit more; but you sure love her as much as a man knows how, I guess. An' don't try for ter deny it, Mr Geoffrey. I ain't blind; leastways I can see a bit out o' one eye sometimes, specially where Hermy 's concerned, I can so. O' course, you ain't worthy o' her; but then no man is.'

'No, I 'm not worthy of her, God knows!' said Ravenslee quite humbly.

'An' Hermy 's goin' to marry a man with money. Her heart 's set on it firm.'

'Money!' said Ravenslee, scowling. 'She seems anything but mercenary!'

'Mercenary!' cried Mrs Trapes. 'I should say not. I tell ye she could be a-rollin' around in a six-thousand-dollar automobile at this very hour if she was that kind. With her face an' figure, she could so.'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean as there 's men—rich men—ah, an' married too—as is mad after her.'

'Ah!' said Ravenslee, frowning again.

'You may well say "Ah!"' nodded Mrs Trapes. 'Men is all beasts more or less. Why, I could tell you things—well, there. Hermy ain't no innocent babe; but there 's some things better than innocence, and that 's a chin—will-power, Mr Geoffrey. If a woman 's sweet an' strong an' healthy like Hermy, an' got a chin, nothin' can harm her. But beauty like hers is a curse to any good woman if she 's poor, beauty being a quick-seller, ye see.'

'Yes, I see—I know!' said Ravenslee, clenching his hands and frowning blacker than ever.

'But,' continued Mrs Trapes, and here she leaned forward to touch him with an impressive, toil-worn hand, 'Hermy Chesterton 's jest an angel o' light an' purity; she always has been an' always will be; but she knows about as much as a good girl can know. She 's seen the worst o' poverty, an' she 's made up her mind, when she marries, to marry a man as is a man an' can give her all the money she wants. So ye see it ain't no good you wastin' your time danglin' around after her, an' sighin'—now is it?'

'Why, no, Mrs Trapes. I think I 'll speak to her to-night'——

'My land! ain't I jest been tryin' to show you as you ain't a fit or worthy party to speak, an' as you won't have a chance if you do speak, her heart bein' set on wealth? But you can't speak—you won't speak—I know you won't!'

'Why not?'

'First, because t'-night she 's away at Englewood makin' a dress for Mrs Crawley, as is very fond o' her. An', second, because you ain't the man to ask a girl to marry you when you ain't got nothin' t' keep her on—you know you ain't!'

'Which brings us back to the undoubted fact that I must get a job—at once.'

'H'm!' said Mrs Trapes, viewing his clean-cut features and powerful figure with approval; 'what could ye do?'

'Anything, so long as I can make good, Mrs Trapes. What would you suggest?'

'Well,' said Mrs Trapes, caressing an elbow thoughtfully, 'grocers' assistants makes good money, an' I know Mr Smith wants a butterman.'

'Good!' nodded Ravenslee; 'I should like to batter butter about'——

'Are ye used to butter?'

'Oh, I 've a decided taste for it!'

'Know much about it?'

'Certainly. It is a yellowish fatty substance concocted by human agency, supposedly from the lacteous secretion of the graminivorous quadruped familiarly known as the common (or garden) cow.'

'Landsakes!' said Mrs Trapes, drawing a deep breath, 'you sure do know something about it. 'Ever worked in it before?'

'Only with my teeth.'

'Ah, quit your jollyin', Mr Geoffrey, if you want me t' help you.'

'Solemn as an owl, Mrs Trapes.'

'Well, then, there 's Jacob Pffeffenfifer wants a young man in his delicatessen store.'

'Mrs Trapes, I can slice ham and beef with any one on earth.'

'D' ye understand picklin' an' seasonin'?'

'Ah, there you have me again. I fear I don't.'

'Then you ain't no good to Jacob Pffeffenfifer!'

'On second thoughts, I 'm not wholly sorry,' answered Ravenslee gravely. 'You see, a name like that would worry me; it would shake my nerve. I might cut beef instead of ham, or ham instead of'——

'Mr Geoffrey!' quoth Mrs Trapes, squaring her elbows.

'Sober as a judge, Mrs Trapes, and—— By Jupiter!'

'My land! What is it?'

'An idea—look!' and Ravenslee pointed down into the yard.

'Why, it 's only Tony!' said Mrs Trapes, glancing down a vista of riotous garments.

'Precisely,' answered Ravenslee, rising and stretching his long arms. 'Tony has solved my difficulty; I 'll go into the pea-nut trade.'

'What! sell pea-nuts? You!'

'Why not? "Man is born"—— you know.'

'But—my land!—only dagos an' guinneys sells pea-nuts!'

'Splendid! I shall be the exception, Mrs Trapes. Anyway, a pea-nut man I 'll be!' And, catching up his disreputable hat, Ravenslee nodded, and left his landlady staring after

him and murmuring 'Well!' at intervals. But presently she reached for her iron, stone-cold long since, and stood a while clutching it in bony fingers, and staring at nothing in particular.

'He 's sure a man, Hermy, my dear!' she said at last, nodding at the stuffed parrot in the corner. 'I 've watched him careful, an' I know. An' there 's some things better than money, my dear—ah, much better! So, if I should help to bring you into his arms—man an' wife, my dear—why, I guess it would be the best thing Ann Angelina Trapes ever done—yes, ma'am.' Saying which, she went back to her ironing.

On the stairs Ravenslee met Spike, who hailed him joyously. 'Say, Geoff, I 'm all alone to-night; come an' eat supper with me—how about it?'

'Suppose you have supper at Mrs Trapes's with me?'

'No; she gets on me nerves; so come on over, will you?'

'With pleasure.'

''N' say, I 'm a few chips shy on butter, Geoff—bring in ten cents' worth, will you?'

'Right-o, comrade, I 'll be with you anon. Make boil the kettle against my coming;' and Ravenslee hastened down the stairs. Reaching the court, he met the Italian trundling his barrow toward a certain shed, its usual nocturnal biding-place.

'How goes it, Tony?' he inquired, shaking hands.

The Italian nodded and flashed his teeth. 'Ver-a good, pal!' he answered.

'Tony, where can I get a pea-nut outfit like yours?'

'Ha! You go-a in-a da pea-nut-a beezneez, hey? You want-a push-a-de-cart, hey?'

'That 's it, Tony.'

'Ver-a good!' nodded the good-natured Italian. 'You come-a long-a me, pal. I take-a you get-a push-a-de-cart, up-a de street—yes.'

Having very soon locked away his barrow, the loquacious Tony forthwith led Ravenslee along certain streets and into a certain yard, where presently appeared a stout man with rings in his ears, who smiled and nodded and greeted them with up-flung finger and the word *altro*. Presently Ravenslee found himself examining a highly ornate barrow fitted with stove, &c., complete unto the whistle, and mounted upon a pair of the rosiest wheels he had ever seen. Thereafter were more smiles and nods, accompanied by the ever-recurrent *altro*, the transfer of certain bills into the stout man's pocket, and Geoffrey Ravenslee sallied forth into the street, bound for Mulligan's, with the chattering Tony beside him and the gaily-painted barrow before him, receiving many friendly hints as to the pitfalls and intricacies of the pea-nut trade, and hearkening with unflagging interest to the story of 'lil Pietro' and the unbounded goodness of 'da Signorina Hermione.'

CHAPTER XI.—ANTAGONISM IS BORN, AND WAR DECLARED.

'WHY, hello, Hermy!' exclaimed Spike, pausing in the doorway. 'Gee! I thought you was—were in Englewood.'

Hermione lifted her golden head, stayed her humming sewing-machine, and smiled at him. 'And I thought I 'd come home and surprise you. Aren't you glad to see me, boy dear?'

'Why, sure I am!' he answered, and, stooping, kissed a certain golden curl that wantoned at her white temple; which done, he sprawled in the easy-chair, and, taking a newspaper from his pocket, fell to studying the latest base-ball scores; while Hermione, head bent above her work again, glanced at him now and then rather wistfully.

'Gee-whizz!' he exclaimed suddenly, 'the Giants put it all over Cincinnati to-day, Hermy. Ye see, Matty was in th' box, an' he sure pitched some game!'

Hermione stopped her machine and looked at him under wrinkling brows. 'I thought you were hunting through the "wanted" columns, Arthur?'

'Why, ye see I ain't—haven't got to the ads. yet, Hermy.'

Hermione sighed softly, and, resting her round chin in her hands, viewed him silently a while; until, becoming aware of the steadfast gaze of those sweet and gentle eyes, Spike shuffled uneasily and changed colour.

'Arthur,' she said softly, 'when you promised me to try to find a situation, you meant it, didn't you?'

'Sure I did.'

'That was a week ago, dear.'

'But, Hermy, I went after that office-boy's job. You know I did.'

'Yes, dear, though you got there too late.'

'No, I wasn't late, Hermy; only another guy happened t' get there first, an' got the job. A kid I could have licked with one hand, too; one of these mommer's pets in a nobby sack-suit, all dolled up in a clean collar an' a bow-tie an' gray kid gloves. I guess his outfit helped him a whole lot, an' ye see I 'm a few chips shy on clothes, I guess.'

Hermione looked at her brother's worn garments, shiny at elbow and knee, and as she looked her eyes were suddenly suffused. 'Yes, dear, I—I 'm afraid they are—rather shabby,' she admitted humbly. 'Your clothes always did seem to wear out so very quickly. And—and it costs so much to live. And—sometimes I grow—afraid.'

The smooth, low voice faltered, and ended

upon a sob. Spike stared in wide-eyed amaze, for seldom had he seen his sister thus; but now, beholding the droop of that brave head, seeing how her strong white hands gripped each other, he tossed the paper aside, and, flinging himself on his knees, clasped her in his arms. 'Don't cry, Hermy!' he pleaded. 'Oh, don't cry! I—I can't bear it. You know I love you best in the world. Ah, don't cry, dear! I—I'll hunt up a job first thing—honest, I will.'

'But your clothes are so very shabby!' she sobbed. 'And oh, boy dear, I have only just enough to—to pay our rent this month, so I can't get you any more—yet, dear!'

'Hermy,' said he brokenly—'oh, Hermy, you make me feel so mean, I—I—— One sure thing, you're never goin' t'spend your money on clothes for me any more—the money you work so hard for!—never any more, Hermy dear. You've done enough for me, I guess; an' now it's up t'me to help you, and—and—oh gee!' Here Spike's voice broke altogether; whereupon Hermione, quite forgetting her own sorrows and worries, fell to soothing and comforting him as she had done many and many a time during his motherless childhood.

'Say, Hermy,' said he at last, his tear-stained cheek pillowed on her soft, round bosom, 'you won't think me a—an awful kid for—for cryin', will you?'

'I think I love you all the better, boy dear, and—I'm sure it has done us both good.' And, smiling down at him through her tears, she kissed him.

'I'll start in an' rustle up a job right away, Hermy,' said he, rising and nodding grimly.

'Oh boy,' said she, looking up at him fondly, 'I shall be so proud of you! It wouldn't matter what it was, or how little you got at first, so long as it was decent and honourable. And I'm sure you'll get on. Mr Geoffrey thinks so too.'

'Does he? I'm glad o' that. Say, how d'ye like Geoff?'

'Oh, well, I've only seen him two or three times,' said Hermione, folding away her work preparatory to cooking supper.

(*Continued on page 163.*)

TROPICAL POTATOES.

By D. M. Ford.

SHORT crops and high prices are now being quoted against the Irish potato. Mr Runciman, as the mouthpiece of Parliament, has bidden the public knock off the 'potato habit,' and put cereals in its place; potatoes once a day, or not at all, is to be the fiat of the future. All the while barrels of tropical potatoes are rotting in Covent Garden by reason of our lamentable insularity in the matter of unaccustomed foods.

Tropical potatoes are of various kinds. The yam, for nutrition and delicacy of flavour, easily heads the list. Most people on first making its acquaintance prefer it to the potato. Speaking from first-hand experience, the writer was genuinely sorry to leave the yam behind after a winter in the West Indies, and become a 'pratie' eater again in this country.

Yams have been cultivated in warm countries for centuries, and in the West Indies enter very largely into the diet of all classes of the population. The tubers vary in size and weight, from the smaller species, no larger than an ordinary potato, to the enormous yam measuring three feet in length, and weighing thirty or forty pounds. A Jamaican lady once told the writer she had seen a monstrosity yam which, when held upright, was as tall as an average human being.

That part of the yam-plant which appears above the ground consists of slender twining stems, which the natives train round poles stuck into a mound of earth, or 'hill.' There is no prettier sight in all the West Indies than these yam 'hills' on the mountain-side, their glossy green tendrils blending in colour with the broad, cool leaves of a banana-grove, an emerald patch of sugar-cane, or a clump of feathery bamboo.

Yams vary greatly in appearance. There is the guinea yam, the hard yam, the yellow or affoo yam, the negro yam, the Lucea yam, the little Indian yam or yampee; but the white yam is the best. It is sometimes called 'flour yam' because of its powdery appearance. Though similar in taste to the ordinary potato, it is more nutritious.

Erroneous ideas are prevalent in this country that yams are difficult to cook. The writer heard of a lady in the West Indies who sent some yams to an English friend. The cook viewed the strange vegetable with profound distrust, and absolutely refused to be responsible for its preparation for the table. The yams were thereupon sent to the local bakehouse, with, however, very satisfactory results.

It may not, of course, be possible to cook yam according to West Indian methods—namely, roast it out of doors in its jacket on hot sticks or glowing coals; but, apart from this, there is no more trouble in preparing the yam for the table than the English potato. Identically the same rules may be followed, allowing rather longer time for the yam because of its tougher outer skin.

The fancy methods adopted by English cooks for transforming 'left over' potatoes may also be copied when using up cold yam. It can be

mashed with butter, eggs, and seasoning, then either baked in buttered moulds or formed into shapes for frying. A favourite dish in the West Indies is roast-pig, served with a stuffing of cooked mashed yam, mixed with tomatoes, onions, butter, herbs, and eggs to bind the mixture. Yam can also be used in various puddings and sweet dishes.

Spanish or sweet potatoes are now coming over in large quantities into this country from Spain and the Azores. Their nutritive properties are higher than yams, and much higher than Irish potatoes, owing to a large percentage of sugar as well as starch. Though the outer skin varies in colour, the inside is always of a rich yellow, with a taste similar to that of chestnuts. In Mexico these tubers are used as sweetmeats, and in Spain they are made into preserves. The usual method, however, is to split them in half, bake them for two hours or so, and eat them after the fashion of ordinary potatoes. In the United States they are often used in place of chestnuts for stuffing turkey on Thanksgiving Day.

Our ancestors were more enterprising than are we of the present day. Sweet potatoes, or skyrrets, were imported into this country immediately following the discovery of the Americas, and continued to be eaten by all classes until the Irish potato, introduced from Virginia in 1586, finally supplanted it. It is to the tropical variety that Falstaff alludes when he cries, 'Let the sky rain potatoes!' (*Merry Wives of Windsor*).

Gerard the herbalist even tried to grow sweet potatoes in England in the sixteenth century, but without success. 'I planted in my garden divers roots (which I bought at the Exchange in London), where they flourished until winter, at which time they perished and rotted,' he records in his diary; and so enamoured was he of their gastronomic properties that later he gives directions for their preparation for the table: 'They are used to be eaten roasted in the ashes; some, when they be so roasted, infuse them, and sop them with wine, and others, to give them the greater grace in eating, do boil them with prunes; others dress them (being first roasted) with oil, vinegar, and salt, every man according to his own taste and liking. Notwithstanding, howsoever they be dressed, they comfort, nourish, and strengthen the body.'

Some lesser known tropical potatoes are cocos and *tous-les-mois*, seldom exported to this country. Cocos can be boiled or roasted. They are harder than yams. The roasted coco-skin is very nice eaten with butter. Grated coco is also good, and makes good fritters; boiled coco mashed with butter is another way of serving it. *Tous-les-mois*, so called because it is supposed to bear every month, is made from a bulb which can be eaten as a vegetable, boiled like yam or coco; but it is generally made into flour.

MR PEDSON'S PALINODE.

By T. B. Simpson.

LET me introduce you to Mr Mark Pedson, Fellow and Tutor of St Serf's College, Oxford.

'There can be no doubt,' he is saying in his most magisterial tones—'there can be no doubt that Gibbon, with that unfailing insight which with him took the place of scientific research—that Gibbon, I say, was right in his assertion that the Age of the Antonines was the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous.'

He gives his whiskers a defiant wave, and looks round the small circle of his auditors, challenging denial. None is forthcoming. Indeed, one of those present is asleep, but he is a rowing Blue, and therefore a privileged person; the remainder are, or have been, Pedson's pupils, and know better than to contradict him.

'In fact,' he continues, 'I have no hesitation in saying that to exchange the cares and anxieties of our modern life for any position, however humble, in the society of those truly "spacious days" would be indeed a boon;' and Mr Pedson, with a satisfied air, squirted a little more soda into the generous whisky that he had just compounded for himself.

At this point the Blue, awakening with a start, collects his faculties just enough to say 'Good-night' before openly revealing that he has lost touch with the current of the monologue with which Mr Pedson is in the habit of entertaining his evening callers. The others gladly follow his bold example, and retire. Mr Pedson himself, after a sad reflection on the fate that condemns him to rise early next morning in order to deliver two lectures before a hard-won lunch, retires to his austere bedchamber, for it is late. Soon he is asleep.

Next morning he awoke with a strange sensation of unfamiliarity, and even of discomfort. He sat up in bed with a start, and discovered, with intense surprise, that he was not in his own bed at all, but seated upon a pile of dirty sacking. His night-gown—for, like all good Oxford dons, Mr Pedson wears a night-gown—had somehow shrunk, and now, drab and coarsened, was girt up round his waist by a rude strand of cord. The discomfort he had felt was easily accounted for by the fact that a tall, powerful-looking man, whom he discovered standing by his side, dressed in a loose linen tunic, had evidently been kicking him in the ribs.

To him spoke this individual, and Mr Pedson remarked with a sort of subconscious surprise that the words were Latin: 'Up, dog, and to your work, or I'll break every bone in your vile body, devil take you!'

Mr Pedson sprang to his feet with an agility that he had not shown for years, and was assisted by his awakener's toe through the doorway of the untidy, dark, evil-smelling apartment in which he had found himself, into a large courtyard. Here was assembled a motley crew of tatterdemalions, dressed like Mr Pedson. They were fighting round a pot which stood in a corner of the yard, and abusing each other in a variety of languages, among which Mr Pedson recognised Latin and a sort of mongrel Greek. It was plain that he was expected to join in the scramble for the unsavoury mess which the pot contained; but his stomach revolted at the thought, and he stood aloofly on one side, feeling hungry and unclean. As he did so, he was disquieted to hear the overseer —for the rude fellow who had disturbed his slumbers was evidently such—engage in conversation with another person who had just entered the yard. This latter was a curled and oiled Semite, loudly dressed in a robe of Coan silk, and flashing a large array of rings proudly in the sun.

'That Marcus,' so ran the overseer's words, 'the new slave from Britain, is a do-nothing donkey. I see that Caius Pomponius is advertising for a number of slaves of good physique to appear at his pro-consular games. A hundred of them are to be matched unarmed against six Cilician panthers, and it should be a pretty enough show. Now, if we could turn an honest penny by disposing of Marcus here, it would be a good riddance; and the knave could fight hard for his life, for all his fat.'

Before Mr Pedson had fully recovered from the shock of the evident assent accorded by the gorgeous Jew to this outrageous proposition, he found himself roughly propelled into taking his place in a sort of squad with the other slaves. A shovel and a rake were thrust into his hands, and in a minute he was out of the courtyard, marching in the centre of a ragged column through the streets. For a time these were narrow and sordid, with high tenements on either side that shut out the light of day; but later they traversed broad and spacious thoroughfares, flanked by splendid mansions with marble fronts. Eventually they emerged at an open space, in which Mr Pedson recognised, towering above him, the Colosseum—the Flavian amphitheatre of ancient Rome. The gang entered the building and were set to work.

Mr Pedson found, to his ineffable horror, that the task in hand was to restore to order the arena, which bore traces only too plainly evident of the previous day's gladiatorial combats. His heart sickened in him as he heaped sand over the dark stains which spotted the surface of the ground, or helped one of his fellow-slaves to drag forth the hideously mutilated body of an unsuccessful competitor.

As he worked, he entered into conversation with one of his comrades whenever he was sure that the lynx-eyed overseer was looking in another direction; for conversation among the slaves was not encouraged, as he gathered from one or two efficient displays of the lash. He found that his master was one Apelles, who enjoyed a running contract for keeping the arena in good order, and for this purpose had a large number of slaves in his employ. His wretched bondmen were driven with merciless severity, for labour was cheap, and if a slave did die from overwork—well, *vile damnum*, his body fetched a fair price as food for the beasts. Apelles got good value for his human chattels, alive or dead.

Midday came, sweltering hot, and brought with it a short respite, and, for the others, refreshment. Mr Pedson could not yet bring himself to face the rotten salt fish and brackish water provided for him, and his afternoon's work was rendered still more nauseating to him by the pangs of hunger. At length, empty and sick, he saw the sun set on his labours, and himself once more fallen in with the squad to be marched back to the 'island' tenement in which they lived.

On the road his knees gave way beneath him from sheer exhaustion, and he was left behind, together with his friend of the arena, who had instructions to 'bring along the scurvy dog as quick as may be,' coupled with dark hints at a spell in the *ergastulum*, or penal settlement, for so idle and worthless a scoundrel, together with a taste of 'the Fork.'

Mr Pedson lay, utterly spent, in the middle of the street. Pain and weariness had rendered him almost unconscious of his surroundings, when he was brought to himself by a sharp blow between the shoulders. Hastily he dragged himself to the side, and two men swept past him armed with long rods. They were 'forerunners,' clearing a path for a litter which followed immediately behind them, borne on the shoulders of six stalwart Cappadocians. In the litter sat a bearded man of middle age, finely dressed, calm, aristocratic, who in passing glanced indifferently at the unhappy Mr Pedson as he lay sprawling in the gutter.

'Who is that?' he asked of his companion.

'Don't you know who that is?' was the reply. 'Little wonder that you are known as "Madman" in the gang. Why, that is the divine Titus Antoninus, our august Emperor.'

'Now may Jove rot his bones, and the Furies bring him dishonoured to the bottomless abyss of Tartarus!' said Mr Pedson.

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when a shutter opened at the top of the building in front of which he was lying, and without any warning a pail of slops was discharged over

his recumbent form. Till that moment he had thought that he had plumbed the lowest depths of misery; now he realised how dreadfully mistaken he had been. With a groan he staggered to his feet, and began to proceed homewards with the assistance of his companion.

It was with positive relief that he sank to rest on his pile of sacking, sordid and verminous as it was. His fellow-slaves thronged round him, reeking of the garlic which had been their supper, and jeered at the dismal plight of the 'silly Briton.' When the jest had palled they went away, leaving behind one or two of their number, kindlier souls, and with these Mr Pedson began to talk. All of them, he found, had once been free, for all had been brought to Rome to be slaves, and not born into slavery. All were uniformly wretched. Though their numbers were great there was no hope of revolt, for even a distinctive servile dress was denied them, so that the slaves of great establishments might not recognise one another as such in the street, and, realising their numerical strength, feel inclined to exert it. All thought of escape was hopeless.

The hour for sleep soon came, and silence having been effectively secured by the usual means—the lash—Mr Pedson lay on his 'bed' and gave himself furiously to think. He would gladly have bartered his soul for a whisky-and-soda, or given his right hand for a pipe; but these, of course, could not be procured, he reflected sadly, in an age when the condition of the human race was (otherwise) so happy and prosperous. It occurred to him that, even had the freak of fate which had reverted him to this age been pleased to place him in the upper ranks of society, he could not have borne his lot; for even there whisky was not, and patricians were pipeless. Nor were they, he thought, immune from slops. Another aspect of their life, too, had struck him forcibly. Wherever he had passed through the city, to and from the Amphitheatre, in fashionable or plebeian thoroughfare alike, he had been overwhelmed by the odours of ancient civilisation. Broad avenues of princely houses shared with the narrow roadways of the densely populated poorer quarters a system of great open drains, from which proceeded stenches whose strength was only equalled by their variety. The streets were littered with the refuse which the *fœx Romuli* were concerned to remove only from their actual dwellings, throwing it from the windows, and not caring for the state of the roads beneath.

Mr Pedson, of course, had spent his time in the midst of an unwashed rabble breathing coarse herbs and clad in fetid rags. But even the higher classes of society, whatever the refinements of their life might be, had these smells always with them when they took their walks abroad. On this account they had to cover their persons and fill their palaces with heavy aromatic unguents, a remedy that to a modern would seem worse almost than the disease; and Mr Pedson realised that, even had he been metamorphosed into the Emperor himself, his twentieth-century nose had reached a stage of culture which would rob his Roman life of any enjoyment that otherwise it might have possessed.

As he reflected, he fell into a fitful slumber. And in his sleep a vision came to him, in which he saw a procession pass before his eyes. In it appeared first a citizen of ancient Athens, tall and dignified, in a well-cut cloak; next was a rude barbaric chieftain, with spear and bull's-hide shield; he was followed in his turn by a hairy savage, with club and bearskin. All of these, it seemed to Mr Pedson, had this in common, that they bewailed their own lot, and spoke with longing of bygone days, each looking enviously at the older type. Last of all came a lumbering ape, shaggy and uncouth, which slowly turned straight upon the dreamer, revealing a discontented face, wrinkled hideously with simian spleen. And the face was that of Mr Pedson, whiskers and all!

This proved too much for the sleeper. With a scream he awoke, and found himself (you guessed it) in his own bed at St Serf's, to his unspeakable relief. With joy he caressed his recovered night-gown; gladly he ascertained that his cherished whiskers still adorned his own face. With ecstasy he rolled upon the bed that now seemed to him so luxurious, though he had often before informed the bursar that it was hardly fit for a dog, and should be instantly renewed. When his scout entered he was dumbfounded at Mr Pedson's unaccustomed urbanity, and at the 'please' which he subjoined to a request for breakfast in his rooms.

Breakfast over, Mr Pedson sat before his fire, and puffed at his pipe in sheer delight. There was a knock at his door, and one of the undergraduates entered who had been calling the night before.

'Excuse my coming in so early, Mr Pedson,' he began.

'Not at all,' said Mr Pedson; 'it's a pleasure.'

'But the fact is, we're having a debate this week at the Compton on the subject that "This House would welcome a return to the 'good old days,'" and we'd like awfully if you'd propose the motion. I thought you might, especially after what you said last night about the Age of the Antonines.'

'No,' said Mr Pedson, 'I couldn't really speak so directly against my convictions.'

'But I thought you said'——

'Ah yes,' said the late "Marcus," 'but that was yesterday.'

. . . . . .

Extract from the minutes of the Compton Debating Society: 'Mr Pedson, who kindly took part in the debate, appeared as opposer, and his arguments against the motion completely carried the House with him.'

SCOTTISH HISTORICAL RHYMES AND SAYINGS.

By JAMES FERGUSON, K.C.

AMONG the sidelights which give variety and picturesqueness to Scottish history, illustrating peculiarities of character and the temper of the people, and occasionally throwing vivid gleams on local and social conditions, not the least illuminating are fragments of old songs preserved by chance by some chronicler with an eye for more than mere narrative, popular judgments in easily remembered rhyme on men and events, and short proverbial sayings expressive of social and political facts. Some refer directly to historical events, some relate to the great families who left their special mark on the nation's annals, and some to the interesting figures in the national life. They are generally concise and graphic, and convey much in a few words. They reflect the patriotic spirit, the shrewd judgment, and the grim humour of the Scottish race, and in them at times we can hear 'the ringing of the Roman tread.'

The first place may well be given to the oldest fragment of Scottish poetry, the lines preserved by Wyntoun, in which, in the dark days that followed, the Scottish people lamented the accident that terminated the male line of the old Scoto-Celtic kings, under whom the realm had been consolidated and made much progress in prosperity:

Quhen Alysandyr oure king wes dede,
That Scotland led in luve and le,
Away wes sons off ale and brede,
Off wyne and wax, off gamyn and gle;
Oure gold wes changed into lede,
Cryst, borne into Virgynyté,
Succour Scotland and remede
That stad [is in] perplexyte.

The fierce hatred of the southern invader is embodied in three short verses, only preserved by chance out of many. The first was composed at the siege of Berwick in 1296:

What! wenys King Edward with longe shankys
To have wonne Berwyk, all our unthankys?
Gaas pyke him,
And when he hath it,
Gaas dyke him.

The second, says Fabian, was for long 'sungyn in daunces in carollis of ye maydens and mynstrellys of Scotlande to the reproofe and dysdane of Englyshmen':

Maidens of England, sore may ye morne,
For your lemmans ye have loste at Bannockisburne!
With heue a lowe.
What weneyth the king of Engelonde
So soone to have wonne Scotlande
With rum by lowe.

And the third was a satire on the southern neighbours made after the marriage of David II. to Joan of England, and posted on the church doors of York:

Long berdes haitles,
Painted hoodes witles,
Gay cotes graceles,
Maketh England thryftles.

The defence of Dunbar by Black Agnes, Countess of March, was celebrated in the minstrel's lines:

She kept a stir in town and trench,
That brawling, boisterous Scottish wench;
Came I early, came I late,
I found Agnes at the gate.

Home preserves a contemporary rhyme on that gallant warrior who 'loved better to hear the lark sing than the mouse squeak,' and who dared the might of England to catch him on 'the skirts of Cairntable:'

Gude Sir James Douglas
Who wise, wight, and worthy was,
Was never over glad for no winning,
Nor yet over sad for no tining,
Good fortune and evil chance,
He weighed both in one balance.

The great Earl of Mar and Lord of Duffel in Brabant, who defeated Donald of the Isles at Harlaw in 1411, is said to have been the author of the proverb, 'Hunger is the best sauce.' He was himself defeated by Donald Balloch at Inverlochy in 1431, and when fleeing through the wilds of Lochaber was thankful to get a little barley-meal from a widow woman, which he mixed with water and drank out of his shoe. He composed a Gaelic verse of which the translation is:

Hunger is a cook right good,
Woe to him who sneers at food;
Barley crowdie in my shoe,
The sweetest food I ever knew.

The horror of the Scottish people at the murder of King James I. was expressed in a current rhyme as emphatic as the Teutonic '*Gott strafe England!*'—

Robert Grahame
That slew our king—
God give him shame.

The days of 'the Douglas Wars,' when the House of Huntly received well-merited honours from the king 'for keeping the crown upon our heid,' provided the proverb, 'Half-done, as Elgin was burnt,' and are alluded to in two rhymes evidently composed by sympathisers with the falling Douglas fortunes. One records a temporary reverse, and the other probably the retribution that followed:

Where left thou thy men,
Thou Gordon so gay?
In the bog o' Dunkinty,
Mowing the hay.

The guele, the Gordon, and the hoodie craw
Are the three worst things that Moray ever saw.

The battle of Brechin, in which Huntly defeated the Earl of Crawford, originated the saying,

A Lindsay in green
Should never be seen,

the Lindsays having worn that colour on that disastrous day. The same colour is unlucky for the Sinclairs, for it is said that none of them who crossed the Ord of Caithness clad in it returned from the fatal field of Flodden. The wide spread of the Gordon name in the north-east of Scotland is recorded in the Aberdeenshire couplet:

By Bogie, Deveron, Don, and Dee,
The Gordons ha'e the guiding o't.

The battle of Glenlivet, in 1594, when Huntly and Erroll vanquished the might of Argyll, levied in the name of Church and king, not altogether to the monarch's dissatisfaction, who found some compensation in his reflection, 'Fair fa' ye, Geordie Gordon, for sending him hame some like a subject,' is associated with the Campbell saying: 'Far's the cry from Loch Awe, and help from the race o' Duine.' And the vengeance of that strong and gallant Stewart who was known as Donald of the Hammer on the Campbell Clan was commemorated in a popular Highland verse:

Donald of the Smithy, the Son of the Hammer,
Filled the banks of Loch Awe with mourning and clamour.

A south-country chronicler tells of a time when no one was safe in that region 'unless he were either a Douglas or a Douglas man;' and there was true Aberdonian caution in the advice, 'Ne'er misca' a Gordon in the Raws o' Strathbogie,' and perhaps sound judgment in the Morayshire rule, 'Speak well o' the Highlands, but dwell in the Laigh.'

The times of the caterans are responsible for 'Forth bridles the wild Highlandman,' and the rough-and-ready methods of the Borderers for characteristic expressions as 'a Lockerbie lick,' 'Jeddart justice—first hang a man and syne judge him,' and 'an Annandale end.'

Adieu, my brother Annan thieves
That helped me in my mischievis;
Adieu, Corsars, Nicksons, and Bells,
Oft have we fared through the fells,
With King correction be ye fangit,
Beleeve right sure ye will be hangit.

A couplet in similar strain proclaimed:

Comes Liddesdale's peace
When Armstrongs cease.

The strength of the great fortress of Tantallon, on the East Lothian coast, was such that achieving the impossible was symbolised in a popular catch, sung to the air of 'The Old Scots March:'

Ding doon Tantallon,
Mak' a brig to the Bass;

and the long range of Mons Meg, the great gun of Edinburgh Castle, is quaintly indicated and good advice inculcated in the lines:

Pouther me weel, an' keep me clean,
I'll carry a bullet to Peebles green.

The old tradition as to the surname of Leslie is embodied in:

Between the Less Lee and the mair
He slew the knight and left him there.

'The Robertson's stirrup-cup' keeps Atholl hospitality in memory; and the name of a famous arrow-maker and the best type of Highland bow are handed down in:

Bow from yew of Easragin,
Eagle feather from Loch Treig;
Yellow wax from Galway town,
Arrow-head by MacPhederan.

Not the fortunes of British administrations, but the last refuge of 'broken men' in olden days, is referred to in the proverbial comment: 'Ireland will be your hinder end.'

The struggles of the Reformation period afford one or two couplets of stern significance. After the fall of the Castle of St Andrews, when held by Norman Leslie and the other slayers of Cardinal Beaton, and the fate of the captives taken by the French allies of the Queen Regent had been settled, the common people made a song upon the event, of which the burden was:

Priests content ye now,
And Priests content ye now,
Since Norman and his company
Have filled the galleys fou.

The lines of Sir David Lindsay on the death of the Cardinal have been so often quoted, sometimes by those who do not recognise their historical origin, that they have almost attained to the character of a popular saying:

As for this Cardinal, I grant
He was a man we well might want,
God will forgive it soon;
But of a truth, the sooth to say,
Although the loon be well away,
The deed was foully done.

With this epitaph may be compared the French epigram upon another great ecclesiastical and patriotic statesman—Richelieu:

Chacun parle à son gré de ce grand Cardinal,
Pour moi je n'en dirai rien;
Il m'a fait trop de bien pour en dire du mal,
Il m'a fait trop de mal pour en dire du bien.

The haughty retort of the Earl Marischal, who founded Marischal College in Aberdeen, to those who shook their heads over the extent to which his family had been enriched by grants of the annexed Church lands was expressed in the inscription on buildings in Peterhead and on a tower on the lands of Deer:

Thay saye
Quhat saye thay;
Thay haif said,
Lat thaim saye.

But the subsequent misfortunes of the House of Keith verified the warning:

Meddle na with haly things;
For if ye dee,
A weird, I rede in some shape,
Shall follow thee.

The Thirty Years' War and the recruiting of Lord Reay's famous regiment for the service of 'the Lion of the North and Bulwark of the Protestant Religion' have left a reminiscence in the Gaelic Sutherland saying: 'Every man that is down in his luck will get a dollar from Mackay.'

The self-sacrifice of his foster-father and foster-brothers for the chief of the MacLeans in the battle with Cromwell's army at Inverkeithing has made proverbial the exclamation, 'Another for Hector,' as evidenced by Scott's use of it in *The Fair Maid of Perth*. The days of the Civil Wars are also recalled by the contrast depicted between the severe marches of Montrose and the predatory incursions of Lord Lewis Gordon at the head of 'Huntly's Highlandmen:'

If you with Lord Lewis go,
You'll get reif and prey eneuch;
If you with Montrose go,
You'll get grief and wae eneuch.

And the names not only of high commanders but of two gallant cavalry captains are remembered in:

Leslie for the kirk,
And Middleton for the king;
But ne'er a man can gi'e a knock
But Ross and Augustine.

The forgotten fortunes of 'fights fought long ago' are indicated in such names as 'The Bloody Butts of Lendrum,' in Aberdeenshire; and vague tradition of some prehistoric conflicts at Menmuir, in Forfarshire, lingers in the local saying:

Between the Blawart lap an' Killievair stanes
There lies mony bluidy banes.

A different order of things, and the political pre-eminence of two great Scottish families between the Revolution and the Reform Bill, are succinctly epitomised in the lines:

First came the men o' mony wimples,
Whom commonly folk ca' Dalrymples;
And after them came the Dundases,
Who rode our Lords and Lairds like asses.

This paper may be concluded with older traditions still which have some bearing on the vexed question of race in Scotland, and are not without relevance to recent parliamentary discussions on the recruiting for Scottish Highland and Lowland regiments. They are fragments saved from the lost verses of the old Gaelic bards, in which they record the traditionary descent of two Highland clans from the ancient Royal House of Celtic Scotland, that of Clan Alpin or the Macgregors from Kenneth Macalpin, the conqueror of the Picts, and that of the Clan Ferguson from Fergus, the founder of the original Scottish monarchy in Argyll, or Scottish Dalriada. The first, referring to the Macgregor, is preserved in a note to Macintosh's *Gaelic Proverbs:*

Sliochd nan righibh duthchasach
'Bha shios 'an Dun-s-a-da-innis,
Aig an robh crun na h' Alb 'o thus,
S'aig am feil duthchas flathasd ris.

Children of the native kings
Who reigned down at Dunstaffnage;
Who first the crown of Alban owned,
And still have native right to it.

Of the Clan Ferguson another bard says:

Sliochd nam fear nach robh cearbach,
Thanaig sios 'o Righ Fhearghuis,
A righich air Albain 'o thus.

Sons of the men who never were unready,
Who descended down from King Fergus,
The first king who reigned over Alban.

M'Gregor, in his *Oran nan Fineachan*, has:

Ach com an leiginn dearmad air
Clann Fhearghuis nan garbh thurn;
Sliochd a cheud Righ Albanaich
A chun air coir's na garbh-chriochan;
Mar leamhuim chalma gharga iad,
Nuair dh' fhalbadh iad le surd,
Clogaid, sleaghs, lurach-mhallach
Sud bhu ac' 'o thus.

And wherefore would I now forget
Clan Fergus of the brave deeds;
Descendants of the first King of Alban,
Who defended our rights to our mountain-land;
Like a lion strong and fierce are they,
When they march on with glee;
A helmet, spear, and coat of mail
Was what they had of old.

It is a curious and interesting historical fact that in the days when the Macgregors were harried, and their name proscribed by Act of Parliament, wherever the Clan Ferguson were numerous in the Highlands men of their name are found in the lists of those 'fyned for resetting the Clan Gregor.'

These quaint fragments of lost verse, rhymes, and epigrammatic sayings give life and colour to the dry bones of the past, occasionally flash an illuminating beam into prehistoric ages, and illustrate, in a way that formal narrative cannot, national sentiment, clan feeling, and local patriotism.

BEYOND THE VEIL.

THEY tell me your emancipated soul
Oft hovers near to comfort and inspire;
That death is but the portal—not the goal—
Of that far country of the heart's desire.
They also tell me you would speak with me
If I had ears to hear your spirit-voice;
That could my earth-dimmed eyes but clearly see,
I might again behold you and rejoice!
If this be so, why wander I in doubt,
With senses dulled and faith so nearly dry,
Mingling with those who ignorantly flout
At such a creed? Alas! I know not why.
I can but hope that when the shadows fall
My failing ear may hear your loving call.

W. FORDYCE CLARK.

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SOME FALLACIES ABOUT EDITORS.

By One of Them.

PERHAPS the commonest is the misconception about the Editor's functions. Very many people seem to be quite unaware of the existence of a manager, a publisher, or a cashier. Any sort of communication is addressed to the Editor. Does the proprietor of the village shop at Drumtochty wish to add the *Daily Grumbler* to his stock? He writes to the Editor. Does Mrs Gummidge, who keeps a boarding-house at Slocum-on-Sea, desire to advertise her eligible apartments? She writes to the Editor. People even write to him for back-numbers. I believe it is no uncommon thing at the *Times* office to receive a letter like this addressed to Lord Northcliffe: 'I understand you had in the *Times* of last Thursday an article on the Yorkshire coal trade. Please send me a copy. Twopence in stamps enclosed.' It is needless to say that Lord Northcliffe does not sit at the receipt of custom, dropping coppers into the till and addressing newspaper wrappers. Nor, as a matter of fact, is Lord Northcliffe the Editor; but the moral of the incident is the same—that the public identifies the paper with the man on it who bulks most largely in its eye, and that in nine cases out of ten is the Editor. People have as hazy a conception of the functions of a publisher as of a stevedore; but the Editor is a familiar and friendly figure, and they calmly hold him ultimately responsible for all the varied activities of a newspaper office. Perhaps it would be unkind to disturb an illusion which has, in many cases, little correspondence to reality.

Another deep-rooted fallacy is that the Editor is in perpetual want of things 'to fill up.' I suppose the popular picture of an Editor is of a distracted man who comes to the office about seven in the evening without an idea as to how his columns are to be filled next morning, trusting that some kindly Providence will come along during the evening with a sufficient supply of battles and tragedies and law-cases to enable the paper to come out. He is growing desperate when, by the last post, arrives Mr C. Scribendi's article on the state of politics in Patagonia. With muttered thanks to a merciful Providence, he grasps the manuscript and rushes it to the printer; and the readers of the *Morning Molehill* are spared the humiliation of finding a vacant column on the back page next morning. No, Editors do not live on casual manna in the wilderness like that. They are not in want of copy, not even in what used to be called the 'silly season' till the war had reduced all the months of the year to a dead-level of wisdom. If you ever have anything to send to an Editor, do not send it from eleemosynary motives, 'to fill up an odd corner.' Well-conducted newspapers do not have odd corners.

Another erroneous conception of the Editor is largely entertained by ladies on charitable committees, to whom an Editor is a nice old gentleman who sits at a desk with a pen behind his ear, waiting to write down nice little paragraphs for every caller with an axe to grind, especially an axe she is grinding gratuitously. The sober fact that in most large newspaper offices the Editor either does not write at all or writes less than almost anybody else on the staff is one which they flatly refuse to credit. So they would the fact that as soon as their backs are turned he passes over their 'story' to the junior reporter, probably with imprecations, and certainly without any trace of the enthusiasm which would be expected of one in his position.

And this touches what is probably the most widespread of all errors concerning Editors: that he welcomes visitors. There is probably no such rooted misanthropist in the world as the Editor. Visitors are the plague of his life, especially those who think themselves important, and who really are so important that they cannot be handed over to a subordinate. They take up valuable time and pay no attention to printed placards urging brevity of discourse. Their requests are frequently absurd or impossible, and their manners vary between blandishment and intimidation. The telephone is nowhere a greater boon than in newspaper offices; and yet one of the commonest of telephone messages is from people with paragraphs, who think they can best promote their object by coming to 'see the Editor,' not because they have anything more to say to him than can be sent by letter, but simply, as they think, to secure his good graces. It is a dreadful mistake. The people an Editor likes best are, as a rule, those whom he sees least, whether proprietors, contributors, or readers.

As a matter of fact, most Editors are disappointing when you meet them. One's abstract

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concept of an Editor is so influenced by the tradition of dignity and omniscience that the revelation of an average human being is bound to be a disillusionment. His journal is so full of varied information, he so clearly shares all the State secrets with the Censor, he reproves (or encourages) Governments with so stern and unrelenting a vigilance, that it is incredible he should be made of the same clay as the ordinary ignoramus. The belief in his wisdom is quite touching. Morning after morning letters arrive in quest of the most curious and miscellaneous scraps of knowledge: what was *really* the cause of the *débâcle* in Roumania; whether it is true that the Crown Prince is bigamously married to Miss Higginson of Buffalo, N.Y.; how many more acres there are in Yorkshire than letters in the Bible; what is the best way of softening the plates of false teeth. Legal and domestic problems of the most intimate sort are laid before him for his arbitrament; and I have even known an entirely secular Editor consulted by one in trouble about the state of his soul.

All letters are not so flattering, and few ideas about an Editor are so baseless as that he is susceptible to letters of abuse. He is far too habituated to them; and he is much more likely to think that he has failed in his duty if his letter-bag does not contain a certain proportion of scurrility. Most of these are founded upon childish errors; but, as they are usually anonymous, it is impossible to make the necessary correction. The rest are either ill-temper or political mania, which used to be a very common form of epistolary hydrophobia. It is curious that so many of these critics are periodical in their ululations. One would think they would give up a paper which apparently caused them so much anguish of spirit; but no, they keep the pricks in order that they may have the meagre satisfaction of kicking against them.

The Editor is in his way a scapegoat. Though, as I have said, he as a rule writes little himself, he is held responsible for every word in his paper, and readers do not fail to call him to account for the misdemeanours of the sub-editor, or the reporter, or even of the printer. One well-known paper has quite lost caste with the musical world because of its proof-reader's habit of regarding 'Brahms' as the possessive case of a composer called 'Brahm,' and because it once mentioned a sonata by Beethoven in D sharp. An Editor, of course, exercises a general supervision over the paper; but it is physically impossible for him to study every line of it, and to check from his own knowledge the accuracy of every paragraph submitted by every correspondent or every item of news transmitted by a news agency. Many thousands of people all over the world are engaged, directly and indirectly, in the production of every daily paper published in this country; and the remarkable thing is that in all the circumstances the average margin of error is so small.

Editors, like Prime Ministers and Generals in the field, are supposed to require no holidays. This is especially the case with those Editors who have a personality not wholly merged in their paper. One recalls the comedy which occurred recently when, in the temporary absence of the Editor of a well-known London paper, the editorial gap was filled with an article markedly different in tone from the customary pronouncement. In response to the outcry, it had to be explained in the remaining issues of the hiatus that the article in question was supplied by a contributor in the absence of the Editor. As a rule, greater precautions are taken to preserve consistency; but most newspapers can tell tales of dilemmas and embarrassments caused by the paper's taking one line when the Editor is at home, and another, through inadvertence, when he is away.

And thereby hangs the whole problem of editorial psychology—a complicated psychology somewhere between that of a human being with a soul and that of a limited company without one. What are the contributing causes when a paper changes its opinions—say on Ireland, or Tariffs, or Woman Suffrage? The cases are few in which it is simply a matter of individual judgment. As a rule there are several people to be consulted, proprietors as well as Editor (there have been cases, strange though it may seem, where the Editor was overruled); and the probability must be considered of the contemplated change being acceptable to the readers. Not many papers were so rash (and not many so peculiarly situated in respect of the unity of proprietorial and editorial responsibility) as to start a campaign of denunciation against Lord Kitchener at a time when he was still the idol of the man in the street. So the relations of an Editor to his own policy are not always so direct and simple a matter as might appear. Not, of course, that any conscientious Editor will professionally advocate a policy of which he disapproves personally; but the policy, as announced, may be subject to reservations and qualifications which are not present to the mind of the Editor as an individual. The distinction is not peculiar to Editors. A man may say one thing of Mr Winston Churchill to his wife, but if he has to write an article on him for the *Fortnightly Review* he will choose a different, and possibly a suaver, form of words.

It is possible, too, to exaggerate the interest for Editors of a good cause, as such. So many people are apt to think that if they have invented a new sort of Garden City, or started a society for supplying hot-water bottles for the natives of Uganda, or have discovered how to live happily off boiled bracken and onion sauce, it is the immediate duty of every newspaper to place its columns at their disposal. But a newspaper is a commercial and not a philanthropic undertaking; and the Editor's business is not to bring about

more of the Millennium than is compatible with a sound balance-sheet. It may seem a hard saying, but an Editor's concern is just as much to please his readers as a grocer's is to please his customers. He is compelled, therefore, to balance the ethical with the 'interesting,' and to bear in mind (if he is the Editor of an evening paper) that a case of wife-beating may thrill his readers where the destitution of Borrioboolah-Gha may leave them cold. You have no more right to blame an Editor in the circumstances than you have to blame a bookseller who sells a Nat Gould novel to a youth who would obviously be the better for one of the works of the late Samuel Smiles.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XI.—*continued.*

'IS that all?' said Spike, smoothing out the paper and scowling at the long columns headed 'Youths Wanted.'

'Ye-es, I think so.'

'But you an' him 's always meetin' on the stair, ain't—aren't you?'

'You should say "you and he," dear.'

'Well, but aren't you?'

'We have met—once or twice.'

'D' ye like him?'

'Well, he 's so very—different! And rather lazy! And awfully sleepy! And yet I don't think he 's sleepy really, somehow.'

'Sleepy!' exclaimed Spike. 'Well, I guess not! Lazy I dunno, but he sure is all to the wide-awake-o. When he looks sleepiest I guess he 's widest awake. And he ain't a — isn't a bad looker, is he?'

'He has nice eyes,' Hermione admitted.

'Oh, I don't mean his eyes!' quoth Spike disgustedly. 'I mean his arms an' legs an' shoulders.'

'They are nice and wide,' nodded Hermione.

'I should like t' see Geoff in th' ring. He 'd strip big.'

'Oh, really,' said Hermione, taking a very large apron from the table drawer. 'Boy dear, I do wish you weren't always thinking of fighting.'

'All right, Hermy dear. But there ain't no flies on Geoff. 'N' say, I wantcher to like him, 'cause I kinder think he 's all to the cream-puffs an''——

'Boy!' cried Hermione, lifting an admonishing finger.

'I 'm sorry; my tongue kinder slipped, Hermy. But I have been tryin' t' keep tabs on me talk—honest, I have.'

'Yes, dear. You haven't been quite so frightful lately.'

'Ye see, Hermy, you 're different. You went to a swell school, an''——

'And you never did; I know, dear. But, oh, Arthur, I did the best I could!'

'And a lot better than I deserved,' said he, reaching out to pat her hand caressingly. 'When I get a good job I 'll stay in nights an' study hard like you want me to. I sure will.'

'Yes, dear, and you 'll soon be heaps cleverer than I am,' said she, stooping to kiss his curly head as she tied the apron about her shapely hips, and thereafter, giving him a smiling nod, vanished into the kitchen, while Spike laboured through the long columns headed 'Youths Wanted.' And presently, as she moved light-footed to and fro in the kitchen, he heard her singing softly to herself an old, old song of other days that had often been his lullaby when he was a small, motherless armful of sleepiness hushed in her young protecting clasp.

'Arthur!' she called.

'Hello!' he answered.

'Are you hungry?'

'You bet I am!'

A long pause, whereafter ensued the following conversation between kitchen and parlour:

Hermione—'Boy dear!'

Spike—'Hello!'

Hermione—'Be a dear and lay the cloth for me.'

Spike—'Right-o!'

A longer pause, during which Spike rises and takes cloth from sideboard drawer.

Hermione—'Arthur!'

Spike—'Yes?'

Hermione—'Where did you meet him?'

Spike (starting)—'Who?'

Hermione—'Mr Geoffrey. How did you happen to meet each other?'

Another pause, while Spike stands frowning in perplexed thought.

Spike—'Where did you say the cloth was?'

Hermione—'In the sideboard drawer. How long have you known him?'

Spike (beginning to lay the cloth feverishly)—'Oh, a goodish time. Say, Hermy, he sure likes your name a whole lot!'

Hermione—'Oh!' (a very small pause) 'likes my name, does he?'

Spike—'He sure does. He told me so.'

Hermione—'Oh!' (another small pause) 'just what did he say, boy dear?'

Spike—'He said it was Greek an' very beautiful, an' then I said it kind o' fitted you, because you were aces up on the face an' figure question.'

A rush of petticoats, and enter Hermione, flushed and laughing. 'You dear boy!' she cried, 'for that you shall be kissed!' which he was forthwith; after which she turned to the mirror to smooth back a shining tress of hair—

that same rebellious curl that glistened above her fine black eyebrow. 'Where did you say you first met him—Mr Geoffrey?' she inquired suddenly, still busied with the rebellious curl.

Spike started, and glanced uneasily at her shapely back. 'Say, Hermy,' said he, a little huskily, 'have you got anythin' for supper?'

'Not much, dear, I'm afraid.'

'That's a pity!'

'Why?'

'Oh, because I asked him in to supper.'

'You asked Mr Geoffrey—here?' she gasped.

'Surest thing you know. Ye see, I thought you was stayin' over at Englewood.'

'Oh Arthur,' she sighed, 'and there are only two wretched little chops! And not a bit of butter! And the rent's due to-morrow—I can't spare a cent—and me in this shabby old gown! And you broke the best teapot!'

'Sounds kind of gay an' festive,' sighed Spike ruefully. 'But don't worry about the eats, dear. Geoff won't mind, an' he'll never notice your old gown.'

'He seems to notice a great deal,' said Hermione doubtfully, as she hastily untied the big apron; 'and, besides—oh, gracious goodness!' she cried as a knock sounded at the front-door, 'you must let him in, Arthur; and don't let him know I'm changing my gown.' Saying which, she vanished into her bedroom, while Spike hastened to the door.

'Why, hello, Tony!' he exclaimed, 'what's wrong now?'

'My lil Pietro,' cried the Italian excitedly, 'he no sleep; he burn-a, burn-a all-a da time—all-a da time cry! You tell you sis—she come-a like-a da las' time, den he no cry-a'—— But here Tony broke off to flourish his hat and bow gracefully as he caught sight of Hermione herself. 'Ah, signorina!' he cried, 'my lil Pietro he seeck. You please-a come see my lil Pietro? He flush-a, he cry, he all-a da fire! He burn-a, burn-a like-a da fire! You so good, so generosa—you come see my lil Pietro?'

'Why, of course I will,' said Hermione in her calm, soft voice. 'Poor little mite—is he feverish?'

'*Si, si*, signorina,' answered the anxious young father; 'he burn-a, burn-a all-a da time.'

'Reach me the aconite, boy dear. Yes, that's it.'

'But what about supper, Hermy?' queried Spike wistfully.

'Oh, well—finish laying the table. I'll be back as soon as ever I can, dear.'

'Oh gee!' sighed Spike, as their footsteps died away down the stairs, 'she sure is keen on knowin' how I met Geoff. And if she ever finds out'—— Spike cowered down into a chair, and, clasping his head between his hands, sat thus a long while, staring moodily at the floor, striving for a way out of the difficulty. He was yet wrestling with this knotty problem when he started, to hear muffled knocks at the front-door, which, being opened, disclosed the object of his thoughts. 'Why, Geoff,' he cried gladly, 'I thought you warn't comin'. Say, what you got there?' he inquired, for Ravenslee's arms were filled with sundry packages and parcels.

'Come and see,' said Ravenslee mysteriously. 'Catch this one before I drop it.'

'Why—hello!' said Spike, sniffing at the package in question as he led the way into the parlour, 'it smells good. It sniffs like—holy gee, it's a roast turkey! And—oh, say, Geoff—she's a beaut'!'

'Precisely what Mr Pffeffenfifer assured me,' said Ravenslee, depositing his other burdens on the table. 'Mr Pffeffenfifer is a man educated in eats, a food fancier, an artist of the appetite. Mr Pffeffenfifer is fat and soulful. Mr Pffeffenfifer nearly wept tears over the virtues of that bird—pledged his immortal soul for its tenderness, vowed by all the gods it had breast enough for twins. Mr Pffeffenfifer seemed so passionately attached to that bird that I feared he meant to keep it to gloat over in selfish secrecy. But no, base coin seduced him, did the trick, and—here it is. Also, we have a loaf!' and from beneath one arm Ravenslee dropped a package that resolved itself into a Vienna roll. 'Also, ham'——

'Hey, Geoff,' said Spike in awe-struck tones, 'are all these eats?'

'Certainly. I should have brought more if I could have carried 'em.'

'More?'

'Most decidedly. When I buy eats, my lad, I buy everything in sight that looks worth while—if Mr Pffeffenfifer sells. Mr Pffeffenfifer sells in such a soulfully seductive way that eats acquire virtues above and beyond their own base selves—Mr Pffeffenfifer can infuse soul into a sausage. Behold now, eats the most alluring. See, what's this? Ah yes, here we have—item: Salmi, redolent of garlic; here again a head cheese, succulent and savoury; here's ham, most ravishingly pink; and a Camembert cheese.'

'But, Jiminy Christmas, you bought such a lot of each. Who's goin' t' eat all these?'

'We, of course!'

'But we can't eat 'em all,' sighed Spike.

'Can't we?' said Ravenslee, beginning to view the quantity of the numerous viands with dubious eyes. 'They do seem rather a lot now I see 'em all together. But I'm ravenous, and if we can't manage 'em we'll find some one who can.'

'Ye see, Geoff, I sha'n't be able t' eat any o' the rest when I'm through with the turk'!' sighed Spike a little reproachfully. 'My, but I'm hungry! Strange, how hungry cold turkey makes a guy!'

'Why, then,' said Ravenslee, pitching his hat into a corner, 'sit down, comrade, and "let

mirth with unconfined wing"'—— Ravenslee yawned.

'I guess we 'd better wait a bit, Geoff.'

'What for?'

'Hermy.'

'Is she—d' you mean she 's back?' inquired Ravenslee, sitting up.

'Yes. She didn't stay at Englewood; she 's downstairs, doctoring Tony's kid.'

'But what will she think of all these confounded messes?'

'Messes!' cried Spike indignantly. 'Cheese it, Geoff—look at that turk'!'

'But—do you think she 'll mind?' inquired Ravenslee uneasily.

'Mind?' said Spike, staring. 'Not on your life. Why should she? Besides, it 's kind o' lucky you happened to blow in with this free lunch; she 's a bit shy on the dollar question this month—an' Mulligan comes t'-morrow. An', oh, say, Geoff—she 's dead set on findin' out how I met you, an'—an' where.'

'Very naturally,' murmured Ravenslee.

'An' we must tell her somethin'; but what?'

'Spike, you 've forgotten the mustard. And as for—er—lying to your sister, let our motto be "sufficient unto the day." Our present need is mustard, Spike.'

'Say, this sure is goin' t' be some supper, Geoff!' said Spike, setting on the mustard and gazing at the array of edibles with shining eyes. 'Gee, I could eat cold turkey all night!'

'Have we everything ready, Spike?'

'Except butter, Geoff.'

'Ha! the one thing I forgot, of course. Cut off and get some, like the good fellow you are;' and Ravenslee flicked a bill into Spike's hand, who, seizing his cap, promptly vanished. Being alone, Ravenslee crossed to the sideboard, and, taking thence a certain photo, seated himself in the easy-chair and fell to studying it with deep and grave attention. And sitting thus, he let fancy run riot—and fancy was singularly pleasing, to judge by the glow in his eyes and the tender smile that curved his lip.

He was lost deep within his dreams when he was aware of a loud knock upon the outer door, which Spike had left unlatched, and, setting by the photo, he rose. 'Come in!' said he.

A heavy step sounded in the little hall, the door was pushed open, and a man entered. He was a young man, big and broad-shouldered, and Ravenslee's keen eyes were quick to heed the length and ponderous carriage of the arms, the girth of chest, and firm, heavy poise of the face; lastly, he looked at the face, aggressively handsome, with its dominating nose and chin, and blue eyes shaded by thick lashes, that looked out beneath heavy brows—a comely-seeming face from the dark, close-cropped hair to the deep cleft in the strong, fleshy chin.

But now, beneath Ravenslee's persistent regard, the full-curved shapely lips grew slowly into a cruel,-down-trending line, the nostrils expanded, while the blue eyes narrowed to shining slits beneath quick-scowling, black brows. For a long moment the two men stared at each other eye to eye; then, in a hoarse, assertive tone, the new-comer spoke.

'What ye doin' here? Who are ye?'

Mr Ravenslee sat down and began to fill his pipe.

'Where 's de kid?'

Mr Ravenslee brushed stray grains of tobacco from his knee with elaborate care.

'Hey, you—where 's Spike—'n' what you doin' here anyway?'

Mr Ravenslee glanced up casually. 'And pray, who the devil may you be pleased to be?' he inquired.

'Me name 's M'Ginnis.'

'Oh, indeed!'

'Yes—indeed! Bud M'Ginnis—is that good 'nuff for ye?'

'Well, since you ask,' said Ravenslee, shaking a languid head, 'I should scarcely class you as a "bud" myself. No, I should say you were perhaps just a trifle—er—overblown. But have it your own way!' and Mr Ravenslee smiled engagingly.

'Where 's Spike?' demanded M'Ginnis, his tone a little gruffer. 'An' say—you can cut out the comedy, see? Nix on the funny business'——

'You are a pessimist, I presume, Mr Flowers?'

'Where 's de kid? Speak up now—where is he?'

'Also, your conversation grows a little monotonous, Mr Flowers.'

M'Ginnis stared, then shot out his big chin viciously. 'What you doin' in Hermy's flat, eh?'

Mr Ravenslee's brows wrinkled slightly, but his soft voice grew softer, as, pausing in the act of lighting his pipe, he answered, 'On the whole, I think you are a rather—er—unpleasant young man, so suppose you—er—go.'

'What! Go? Are ye tryin' t' tell me t' go?'

'I 'm suggesting that you—er—crank up the machine, Mr Flowers, and beat it while the going 's good!'

M'Ginnis clenched his fist and took a threatening step toward Ravenslee, then checked and stood breathing heavily.

'May I further suggest,' said Ravenslee in his pleasantest voice, 'that you look in again—say next Thursday fortnight, Mr Flowers?'

'T' hell with you—me name 's M'Ginnis.'

'Of course, you might leave a message, Mr Flowers.'

'Now, see here, you,' said M'Ginnis, his words coming thick with passion, 'I wanter know, first, where Spike is. An' then I wanter know who you are. An' then I wanter know what you 're after in Hermy Chesterton's flat—an' you 're sure goin' t' tell me!'

'Am I?'

'You sure are!'

Mr Ravenslee opened the match-box. 'Seems a pity to shake a confidence so sublime,' he sighed, 'and yet'——

'An' see here again! I've known Hermy since we was kids, an' I don't allow no man t' come stampin' around here—see? So you're goin' t' quit, an' you're goin' t' quit right now!'

'Do I look like a quitter, Mr Flowers?'

Now beholding the speaker's lazy assurance of pose, the contemptuous indifference of his general air, M'Ginnis stood speechless a moment, his clenched fists quivering, while, above the loosely tied scarf, his powerful neck seemed to swell and show knotted cords that writhed and twisted, and when at last he spoke his words came in a panting rush. 'This is Hermy's flat, an' I guess—you think you're safe here; but you ain't! I'm thinkin' out which 'll do th' least harm to her furniture—to lick ye here, or drag you out on to the landin' first!'

Mr Ravenslee lounged lower in the arm-chair, and yawned behind the box of matches. And in that moment, like a maddened animal, M'Ginnis leapt upon him, and, striking no blow, seized and shook Ravenslee in powerful, frantic hands, while from between his lips, curled back from big, white teeth, came a continuous vicious hissing sound.

'I'll wake ye up,' he panted. 'Come out—come out, I say. Oh, I'll wake ye up when I get ye outside, I guess. Come out! What you doin' in Hermy's flat? By God! I'll choke ye till ye tell me!' and his hands came upon Ravenslee's throat—came to be met there by two other hands that, closing upon his wrists, wrenched and twisted viciously in opposite directions, and, loosing his hold, M'Ginnis fell back, staring down at bruised and lacerated skin where oozed a few slow drops of blood.

'And now,' said Ravenslee, rising, 'after you, Mr Flowers; let us by all means step outside, where we will each earnestly endeavour to pitch the other downstairs. Personally, I shall do my very damnedest, for really I don't—no, I do not—like you, Mr Flowers; you need some one to tread on you a little. Step outside, and let *me* try.'

But now, while M'Ginnis stared from his swelling, bloody wrists to Ravenslee's face—a face quite as fierce and determined as his own—steps were heard, and Spike's voice called, 'Hermy come in yet, Geoff?'

'Not yet, but our friend Mr Flowers has dropped in—socially, I fancy.'

'Mr who?' inquired Spike at the door; but, beholding M'Ginnis, he paused there, staring aghast. 'Why, hello, Bud,' said he nervously, 'what's wrong?'

'Nothin' much yet, kid; only it's kinder lucky for this guy as you happened in. Who is he? What's he doin' here?'

'He's only a friend o' mine, Bud, an' he's all right; 'n' say'——

'Tell him t' beat it.'

'But ye see, Bud'——

'Tell him as we don't want his kind around here, or'——

'Spike, did you bring in the butter?' inquired Ravenslee, serenely unconscious of M'Ginnis.

'Yes, here it is, Geoff; but say'——

'It doesn't feel much,' said Ravenslee, weighing the package in his hand.

'It's half a pound. But say, here's Bud; he says you're to'——

'My Spike, I'll trouble you for the butter-dish—thanks!' and, turning away, Ravenslee busied himself at the table, whistling softly the while.

'But, Geoff, this is Bud!' cried the lad, glancing from one to the other in an agony of suspense. 'Oh, don't ye know this is Bud M'Ginnis?'

'Ah, still here, is he?' said Ravenslee without looking round.

'See here, kid,' growled M'Ginnis, 'you tell your friend t' clear out, an' t' do it real quick, see. You tell him if he ain't out in two minutes I'll run him out meself.'

'Spike, this butter is nearly oil.'

'Oh Geoff,' groaned the boy, 'you've got to go; here's Bud'——

'Why, then, Spike, tell him to—er—chase himself; I'm busy.'

Came the sound of a chair set roughly aside, and a shrill cry from Spike, 'My God, Bud, don't—look out, Geoff!'

But, as M'Ginnis came, Ravenslee turned swiftly, ducked the expected blow, and swinging his fist up beneath his assailant's extended arm, smote him hard and true upon the elbow; and Spike, staring pale and wide of eye, saw that arm fall and dangle helplessly at M'Ginnis's side, while his face was contorted with sharp agony.

'My God, Geoff! what you done to him?'

'Pins and needles, Spike, that's all. A hoary old trick, but useful now and then. Mr Flowers isn't so very wide awake as folk seem to think. You see, it wouldn't have done to knock him out here; he might have upset the table.'

'Knock out Bud!' cried Spike, aghast. 'But there ain't nobody can lick Bud M'Ginnis.'

'Oh, I don't know, Spike. Anyway, we'll see what can be done outside. After you, Mr Flowers. Pray go first, Mr Flowers. A fellow who would attack a man sitting down isn't to be trusted behind one; so, after you, Mr Flowers. Oh, we'll wait until you can use your arm, but we'll wait outside. Miss Chesterton's flat is no place for your sort; so, out with you, and quick, d'ye hear?'

M'Ginnis opened his lips to retort, but passion choked him; and, snarling unintelligibly, he turned and strode out upon the landing.

(*Continued on page 179.*)

THE GERMAN MENACE TO NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

By EDWARD PERRY (New Jersey).

WILL America's next great war be over the Monroe Doctrine?

The basic cause of most great wars has been the desire to control sources of the necessaries of life. Really great leaders of nations know that he who can control the food of the world can make all men his slaves.

Some parts of the Old World are already fully populated; other parts are infertile or inclement; some parts, again, are held by Powers so strong that attempt to seize them would be unprofitable. The occupation of parts of France and of Belgium, for instance, has already involved a cost frightful beyond the wildest dreams of three years ago.

South America spreads wide under equatorial skies, and narrows almost evenly as it approaches the cold Antarctic; therefore the two vast oceans temper the winds, so that the country has no such long months of ice as are common at a corresponding latitude in North America. The major part of South America will thus become the most productive area of its size in any quarter of the globe. Two of the largest river systems of the world afford easy access from the Atlantic to nearly every part of this rich field. Other large streams reach far into the continent. Together these waterways make easy and inexpensive the marketing of products of most of the countries there without the cost of constructing and maintaining great railway systems. This field has been, naturally, a great temptation to European Powers. A compact these Powers made a hundred years ago led the republics of the New World to bind themselves together to resist such encroachment. The declaration of the purpose of this compact is known as the Monroe Doctrine, which embodies the principle of non-interference with South American Governments by any European Power. Such interference would be regarded as an unfriendly act by the United States. Despite this announcement, European empire-builders and European monarchies have from time to time tried to wrest parts of their territory from South American nations.

The American attitude is: 'We should be glad to have the friendship of all other peoples, and their trade if they will give it on fair terms. What we don't want is to manage their affairs for them, or for them to interfere in ours.' That the American people really adhere to such a principle is shown by their refusal to take any part of Cuba in return for freeing the island from control by Spain; or to accept payment in any form for helping to induce European Powers to abandon claims to the territory of Honduras, Nicaragua, Colombia, of Venezuela and islands of the Antilles; or to occupy permanently any part of Mexico, great as the provocation has been to do so.

While the Americans gave such proof of aversion to conquest of other states, the people of Great Britain seem to have been approaching a like feeling, if a majority of them had not reached it, before the present war began. If they are of that mind they are far in advance of millions of their near neighbours.

When the most tremendous of all wars is at an end, the world may then be so tired of war that the millions of armed men will be restored to peaceful work. But what assurance have we that none of the warring Powers will not turn their ready forces to seizing possessions that would compensate for losses the war has already brought to them? America has such possessions, perhaps the most tempting ever known. What Power is most likely to attempt to seize them? Russia has always shown a most friendly feeling toward the United States, even when American popular sentiment appeared to be favourable to Japan, mainly because the island nation was thought to be the weaker of the two. But Russia has area and natural resources enough to give profitable employment to her people for centuries. She needs no more territory. France also has been always the steadfast friend of America. She has sufficient territory to give new homes and employment to her surplus population for generations. Moreover, racial sympathies have made the French and the Italians most welcome to Latin-America, and they have ever been welcomed to the United States. Spain and Portugal, for linguistic and traditional reasons, send emigrants freely to South and Central America, and in addition they have possessions of their own in Africa to absorb their capital, energy, and people. Belgium, with a great colony in Central Africa to develop, has no wish or inducement to go farther afield. Japan may have more urgent need than has any other Old World Power for additional room for expansion; but China, Korea, and other parts of Asia seem to offer a vast field in which the Japanese interests may expand peacefully, and with far more profit than any attempt against America would probably give.

We have been told that British statesmen inspired the Monroe Doctrine. Great Britain has respected it, even when zealous empire-builders violated the doctrine. The people of Great Britain and of the United States have long been in agreement on the basic principles of the rights of humanity, on ideals of honour, and on the essentials of government. They are also in agreement on questions of world policy. This may account in part for the hatred toward the Americans shown by so many Germans—

hatred second only to that expressed toward the British. It may be contended that they have more than once given cause for this feeling. Americans 'called the bluff' of the German squadron at Manila. Americans checkmated German intrigues for seizing Haiti and Santo Domingo. American and British influence prevented Germans from monopolising the Orinoco River. Americans kept Zelaya from delivering to Germans the railroads and the canal zone of Nicaragua. American influence deterred Costa Rica from granting to Germans a canal zone parallel and close to that of Nicaragua. Americans kept Germany from taking the Isla Margarita from Venezuela. Americans cut off the German trade in munitions for Huerta of Mexico, and arrested Germans for furnishing munitions to rebel factions in northern Mexico. Americans have been ready to supply munitions to the Allies—supplies that Germany found herself unable to carry home for her own use against those Allies because of their command of the sea. America denounced the use of submarines against unarmed non-combatants, men, women, and children, as too frightful for any but the lowest savages.

For years the Germans have complained that the Americans uphold a dog-in-the-manger policy; that they will neither take possession of Latin-American countries themselves nor let others do so. To this extent the Americans may have kept Germany from 'taking her place in the sun' of tropical America. So bitterness of feeling against the American nation was strengthened. An idea of the intensity of this hatred may be got from the fact that it caused war to be made treacherously on unarmed workers in shops well within the territory of the United States while the country was at peace with Germany, was giving shelter to millions of Germans, including the cowards who thus blew up men, women, and children, and guaranteeing to the Germans freedom to live and do any lawful business in the United States. It may be that the German Empire is not responsible for any of these acts of treachery and murder. It may not be responsible for declarations like that attributed to a professor of a public school of New York, to the effect that 'if war comes because the American Government demands that we stop using our U-boats, our most effective weapon, we Germans in New York will destroy the city! Enough of us here are ready to do it in a day!'

In relation to probable raids on the territorial and other rights of the New World, evidence volunteered by Germans of high standing in the employ of the Empire is abundant and conclusive. One of these witnesses, Baron von Stengel, an authority on international law and a professor of the University of Munich, is reported to have written lately to the Dutch Pacifist League: 'The whole course of this war up to the present has shown that we Germans have been chosen by Providence, from among all other peoples, to march at the head of all civilised nations, and lead them, under our protection, toward assured peace; for we have not only the power and force necessary for this mission, but we possess the spiritual gifts also to the highest degree; and in all creation it is we who constitute the crown of civilisation. Therefore it is superfluous to discuss pacifist plans of any nature. The nations, and especially the neutral nations, have only one means for leading a profitable existence. It is to submit to our guidance, which is superior from every point of view.' Was not that warning directed to all New World nations, and expressly and particularly to the United States?

As to designs against the peace of these nations, Professor William Romaine Newbold, of the University of Pennsylvania, has written about revelations by an Austrian army officer with whom he became well acquainted. This officer told the professor that the conquest of the United States and Canada was scheduled for the near future. 'He thought that I myself, then about forty-six years old, would live to see this conquest completed, and the English language stamped out in North America. There existed a strong organisation of Germans throughout the North American continent, the object of which was to keep alive German *Kultur* and allegiance, and to stab us in the back when the attack upon the country was made.'

Perhaps, naturally, Professor Newbold was amused by these predictions, as showing fanatical faith in Prussian mightiness. He so described them to a German 'who had long been in the diplomatic service, so I was told, who spoke English as well as I did, and was thoroughly conversant with American conditions, having been long in Washington. I told him something of Lieutenant ——'s ideas, as an illustration of the extremes to which patriotism, when not regulated by intelligence, would carry a man. To my surprise, he replied in effect, "I see nothing extravagant in all that. Nothing counts nowadays except brains. We Germans have them, and the rest of you haven't. I don't say that we shall conquer the entire earth; but I do say that we shall conquer as much of it as we please, and you can't prevent it. Try it if you dare!"'

Were we to ignore these and similar warnings, we of the Western World might be as astoundingly stupid as we think the Germans were foolish to utter them. We might think that no sane person would so betray such designs had we not seen General von Bernhardi's book, and read other utterances to the same effect by eminent Germans. Americans can no longer smilingly regard these as mere 'bluff' because they appear to be too insane to be taken seriously.

News of the day indicates that the war losses of the Teuton Powers have been prodigious, and the end is not in sight. German industries

have been deranged, her artisans scattered, crippled, or killed. Her foreign commerce, built up at the cost of years of admirable thoroughness and diligence, has been almost wholly destroyed. The road to her expansion in the East has been blocked, and it seems likely that, convinced that Germany is as a rabid wolf to the rights of humanity and civilisation, the Entente Powers will carefully maintain all useful barriers.

This New World offers the most tempting of all fields for early and easy looting, and for later and lasting exploitation. Here lies ready the greatest booty ever known; and we ourselves have loudly declared that we are unprepared to protect it. And in this New World the Prussian oligarchy might build, easily and quickly, a nation that could feed the world for a thousand years; that could become so rich and powerful that it could master all mankind. The purpose to do this was no doubt behind the German preparations that were carried on for years. It was one of the most magnificent of all human dreams. Part of these preparations was the planting and the cultivation of anti-American sentiment throughout Latin-America. There the cry 'Yankee imperialism,' like the yell 'Stop thief!' was raised on every occasion to avert attention from the real robbers, to prevent the Latin-Americans from seeing German preparations for seizing their territory. That propaganda served other purposes also. It paid its own way by turning trade from North Americans to Germans. At the same time it gratified the Teuton hatred of the Yankee. It was intended to induce the Latin-Americans to fight against the Colossus of the North when the day would come for breaking down the Monroe Doctrine and parcelling out South American territory.

Latin-America appeared to be quite ignorant of schemes for encroachment on its sovereign rights. This may have been because many a truth is known that cannot be demonstrated to the satisfaction of a court bound by rigid rules of evidence; many a truth is unpublished because the source of information must not be exposed; many a fact of living interest to a nation remains unrevealed because diplomacy requires silence. Nevertheless, soon after the beginning of the European war, warning to America was voiced by the Brazilian Minister at Paris. He declared bluntly that the greatest of dangers threatening Latin-America lay in German designs. Early in June 1915 his assertion was verified by the discovery of large deposits of arms and munitions secreted in the province of Santa Catharina, Brazil; and with them were discovered full plans for seizure of that province by the Germans settled there.

If Britain had not intervened as she did, and Germany had crushed Belgium and France, as Bernhardi prophesied, Germany would have menaced England across a narrow channel, and would have had a short and open road to North America, and through France a direct and short way to the Mediterranean, to the Caribbean, and to the South Atlantic. Had she cared to disguise her plans, German squadrons might have sailed 'on friendly visits to friendly countries,' after the precedent set by an American administration. To honour fitly the two greatest American republics, a powerful squadron might have appeared at New York, while a number of cruisers might have gone to Rio de Janeiro. A single ship of that squadron to the south might have been enough, in the German view, to do the honours at Buenos Aires, while another might have sailed farther south. At that opportune moment the Germans in southern Brazil, or in Paraguay, in Uruguay, or even in Argentina, might have uncovered their arms and their scheme. They might have declared that a new Government was established, and appealed to Germany, the mother country, for recognition. Had these quite possible things happened, what probable combination among the Latin-Americans could have driven the invader out? What could have prevented the Germans from seizing one small republic after another? What European Power would have had inducement enough to join the United States to prevent this? Would not European prejudices, and political, financial, and industrial interests, have tended strongly to lead some such Powers to join the invader in hope of sharing the spoils?

Had Germany so seized part of South America, while a powerful squadron menaced New York City, and hundreds of thousands of Germans in big American cities formed a grave internal danger, Washington would have had to sacrifice either peace or the Monroe Doctrine. The Government would have been urged by one party instantly to fly to arms to rescue a distant nation from annihilation, while another party implored them to declare neutrality and save their own cities from Prussian frightfulness by making known that the Monroe Doctrine was obsolete.

Eminent Germans long, diligently, and ably taught the dogma that the wishes and the welfare of the individual must be sacrificed to the State, whenever and however required. It is said that many Germans sought homes in the United States to avoid submitting to this doctrine. But possibly humanity might in time come to accept this dogma were there reason for believing that any ruler of any state would be fit to decide when, and how, to what extent, and by whom, such sacrifices should be made; or that any such ruler would be superman enough never to demand sacrifice for his own benefit. Often and by various witnesses the world has been informed that many a royal head has been unsound; even that a number of the crowned heads of the world have been too insane to be allowed to go about at will. The world has been told that many members of royal

families have been degenerate descendants of the drunken and the vicious, of diseased and debased rulers whose weaknesses, vices, and physical deformities have been perpetuated and increased by inbreeding. Was not the Kaiser's decision that *Der Tag* was come an evidence that he was mentally unsound? Was the sanity of the Kaiser and his councillors demonstrated by their blundering belief in easy victory over France, over Russia, and perhaps over Britain? Whether they were sane or not, they decided that the time had come for demanding such sacrifice of the individual for the State; and the Kaiser is the German State. As a natural consequence of Prussian *Kultur*, the property, the health, and the lives of millions of his people, and those of his Allies, have been destroyed because the working of wrongly developed brain-cells of a single man, or at most a small group of men of the same stamp, decided that the time was ripe for imposing their will upon all the rest of humanity. This working of mistrained minds has already cost the rest of the world enormously, and no one knows how prodigiously greater this cost may become.

Since last year's campaign drove into even German consciousness the truth that the Empire cannot hope for victory, eminent German agents have been denying that Prussian *Kultur* was to be imposed by armed conquest upon all the rest of mankind. Nevertheless, the late Professor Münsterberg, of Harvard University, declared, as lately as 26th October 1916, that 'whatever the great diplomats may settle upon after the war, the one great change will be that German *Kultur* will conquer the globe; that German *Kultur* will spread to all the countries of the world.' He added: 'The German ideal is not individual, but works in the service for the ideals of the whole State. The individual subordinates himself to the works of the whole State. That idea has taken hold on our nation, and it must grow all over the world. No nation will be able to play a rôle in the great drama after this war without it. And that is exactly what the Germans mean to-day by the term "German *Kultur*."'

This may be accepted as an assertion that armed conquest of the world was not, or is not, the design of Germany. It may with at least as good reason be taken as a reiteration of the old statements of such design: that the Prussian slogan, *Deutschland über Alles*, means all it says —Germany over all; that Prussian *Kultur*—the extreme opposite of that democracy toward which mankind has struggled through centuries —was to be forced upon all humanity. Its logical, inevitable result would be slavery for all human beings excepting one ruler by the divine right of kings.

None can fairly object to being judged by their own acts and words, and the words and deeds of the German people warrant the assertion that they accept Prussian *Kultur*. What that means may be judged from these emulators of the Hun, Goth, and Vandal; by the treatment accorded by the ruling classes of Germany to their own people; by the savage 'frightfulness' of their recent war on defenceless men, women, and children, even when these were neutral, if they were not actually friendly to the Germans. Their words and deeds show that they have long worked, and are even now working, to carry Prussian *Kultur* and slavery to America. Their record warrants the charge that Prussian *Kultur* in the New World would surpass in 'frightfulness' and savagery the worst rule by the Conquistadores in Spanish-America.

Why should not the Prussian oligarchy strive to save itself by plundering another nation or nations? By this means it might satisfy its own people by material and immediate booty, and with the belief that the mastery of the world would be given to them. Accumulated riches in the United States, and the ability of the American people to pay a prodigious, an utterly unparalleled, ransom, would make them the most tempting victims ever known. But South America could be conquered much more easily, and offers a field that is potentially greater than is North America. Conquest of South America would in time bring realisation of the dreams of the Prussians. It would make them masters of the world. Surely it is more than probable that they will attempt this conquest, unless they are convinced that such an attempt will be hopeless.

'OLE CAM'RON.'

CHAPTER II.

HOW the life-lines of Ian M'Leod, late Captain, Cameron Highlanders, came in so strange a manner to cross those of his long-dead kinsman's old slave may be briefly told. The third or fourth son of a Scotch laird, and, as the result of a small frontier campaign, minus an arm and with a more or less shattered lung, the young officer had not improved his worldly prospects by precipitately marrying his cousin, daughter of an honourable but impoverished branch of the family. Between himself and his father there passed, on the subject of what the latter chose to consider his son's unutterable folly, such high words that pride, reinforced by the doctor's verdict as to the effects the British climate might have upon his injured lung, led young M'Leod to the impulsive decision of taking his bride to the far-distant 'Golden State' of California, and there investing what small capital he possessed in a fruit-ranch lying in one

of the sun-cup valleys among the Sierra Nevada foothills.

There already, for some months before their chance meeting with Old Cameron, the young couple had been established—M'Leod himself happy and contented among his own vines and fig-trees, accomplishing wonders with his one arm; while Margot's busy hands and tireless feet soon created a 'home' out of the long, white bungalow, with its broad veranda and green shutters, which at first seemed so appalling a contrast to the ivy-grown granite walls of her own dear Highland castle. With cheerful determination to make the best of things—with her face bravely set towards the sunshine and her back to the shadows—the high-born girl discarded pretty frocks and smart hats for a short cotton dress and sun-bonnet, helped her husband to stow away in a corner of the house boxes brought out from 'home,' filled with all manner of useless silver and china, and, while her crippled soldier dexterously dug and pruned and irrigated the precious terraces of vines and the fragrant peach orchards, set herself to the manifold tasks of maid-of-all-work, where were none available to help. Ian was happy! Ian was looking stronger! What else in the wide world mattered to Margaret M'Leod?

And yet, beyond the limits of her own new home, this exiled daughter of a proud Scotch clan lived in an atmosphere of strange isolation. The valley, beautiful as Eden, with its wealth of blossom, its wooded slopes, and its river like a silver chain, twisting and breaking over time-old rocks, though once upon a time thickly dotted with prosperous ranches and busy men and teams, had, when gold was discovered in the river-bed and encircling foothills, been suddenly transformed into a great, ugly, greedy 'camp.' In an incredibly short time fair acres became pitted, as it were, by the ravages of smallpox, where one prospector after another dug frantically for the precious metal. Orchards and vineyards were first neglected, then abandoned; and when at length the gold-fever had exhausted itself, nothing remained but the bare bones of what had been one of the most famous wine-producing districts in California.

In course of time, however, the pendulum began to swing back again, and a few of the neglected ranches, including the one that young M'Leod purchased, were taken up and replanted; but the valley lay far from railroads and markets, the old methods of disposing of vine and fruit crops had passed away, and a difficult task confronted the plucky young Scotsman to win a livelihood for himself and wife from their adopted soil. Of neighbours they had scarcely any, of friends none; though the door was ever open and a kindly welcome extended to any chance visitor in the passing—some prospector trudging hillwards with pick and pan; a rancher, with sweating horses, on his slow journey into the 'big timber' country; the flotsam and jetsam of the restless race of that Far West.

All these Margaret M'Leod could and did enjoy. Their racy speech, frankly democratic but chivalrous manners; the hearty, almost pathetic appreciation of any little kindness or homely gift—all interested and appealed to one brought up in a land where sharp and unassailable distinction is drawn between gentlemen and men as mere *men*. With the few women, however, with whom she came in contact—the wives and daughters of the valley householders—poor Margot could make no headway. That which in the rough-and-ready garb of men passed as, at the worst, eccentricity of speech and the result of environment, became in their womenkind, with their would-be smart dresses of latest cut and fashion, and their easy familiarity, hopelessly underbred and common. Their efforts at 'conversation,' revealing an utter lack of comprehension of things beyond their own narrow world; the tacit criticism which Margot instinctively felt beneath their suave, self-possessed manner; their complete oblivion as to any distinction inherent to birth and breeding, irked and irritated the girl, in spite of her self-chastisement for being thus supersensitive and hypercritical.

'I can't help it—oh, I can't *help* it!' she had once exclaimed, during one of the passionate storms of homesick longing that sometimes swept over her, after a 'visitation' (as her husband called it) of one of the local dames. 'They are so *common*, Ian; and I shouldn't *mind* their being common if only they *knew* they were, and that I am *not!*' And then she had to join with him in the laugh against herself.

So when, during one of their long rides together, which always acted like a restorative to Margot's flagging courage, they had chanced upon the old negro, who not only at once recognised in her husband and herself something above the ordinary run of 'po' white trash,' but proved to have been long years in the service of their own kinsfolk, the girl had been excited and cheered to a seemingly unwarrantable degree.

Good part of the following night, while her stolid lord and master, having dismissed the subject with a laconic, 'Rum go that, Meg, about the old nigger!—better put those things where they 'll be safe,' settled solidly to sleep, Margot lay wakeful by his side, thinking over Old Cameron's story in all its detail, longing to hear more, and cogitating how she could bring a little added comfort and happiness into the life of the poor old slave, so devoted to the memory of his 'massa.'

Therefore a few days later found the young couple once more heading for the hills, a fine 'pack' of good things for Old Cameron behind their saddles, as well as a box—large and comfortable—in which two fat kittens were making themselves as crowded and noisy as possible.

When they arrived at the cabin the old darky

joyfully appeared, overwhelming his visitors with delighted thanks, and hurrying to establish snug quarters for the 'little cats,' to the evident pleasure and satisfaction of the young coon; then he took M'Leod and his wife to see his gold 'claim.' He soon taught the former the art of 'panning.' As the pine-laden air and higher altitude were a welcome change to both the young people from the valley, it became a regular thing for them to ride thither once or twice a week, with unfailing additions to Old Cameron's larder or wardrobe; and while Ian pottered about with his gun or panned the red-brown earth in the negro's 'claim,' Margot would sit and listen to the old slave's tales of long-ago days in the cotton-fields of South Carolina.

By constant questioning, Margot gradually sharpened the old man's memory, thus learning much of the lives and surroundings of those proud M'Leods, with whose names she had long been familiar, but scarcely as realities. To Margot all this was like a new breath of life, an oasis in the desert of their alien surroundings —a welcome, if unique, link between her *own* 'world' and this Far Western one of antipodal habit of life and outlook. So when, in the following year, there came a good many months in which M'Leod had to take his rides alone, the girl sorely missed her old negro friend. Her husband, however, when he could spare the time from the ranch, whose demands on his strength and purse seemed to grow daily more exacting, continued to ride up to Light Cañon.

It was after one such expedition that he said to his wife, 'Meg, I believe it's rather a good thing that we chanced to run across that poor old nigger. I "doot" he's breaking up, and I can't think what he would do without all those foods and things you send to keep him going. As for that "claim" of his, it seems to be an awfully rotten affair; I panned for several hours for the poor old soul, and got barely twenty cents' worth of "dust"—can't see how he has managed to exist all these years. One hears rumours of his having a "good thing," and he always insists he gets "'nuff," but if he were to be ill, I don't know what would become of him if he hadn't us to fall back upon.'

But although Margot's eyes were raised to his while he spoke, her thoughts this time were not of the old slave. She was thinking of her husband. Surely he had grown thinner, and more transparent-looking and worried? She wished the blight on the vines had not been so bad; and she wondered if the peach-crop were more of a failure than he admitted. It would not do for her to worry too much *now;* but after baby came she must devote herself more again to Ian —she feared she had been neglecting him. Then the busy fingers fell to stitching tiny garments which her husband called 'ridiculous!'

(*Continued on page 185.*)

SOME FACTS ABOUT ZINC.

By JOHN BOWMAN, Assoc. M. Inst. C. E.

UP to the beginning of the nineteenth century zinc was used for little else than making brass. To-day it is probably employed in more diverse ways than any other metal. So enormously has the demand for zinc grown that within the last fifteen years the world's output has been doubled, and now amounts to over one million tons per annum.

The existence of zinc as a separate metal was unknown to the ancients. The name first occurs in the writings of Paracelsus the alchemist, about 1530, to whom its discovery has, perhaps erroneously, been attributed. The fact that it was so long in being identified is doubtless due to its never being found in a free state. To extract the metal from the ore a process of reduction and distillation has to be performed. For a long time, and so far back as the sixteenth century, one of the products, white vitriol or sulphate of zinc, was prepared and used commercially before it was known to be procured from the metal. This white vitriol was made from the ore of calamine obtained in the Hartz Mountains, and its manufacture appears to have been a monopoly of Duke Julius of Brunswick. It was extensively used by leather-dressers, and also in processes where formerly alum had been employed.

Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc, to which a small quantity of tin may be added to increase the hardness, or lead if it is desirable to make the brass more suitable for filing or turning. The percentage of zinc varies. Generally the mixture consists of about two parts of copper to one of zinc. Ores are to be found which are rich in a mixture of zinc and copper, and which yield a kind of natural brass. Mines containing ores from which gold-coloured metals could be obtained were known to the ancients, and were held in the highest esteem. When such mines were exhausted it was believed that this yellow metal, which was looked upon as a purer kind of copper, would never again be found. In course of time, however, it was discovered that the addition of an ore, probably calamine, to copper while melting gave it the yellow colour so much admired. When calamine ore was discovered in sufficient quantities the ancient method of procuring brass from copper ore was abandoned, and it was found more convenient first to extract the pure copper ore, and then convert it into brass by the addition of calamine.

Zinc-smelting was practised in England from about 1730, and on the Continent, first at Liège, in 1807. The original English process for the extraction of zinc is seldom employed. Either the Belgian or the Silesian method is now used in zinc-producing countries. In the Belgian method between forty and fifty retorts charged with a mixture of ore and coal are inserted in one furnace. The distilled metal discharges from each retort into a fireclay nozzle, and the residue into a cone-shaped sheet-iron receptacle which forms an extension of the fireclay nozzle. The contents of the fireclay nozzle are raked out, and are cast into plates ready for commercial use as spelter. The residue, which may amount to as much as 10 per cent. of the total metal, is zinc dust, and is either sold as such or added to the next charge. The Silesian method employs larger fireclay retorts. These take up more room and burn more coal, but less expense is involved for retorts, as these are less exposed to the heat of the fire.

Up to 1833 zinc was principally obtained from Germany. Then Belgium began to produce the metal. These two countries manufacture considerably more than half of the world's output. Next to Belgium and Germany, the United States produces most zinc. The growth of America's production has been very remarkable. In 1897 the output was under one hundred thousand tons, and in 1906 it had increased to two hundred thousand tons. The other zinc-producing countries in their order of output are France, Britain, Austria, Spain, and Russia. The whole output of these five countries amounted to about half that of Belgium. Owing to the war and the consequent stoppage of the Belgian and German supplies there has been an enormous increase in the supplies from the other countries, and probably one result has been to place America in control of the zinc markets of neutral countries. Another effect has been enormously to increase the price. Before the war prices ranged from fifteen to twenty-one pounds per ton. In November 1914 the price was twenty-four pounds per ton. By January 1915 thirty-six pounds was the market price, and twelve months later the price was eighty-three pounds per ton. The highest price, one hundred and two pounds per ton, was reached at the end of February. On 1st March an order prohibiting speculative dealings in metals was published, and in less than a fortnight the price had declined to seventy-seven pounds per ton. At the beginning of April the price was steady at eighty-nine pounds. By the middle of the month the price had again risen to one hundred pounds, and remained at this figure until the beginning of May. At the end of May seventy-six pounds was the quoted price; the end of June saw a further decline to fifty-six pounds. Since then the price has fluctuated between fifty and sixty pounds, the average for December being fifty-five pounds. While this price represents an enormous increase on normal prices, the big reduction from the maximum price is satisfactory, because it is due to the determined action of producers in Australia. The cutting off of the German and Belgian supplies has enabled Australia to become one of the leading zinc producing countries, and she should be, at the close of the war, a formidable competitor in the Eastern and South American markets. Canada also began producing last year, and the smelter at Traill, British Columbia, yielded six million pounds, valued at two hundred thousand pounds sterling.

In its pure state zinc is extensively employed for building purposes, chiefly as a covering for roofs, where, for economical reasons, it has taken the place of sheet-lead. Its use is not to be recommended in smoky atmospheres, and even under good conditions its average life is about twenty years. Like lead, zinc is protected from further corrosion by the first coat of oxide which forms on the surface. Cast-iron exposed to air rapidly corrodes, but by coating it with zinc it is rendered weather-proof. The process of coating, or galvanising, is performed by cleaning the iron and dipping it in molten zinc. Contact with water containing calcareous matter destroys zinc. For this reason the use of galvanised iron piping is expressly forbidden by many water authorities.

As a component part of alloys, such as brass, Muntz metal, German silver, and bronze, zinc is extensively used for engineering purposes. Sulphate of zinc or white vitriol was used in the sixteenth century as an eye-wash. It is still employed as an astringent for sores and ulcers. Taken internally it is a powerful emetic in cases of poisoning.

Chloride of zinc is used as a flux in soldering. Under the name of Burnett's fluid it is a powerful disinfectant; possessing the property of dissolving silk, it is employed for removing the fibre from wool. Zinc oxide, known to painters as zinc-white, is employed as a pigment in place of white-lead for use in smoky atmospheres, where it is not discoloured by sulphuretted hydrogen.

THE SAP.

By O. C. Platoon.

SAPS are funny things. They are also not very nice things to have very much to do with, and so they are usually handed over to the care of the bombing-officer; really it is Tommy who looks after them, keeps them up to the mark, digs them out, and improves them. Saps have many purposes, the chief of which seems to be to pretend that they are the front line, so

that unsuspecting people may turn a corner and lose themselves. When they retrace their steps, they usually go in the opposite direction. When they have repeated this once or twice, they find that they have forgotten which is the front and where the Germans are. They look for the fire-bays, which are, of course, on the German side, and, finding none, realise they are in a communication-trench. They find the front line again after a while. When this has happened about forty times, somebody puts up a large notice-board at the mouth of the sap. Another use of the sap is to put the wind up the Boche, by enabling our bombers to get nearer to their lines. The Boche copes with this by putting the wind up the sap, usually with something hefty in the *Minenwerfer* line. This is a story of a sap like that.

Dead Man's Sap it was called, running out from our line at an angle of about seventy-five degrees. It bent sharply, after about ten yards, and finished up twenty yards farther on in a kind of circular pit, with fire-bays and a dug-out. The ground all around it looked as though it had been chewed. There had been more wire put up in front of Dead Man's Sap than on the whole of our company front. It had been dug out more times than any other part of our line. In fact, there was always somebody or other digging out Dead Man's Sap, or deepening it, or improving it, or making new bomb-box emplacements in it.

For some obscure reason of his own, the Boche did not like that sap. During the day his snipers fired over it and all round it. As evening came he usually dropped an aerial dart or a light trench-mortar bomb into it, or very close to it, just to show that he had not forgotten it, and that he was not going to let the matter rest. And all night long he had a battery of four fixed rifles, which fired at intervals of about ten minutes into the sandbags. Altogether, it was a very uncomfortable place—which was why we very rarely occupied it. Nobody ever lived in it; but we kept it clean and tidy, and dug it out surreptitiously with blasphemous regularity. Poor old Fritz, believing that we lived and had our being there, strafed it day in and day out, until one day he realised that it must be a dud, and let it rest. Then we occupied it.

It was very useful to us, for it was quite the best exit from the trench, and as we 'exited' every night, for one reason or another, Dead Man's Sap became quite a thoroughfare. The men who occupied it were chosen very carefully, for it had a sinister reputation. It was told that back in the early days of the war, when Fritz's tail was up, and not down, as it became later, a raiding party of Germans had arrived at the sap, hooked a sergeant out with a bayonet, dropped a large bomb among the remainder, and decamped. When the sap was inspected the next morning, however, the sergeant had been returned. He was sitting on the fire-bay, staring straight before him, quite dead and full of bayonet-holes. This was one of the mildest stories told of the sap, and it was not every one who cared to hang round the neighbourhood at night if he could help it.

The choice fell on Bullock, Minchin, and Williams. They were all types, and none of them feared anything on God's earth.

Bullock was tall, thin, dirty, and pessimistic. He was utterly without imagination. I believe he would have gone over to the German line in daylight without the slightest excitement or interest, and only have been mildly surprised when some one turned a machine-gun on him or threw a bomb at him. He rarely washed.

Minchin was youthful, and very excitable. War to him was a great and glorious game, and every morning he would walk along the trench and swear vigorously at the Germans, and propound wild plans for putting the wind up them. He it was who lay out under the Boche wire one night, shaking the posts so that the wire rattled, and the Boche, frightened out of his life at the inexplicable rattling, threw things about for quite a long time.

The third man, Williams, was grim and dour. He had a South African ribbon up, and the trenches rather bored him. He took things very calmly; yet whatever mad idea Minchin produced, he was always ready to carry it out. Bullock was usually fatigue-man on these occasions.

It was Minchin who conceived the idea of crawling out and cutting loose three of the Boche *chevaux de frise*. Bullock carried out a coil of stout wire, and the other two made it fast to the loosened portion. They then took the wire back to the line, and when daylight came, pulled the three *chevaux de frise* across No Man's Land in full view of the astounded Boche. It was quite a useful bit of work really; for the Boche, forgetting his customary caution, stared over his parapets at the moving wire, so that our snipers had a day out.

Dead Man's Sap was also extremely useful as a listening-post. At night the only way you can fathom what your opponent is doing is to listen. Verey lights give away the most obvious things, but it is not often they reveal much. There are many nights when patrols are not practicable, and on such nights listening becomes the only alternative.

'Can you hear it?' I said to Bullock, who was beside me in the sap.

'Heard it larst free nights,' said Bullock; 'diggin' an' 'ammerin'.'

'Where do you think it is?'

'Dunno, sir.'

'Fancy it's in their trenches, sir, just opposite. Can 'ear it from the front line in the daytime an' all,' said Williams.

There was the unmistakable sound of chalk

sliding off a shovel, of a pick being used, and of posts being hammered into the ground.

'Can Williams an' me go out an' find out, sir?' said Minchin.

'Yes; but mind you 're not seen, and don't interfere with them unless they interfere with you. Now, understand you 're going out for information only, and I don't want any foolhardy tricks.'

I went off to report that a patrol had gone out, and then returned to the sap to listen. Save for the continual scraping there was silence. Lights went up from time to time, and odd bullets wailed across the darkness, haphazard blind shots into the dark, which rarely, if ever, hit anything or anybody. No Man's Land seemed deserted. Suddenly Bullock pointed out in front. Two figures were crawling carefully towards the sap. We covered them, and waited until they were right up to us. We recognised them as Minchin and Williams. They rolled in, and, replacing their bombs in the box, made their report.

'We found 'em all right. They 're opposite 'ere in their front line. An' you can't see 'em from our trench, 'cos there 's a bit of a 'ill. Could see 'em from the sap 'ere in daylight. Three of 'em there is, far as we could tell.'

Now it was forbidden to observe from the sap by day, for fear of giving away the fact that it was occupied.

But a peep at Stand To in the morning could do no harm, and at dawn I went along. As I went up the sap I heard Minchin's voice. 'There they are. See 'em? Gord's truth! plain as daylight! Let 'em 'ave it, somebody.'

As I turned the corner I saw Williams lift his rifle swiftly and fire. The bullet struck the ground at the feet of the three Boches working near the parapet of their trench. There was a second's pause, then a blinding flash, a cloud of dust and smoke—a crash! Where the three men had been was a single black thing that did not move. What had happened we never knew. Williams's bullet must have struck some detonated explosive they had with them. What *would* happen I knew only too well.

I sent Bullock, Minchin, and Williams out of the sap, and told Williams just what I thought of him. For he had given away the fact that the sap was occupied, and I knew what that meant.

'Sorry, sir, but I couldn't 'elp it. To see them blighters there! Chance in a lifetime at this trench-game. Still, I 'm sorry, sir. Is it Company Office?'

Of course it was, for it meant disobeying an order, the order being that no one was to fire from the sap.

. . . . . .

During the day I was anxious. I felt certain that Williams had been spotted, and that they would take it out of the sap. But nothing happened until late afternoon.

'Rumjar, sir!' shouted the sentry.

It wobbled through the air with a 'chuffing' sound, pitched between front line and supports, and exploded with the usual terrifying clatter. It did no harm, but it was followed by four others, which hurtled over, seemingly haphazard and aimless. Then one fell short, or so it seemed, dropping about twenty yards to the right of Dead Man's Sap. The next, increasing in range, blew great gaps in the wire on the left of the sap, and filled the air with filthy dust. By this time our 'toffee apples' were sailing over in grand style, and blasting the German line to a dust-heap amid clouds of powdered chalk. No more came over, and I was left with a problem. Had it been just a 'hate,' or were those two last efforts registering on to the sap? Did the Boche mean to blot Dead Man's Sap out of existence in revenge for the events of the morning, or was it just an accident?

I went to see the trench-mortar gentlemen. I asked them if they had plenty of ammunition. 'You see, I 've an idea that the Boche has a spite against my sap, and that he may try to clean it up to-night. If he does, I want you to be quite certain that he 'll have the worst of the bargain. If he should chance to strafe my sap, I want you to make him hate himself like hell for it.'

'We 've bags of ammunition, sir. Shall we wait for orders, or just loose off when he starts?'

'You 'll traverse their support-line, and you 'll start as soon as he starts. And you 'll keep on until you 've used all you 've got, unless he chucks the game up quickly. And there 's plenty more stuff coming up to-night, so you can be as generous as you like about bombs.'

As I walked back along the trench, I felt as though I had made rather a lot of fuss about nothing. After all, nothing would probably happen. Everything was beautifully quiet.

As night came, Minchin, Bullock, and Williams occupied the sap; and when it was two o'clock the next morning and nothing had happened, I stopped being anxious about them. It was a relief to stop thinking of the matter, for this long-distance psychology is really tiring. To probe the intentions of an enemy at a distance of two hundred yards with nothing to go on but faintly heard sounds, and a few events which may be quite accidental, is an irritating pursuit.

A Verey light curved over, and as it curved I heard the horrid 'chuff-chuff' of a Rumjar. There was a fierce white flash, a tearing crash, and I knew the entrance to Dead Man's Sap was closed for repairs. Then I heard an unpleasant sound. Tat-tat! Tat-tat! Tat-tat! Every two or three seconds the double spit of a machine-gun. I hurried down to the sap. The entrance to it was almost level with the ground, and across it the machine-gun was firing. Tat-tat! Tat-tat!

Nothing could cross there. There were other shots, too, from the left, which appeared to be

hitting the sandbags of the head of the sap. There seemed no way out of it. The three men were cooped up in the bombing-pit. If they moved out towards our trench the machine-gun would get them. If they crawled out in front the odd rifle-shots would get them; and if they stayed where they were I knew only too well what would happen. Even as I thought, I heard another of the whirling shuffling horrors come curving over and drop in the angle of the sap, filling the air with humming bits of iron, stone, and wood.

But our trench-mortars were busy now, and bits of the Boche support-line went heavenwards with a loud noise. The night became a sickly, quivering glare with Verey lights, and machine-guns spat all down the line. The racket was appalling. Rifle-grenades began to burst down the trench, and ours answered in kind, their tail-pieces humming as they curved Bochewards. And through it all the sickening tat-tat! tat-tat! of the machine-gun firing across the blown-in sap.

A rattle of loose chalk, a stream of curses, a clatter of a rifle, and Minchin picked himself out of the trench beside me.

'You hurt?' I cried.

'Cushy one in the shoulder,' he answered. 'I risked it.'

'Where are the others?'

'Williams is still there. Don't know where Bullock is.'

I sent a man off with him down to the dressing-station, and watched the strafe. I pictured Williams waiting there in the sap-head, wondering how soon the Rumjar would arrive to blot out the rest of the sap, and him with it.

Suddenly the horrible tat-tat! tat-tat! ceased. One of our rifle-grenades must have laid out some of the team, for it was silent for a full three minutes. Then it began again. But in that brief pause Williams slipped calmly into the trench, unhurt. And as he was telling me how he had waited his chance, the third Rumjar dropped plumb into the sap-head. He slipped a cartridge into the breech of his rifle.

'I'm after that machine-gun,' he said, and walked away.

'But what about Bullock?'

'Don't know, sir. He disappeared just as the first Rumjar landed. 'Ope 'e 's all right.'

The strafe was dying down, but our trench-mortar people continued the good work for a full twenty minutes. Then they too stopped, and the night grew calm, save for an occasional rifle-grenade from one side or the other. I hung about the entrance to the sap, anxious about Bullock; but he did not appear. I went away at last to ask for a patrol to look for him before it grew light. Not that I had any hope of finding him. As I returned I heard the sergeant's voice.

'An' where the 'ell 'ave you bin?'

'In a shell-'ole,' said Bullock's voice.

'Talk about nine lives! Forty blinkin' lives is what you must 'ave.'

Bullock grinned.

'For Gord's sake, try and 'ave a wash before the orficer sees yer! Positive disgrace to the trenches, you are.' There was a long pause. 'Come to my dug-out, an' I'll give you a drop o' tea,' the sergeant went on, relenting a little, for Bullock was covered with chalk and dust from head to foot, and must have been badly shaken, save that nothing on earth ever did shake him.

'All right, Bullock?' I asked.

'Yessir.'

'Pretty hot, wasn't it?'

'Yessir.'

'Thought you were up against it, I suppose, eh?'

'Yessir.'

He grinned, and followed the sergeant.

'Bloomin' miracle, that's what you are,' the sergeant said, as they disappeared up the trench.

But it was a long time before we finished digging out Dead Man's Sap again.

YESTERDAYS AND TO-MORROWS.

Ah, our eyes are ever turning,
Filled with some unfathomed yearning,
Turning back along the pathway where time flings its mellow haze;
And we count the frets and sighing,
In the silence unreplying,
In the silence that has fallen over all our yesterdays.

Memory would fain be bringing
Echoes of our golden singing,
Brings us melodies that cheered us when the light was on the wane;
But our senses always falter
At some old deserted altar
Where we sacrificed to sorrow and to bitterness and pain.

Step by step we foot the highways,
Or we fare along the byways,
Where the shadows were the longest and the path was rough and steep;
And we catch the sound of sobbing
Through the mystic stillness throbbing,
And we wonder what of happiness our yesterdays may keep.

But the morrows beckon to us,
Call us from the paths that knew us,
Lure us on with smiles and sunshine down new roadways broad and fair;
And they coax us with the promise
That they never will take from us
All the goodness and the gladness that we thought we lost back there.

Then with fingers swift and certain
We draw close the velvet curtain
That swings down across the present in the sunset's golden haze;
And we turn to our to-morrows,
That still sweetness from the sorrows
Which we thought were sent to sadden all our olden yesterdays.

OWEN E. M'GILLICUDDY.

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SEVENTH SERIES

KILLING TIME ON DARTMOOR.

By BEATRICE CHASE, Author of *The Heart of the Moor*, *Through a Dartmoor Window*.

SOMETIMES I am patronisingly asked how I manage to kill time on Dartmoor. I usually reply that it is Time who kills me. Certainly we kill our friends, and the mystery to the Rainbow-Maker and me is why any one ever comes to see us at all. The more intimate the friend, the worse he or she is treated. We try, or I always try, to be polite to stranger pilgrims. The Rainbow-Maker, who is a poor dissembler, does not invariably even try to be polite. At times she is cataleptic with fatigue, and at other times she is severe. This is when she thinks I am being overworked. I remember, one afternoon, when she frightened three lovely ladies—actually frightened them. It happened to be rather a busy day with pilgrims. Five were already in the dining-room looking at picture-post-cards, several were in the drawing-room, three were waiting outside the window in a car, and another three arrived on the step. When I left the other two sets already inside the house, and went to attend to those waiting on the step, I discovered the Rainbow-Maker loose in the hall. What her original idea had been she did not seem to know; nor did she know where she wanted to go. When I opened the door and she realised that she was wedged between five people in the dining-room and three in the hall, she collapsed suddenly into the hall chair—the wicker one under the cuckoo clock—and gazed drearily into Africa. I admitted the three, and brought them in. As we passed the Rainbow-Maker in single file, I said politely, by way of introduction, 'That is the Rainbow-Maker.' She took no notice, but continued to stare into Africa. I repeated the remark a little louder, and the leading lady remarked nervously, 'Oh, that is the Rainbow-Maker, is it?' exactly in the way she would have said, 'Oh, that cabinet is Indian, is it?' We stood still and looked at the Rainbow-Maker for some time; but she neither turned her head, spoke, nor even blinked. The Dark Continent absorbed her. So I gave it up, and took them on, with shattered nerves, to see the rest of the house. I know they thought she was in a cataleptic trance, but they were too polite to say so. This state with her is not incivility; it is not even inhospitality. It is exhaustion.

There always in this house seems to be some unexpected uproar going on which requires errands to all points of the compass, and there is never any one to do the errands, as we all work sixteen hours a day at the ordinary routine, with no reservists for emergencies. Consequently our friends find themselves playing the unrehearsed parts of reservists. They come for rest, and they stay either in the Rainbow-Maker's cottage or in rooms in various parts of the village. When they arrive to pay a polite call, they encounter one of two treatments. Sometimes I meet them on the doorstep, remarking, 'Oh, I am awfully sorry I can't ask you in, but we have just had an urgent letter from a lady who wants rooms on Tuesday. Would you be so angelic as to go round to these places and get back here with all the answers by 2.30, and then wait while we write and take the letter to the post? Thank you very much.' Before they have time to scream a list is thrust into their hands, and the door is shut in their faces.

All our errands have two acts, so to speak. They are not the kind which you can do on your way for an expedition. They always mean cutting up a day by having to get back for consultation before post-time. The other reception is when visitors are reluctantly admitted to find me frenziedly typing against time, and the Rainbow-Maker finishing an urgent necklace for the afternoon post. She never looks up, but merely murmurs, 'Good-morning.' I pause in my clatter, and say, 'Oh, how do you do? It's so kind of you to come. Would you mind sitting down over there and looking at *Punch* till we have done? I am sorry we can't talk, because it puts her out in counting the beads.' Then I resume my clatter, and the visitor, instead of throwing a boot at my head and departing in blue flame, sits down for nearly an hour in silence, waiting till permission is granted to speak.

Two friends last summer were worse treated than any. I don't quite know why. Possibly it was that they were more meekly and touchingly determined to see something more of us than the rest. The first was a girl who was staying in the village, who used to come to us by the road visible from the window. The Rainbow-Maker, sitting therein, spotted her first, and remarked, 'If that is Miss B——, catch her at

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the door and ask her to take this note for me to C——, and bring the answer back before lunch.' This kind of thing went on for a fortnight.

The other friend was a man, a meek, gentle, kind, quiet creature, who came every morning for three weeks without missing once. He was told never to knock or ring, but to come in. Some of our friends are given that order; it saves so much answering of the door. At first they are naturally too polite to obey. They begin by ringing; but such a torrent of abuse in two different voices floats out at them that they abandon politeness, and learn to walk in. This man, after being shouted at several mornings running, learned to walk gently in, find a chair and the newspaper without speaking, and sit still, till he was hustled out of the way by my starting to cook lunch in a violent hurry. I used to bear down upon him, buttoning up my blue 'pinny' as I charged, remarking, 'Do you mind sitting over there now? You are in the way of the oven here.' Hastily he would move his seat, and retire to the indicated chair. Then the Rainbow-Maker would suddenly finish a necklace, look round with a glassy stare, and see him sitting by her davenport where she wanted to write letters. Quite dispassionately she and I would then discuss the best place for him to be moved to again—and he was moved. As a matter of fact, the safest spot for him would have been in the open fireplace inside the fender, but this never struck him. If he made a feeble effort to leave the house, this was negatived with yells of disapproval from us both, on the ground that he must wait and post our letters. He was never unchained till just before lunch-time, and was then hustled off lest he should be late for his own lunch. As I say, this took place every day (except Sundays) for three weeks. He seemed to prefer seeing us even on these terms, rather than not at all.

Since a heartless country took our bluejacket for coast defence, life has, of course, been extremely intricate, because his was the heaviest work, and male labour is unprocurable. We now, therefore, gaze with appraising eyes at the muscular proportions of our men friends, and calculate which job they had better be put to. Since the departure of the dismal female failures who followed the bluejacket, life has had to be mapped out afresh; and one thing we have been compelled to do away with is giving tea to wanderers. It takes more time and strength than I possess to get a meal for extra people, clear it away, and wash up afterwards. One unfortunate young man managed to get four days' leave, which he craved to spend out of doors on the moor. The first afternoon I started for a walk with him, came back without him at 4 P.M., and began to get tea.

'What have you done with Plantagenet de Courcy?' asked the Rainbow-Maker.

'Put him into the linhay to cut up faggot-wood. He loves cutting up wood,' I added, in response to a gleam in the maternal eye.

She did not reply, but listened thoughtfully all tea-time to dreary distant bumpings from the regions of our wood linhay. That afternoon Plantagenet de Courcy cut up five bundles of faggot-wood—no mean task. Next day, when I returned alone at tea-time, I volunteered the information that he was weeding the lily-bed.

'Aren't you going to give him some tea?' asked the Rainbow-Maker, shocked.

'He never has tea. Hates the meal. Besides, if he loses any time, he won't have done by dark.'

Such is the forgivingness of man that, when he got back, this ill-treated friend wrote saying his two happiest afternoons were those he spent cutting wood and weeding. I am convinced it was not satire; and how much sweeter it is to be served for love by gentlemen than for money by inferiors!

My most intimate friend had the experience of his life one autumn day. He arrived to visit the chapel at 11 A.M., accidentally encountering me outside, in a cap and large blue pinafore, shaking curtains. He asked, with much sympathy, if he could do anything; to which I sadly replied, 'I don't think so. Our domestic treasure has gone to market, and I am doing all the work to-day.'

With much spirit he thrust his services on me, came in, took off his coat, and turned to. Besides all the ordinary work of the house, I was changing the curtains for winter—a fearsome task, during which I learnt the truth of old Granny Caunter's remark, 'A house with many windows be only fit for gentry.' Many windows do cost time and money. The friend first helped me to take the summer curtains off the poles, and replace these by the winter ones. During this process he suffered a good deal of damage by getting hit over the head with the other end of the rod, or else having it poked suddenly into his eye. His worst anxiety, however, was while he was helping me to nail up the chimney-screen in the dining-room. Above us, on the high mantelshelf, was the row of ancestral copper pans. At the first blow of my hammer a loud slithering began. He exclaimed nervously, 'Look out!' I took no notice whatever, but continued to hammer. He sprang behind me, like a wicket-keeper, and caught the brass kettle-stand with his right hand. Still I hammered. Following that came the copper coffee-pot, which he stopped with his left, though the handle, which is loose, shot out into the fender. Two brass fish-slices began to descend, but were jammed by the saucepans in front of them. Then the large preserving-pan, weighing about fifty pounds, awoke from a trance. My friend reached over my head and fielded that at the risk of his life, by which time I had

finished. It was then about noon, so we washed up the breakfast-things. I washed and he wiped. His gold pince-nez and signet-ring lent quite an air to the scullery. He wiped very slowly, very vigorously. I finished washing long, long before he had done the corresponding wiping. That done, I sent him out to the linhay to carry in a basket of coke for me. He could not find the shovel, so he loaded the basket with his hands, and then had to clean under the pump. After that he carried in water, and carried out buckets of waste. The moor being such a painfully tidy place, with, of course, no dustmen and dust-carts, such things as cinders, orange-peel, tea-leaves, banana-skins, and other solid matter have to be carried to their own burial-place across the farmyard. He did all this quite nicely, and then came back, inquiring what next. To which I responded, 'Next, while I get lunch, take on the rôle of hall-porter. Sit on the oak chair by the door, nursing the coal-hammer and the billhook, and kill any inquiring stranger who wants to see me before I am ready.' He grunted with joy, and trotted off. So far as I know, no one did come. Anyhow, I never found any traces of justifiable homicide.

Just before his lunch-time, I graciously permitted him to go. He returned on tiptoe before tea, and crept quietly into chapel to pursue his belated devotions. But he had not been there two minutes before the door opened and a phantom hand beckoned him out. He followed, and the phantom hand indicated a full bucket and an empty can on the doorstep, both requiring attention. He has very expressive eyebrows, and he raised them at the sight, with an air which said more clearly than clumsy words, 'Again! Why, I did both those two hours ago. How has she done it in the time?'

If any one is yearning to kill time on the moor, he knows where to apply for the sport.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XI.—*continued.*

NOW, as they stood fronting each other very silent and grim and menacing, running feet were heard ascending the stairs, and a slender boy appeared, who, perceiving M'Ginnis, panted out, 'Say, Bud, O'Rourke 's been pinched by de cops! He wants ye t' shin over an' fix it up.'

'O'Rourke pinched!' growled M'Ginnis. 'Say you, Larry, whatcher givin' me?'

''S right, Bud; dere 's a noo captain on de precinct, an' he 's pinched O'Rourke. 'N' say, Bud, de games 's all balled up; de push is all up in de air. 'N' say, O'Rourke 's crazy, an' can't do nothin', so he sent me t' fetch ye. You 're de only one as can fix de police, so come on right now before de whole show 's busted up.'

During this breathless speech the narrowed eyes of M'Ginnis never left Ravenslee's pale, placid face, and in the persistence of this ferocious glare was something animal-like.

'Say you, Mr Butt-in,' said he, 'I ain't through wid you; not by a whole lot, I ain't. Oh, I 'll get ye yet, an' I 'll get ye good. There won't be nothin' left for nobody else when I 'm through wid you. Savvy this, there ain't nobody ever goin' t' queer me with Hermy Chesterton. Oh, I 'll get ye good, an' I 'll get ye soon.' So saying, Bud M'Ginnis turned and went, slow and unwilling, down the stair.

'Gee, but I 'm glad he 's gone!' said Spike as he closed the door. 'Gee, but I 'm glad!' and he drew a deep breath.

'So am I,' said Ravenslee, sinking into the arm-chair; 'but there 's always to-morrow, isn't there?'

But instead of replying, Spike stood to stare on Ravenslee with eyes of admiring awe. 'I guess you know how t' handle y'self, Geoff,' said he.

'I used to think I could, once upon a time,' answered Ravenslee, stooping to recover his pipe.

'That sure was some wallop you handed him.'

''Twas fair, I thank you, comrade.'

'I shall be awful sorry to have you leave me, Geoff.'

'Leave you?'

'Well, you heard what he said?'

'Yes, I heard.'

'An' you know what he meant?'

'I can guess.'

'You 'd best shin out o' Mulligan's first thing to-morrow.'

'What for?'

'Bud says you must, an' he 'll make you, worse luck!'

'Oh, how?'

'Well,' said Spike in low, troubled tones, 'he 'll stick de gang on to you if you don't make your getaway while you can.'

'My God!' exclaimed Ravenslee, his eyes suddenly very bright, 'I never thought of that.'

'Yes; so I 'm thinkin' you 'd best shin off t'-night, Geoff,' sighed the lad gloomily.

Whereupon Ravenslee pocketed his pipe and clapped him joyously upon the shoulder. 'Banish that dejection, my comrade,' said he, 'for now, my Arthur-Spike, "now is the winter of our discontent made glorious summer in this brutal Bud," and'——

'Whatcher mean, Geoff?'

'I mean that life's erstwhile dull monotony is

like to be forgotten quite in the vigorous, exhilarating air of Hell's Kitchen. Hell's Kitchen suits me admirably; consequently in Hell's Kitchen I'll stay.'

'Stay! Geoff, are ye crazy? What about Bud M'Ginnis?'

'M'Ginnis, my Arthur? Oh, Bud M'Ginnis may be—— Hush! Straighten the cloth yonder, Spike; she's coming at last, by heaven!'

CHAPTER XII.—CONTAINING SOME DESCRIPTION OF A SUPPER-PARTY.

'OH!' said Hermione, as she caught sight of Ravenslee's tall figure, 'you've come, then, Mr Geoffrey? I've been hoping and praying you wouldn't. I mean,' she added hastily, in answer to his look—'I mean, I have only two miserable little chops for supper.'

''S all right, Hermy,' cried Spike. 'I told you not to worry about the eats; look what's here. Stand out o' the light, Geoff, so's she can see the table.'

'Why, wha—what's all this?' she exclaimed, staring at the numerous well-filled dishes with blue eyes very wide. 'Oh goodness, gracious me!' and she turned to look at Mr Ravenslee, who, meeting that wonderful glance, actually found himself stammering again.

'The fact is, Miss Hermione—er—I say the fact is we—Arthur and I—are giving a little supper to-night in honour of—of—er—my birthday.'

'You bet we are, Hermy,' added Spike. 'Will you pipe the turk'?'

'We have been waiting for you,' continued Ravenslee, placing a chair for her. 'You see—er—you are to be our guest of honour—if you will?'

'Sure you are,' nodded Spike, 'and I am head-waiter, eater-in-chief t' the turk' while she lasts, an' chief mourner when she's gone; so now I'll go an' make th' tea, only don't begin without me; a fair start an' all together—see?' and, speaking, he vanished into the kitchen.

'But a whole turkey!' said Hermione, viewing it with feminine, knowledgeful eyes; 'and then all this ham and tongue, and—Mr Geoffrey, how extravagant of you!' and she shook her shapely head at him reprovingly, but with a smile curving her red lips; and, lo! there was the shining curl above her eyebrow again more wantonly alluring than usual. 'Whatever made you buy so much?'

'Mr Pffeffenfifer,' answered Ravenslee, staring at the radiant curl; whereupon she, becoming aware of it, would have sent it into immediate retirement among its many fellows, but that he stayed her humbly. 'Please don't,' he said.

'But it—tickles.'

'Well, let it!'

'But why should I?'

'For m—Arthur's sake.'

'Arthur's!' she laughed. 'Oh Mr Geoffrey, as if he would ever notice!'

'Well, then, for the—er—turkey's sake!'

'The turkey!' she laughed. 'I'm afraid I'm dreadfully untidy to sit down at such a luxurious feast.'

'Are you?'

'Well, am I not? Look at this poor old gown.'

'I'm afraid I didn't notice your—er—gown.'

'What did I tell you, Hermy?' said Spike, entering with the teapot. 'Geoff ain't—I mean, isn't—that kind o' guy—I mean mutt—no, I mean feller. Ye see, Geoff, a girl always thinks a feller's got his lamps—I mean eyes—on their rags—clo'es, I mean. 'S funny, ain't it? Gee, but I'm hungry!'

'So am I,' said Hermione.

'So am I,' said Ravenslee.

'Why, then,' quoth Spike, 'I'll tell you what. Let's all sit down an' eat. I guess I'm full o' brilliant ideas t'-night, but this ain't no time to talk—not with that turkey starin' us in the face, it ain't—isn't, I mean. So quit chewin' de rag an' let's chew d' turk' instead—an', gee! but that's some brilliant too, I guess.'

So down they sat forthwith; and, while Hermione presided over the cups and saucers, Ravenslee carved.

'Light or dark meat, Miss Hermione?' he inquired.

'Hermy likes th' light, but a drumstick for mine; an' please don't forget th' stuffin', Geoff.'

'Tea, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Thanks!' he answered, pausing to watch the curve of her shapely neck as she bent to pour the tea, and to note how her white hand grasped the battered teapot, little finger delicately poised.

'Say, Geoff, get busy,' said Spike wistfully. 'I know the teapot's a bit off on looks, but I broke the best one, an''——

'I didn't even notice the teapot, Spike,' said Ravenslee, meeting Hermione's quick upward glance.

'Oh, cheese it, Geoff; here you've sat, with your fork in th' turk' an' your knife in th' air, starin' at that teapot a whole minute.'

'No, Spike; no. I was only thinking that tea never tastes quite right unless poured out by a woman's hand; and the fairer the hand the better the tea.'

'Which means—just what, Mr Geoffrey?' laughed Hermione.

'Why, that Spike and I are about to drink the most delicious tea in the world, of course.'

'I'd rather be eatin' that turk' when you've sawed me off a leg,' sighed Spike. 'I say, when you have.'

'Ah, to be sure,' said Ravenslee, turning his attention to his carving again, while Hermione bowed her golden head above the tea-cups.

'Gee, but she cuts tender!' quoth Spike; 'that bird sure has the Indian sign on me.'

'Sugar, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Two lumps, please.'

'Milk, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Thank you.'

'Geoff,' said Spike wearily, 'I cracked that milk-jug last night; but you don't have to sit starin' at it that way, an' me dyin' o' hunger by inches.'

'My humble apologies,' said Ravenslee, wresting his gaze from a certain curl and fixing it upon the turkey again. 'I'm a little—er—distracted to-night, it seems.'

'Oh gee!' said Spike in a hopeless tone, 'now Hermy's gone an' filled my cup with milk.'

'Why, boy dear, so I have,' she confessed with a rueful laugh, and her cheeks were very pink as she rectified her mistake.

'Are you distracted too, then?' demanded Spike.

'No, I—I don't think so. No, no, of course I'm not. I—I was just thinking, that's all.'

'Not about tea, I reckon. Say, what's gettin' you two, anyway?'

'Arthur,' said she serenely as she passed his tea, 'please fetch some more hot water.'

Spike sighed, rose, and, taking the jug, went upon his mission.

'And how do you like Mulligan's, Mr Geoffrey?' inquired Hermione, regarding him with her calm, level eyes.

'Very much,' he answered; 'I like it better and better. I think—no, I'm sure—I would rather be in Mulligan's than anywhere else in the world.'

'Oh! Why?'

Down went carving knife and fork, and leaning toward her, he answered, 'Because in Mulligan's, among many other wonders, I have found something more beautiful and far more wonderful than I ever dreamed of finding.'

'In Mulligan's?' she asked, looking her amazement.

'In Mulligan's,' he answered gravely.

Now here, all at once, her glance wavered and sank before his. 'What do you mean?' she inquired, staring into her cup.

'Shall I tell you?'

'Yes—no!' she murmured hastily and a little breathlessly, as Spike re-entered, who paused, jug in hand, to stare.

'What! haven't you served Hermy yet?' he inquired in an injured tone.

'Certainly I have,' answered Ravenslee; 'here it is, you see—all ready.'

'Only you forgot t'hand it t'her, an' she forgot t'take it. Well, say, for hungry folks you two are the limit.'

'"Man doth not live by bread alone," boy; we were talking,' said Ravenslee, handing Hermione her plate.

'You said you liked milk and sugar, didn't you, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Holy gee!' murmured Spike.

'Milk and sugar, thank you,' said Ravenslee, heedful of her deepened colour.

'Geoff,' inquired Spike gently, 'if I was to hang on to that drumstick, d'ye suppose you might be able to hack it off for me—some day?'

'My Arthur,' said Ravenslee, plying knife and fork energetically, ''tis done—behold it!'

'But surely,' said Hermione, glancing up suddenly—'surely you don't like Mulligan's, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Like it, Miss Hermione? I—abominate it.'

'Oh!'

'Say, Geoff,' mourned Spike, 'don't I get any stuffin' after all?'

'Mr Geoffrey, I've been wondering how you and Arthur met—and where, and'——

'Gee, Hermy!' Spike exclaimed, 'you sure do talk. If you go on askin' poor old Geoff s'many questions he'll forget t'serve himself this week. Look at his plate.'

'Why, Mr Geoffrey, do serve yourself, please. And—oh, my gracious! I've forgotten to give you your tea; I'm so sorry.'

Here Spike, having once again staved off the inevitable explanation, grew hilarious, and they laughed and talked the while they ate and drank with youthful, healthy appetite.

(*Continued on page 197.*)

EARLY SCOTTISH LIGHTHOUSES.

By D. Alan Stevenson, B.Sc.

THE history of lighthouses in Scotland goes back only to the beginning of the seventeenth century, and one must search among the records of the early periods when the Eastern Mediterranean was the centre of civilisation and commerce to trace the existence of the earliest lighthouse. The Pharos of Alexandria, in Egypt, built in the third century B.C., is the most celebrated lighthouse of antiquity; but it does not seem to be generally known that others were in existence in even more ancient times. The oldest Grecian records make reference to fire-beacons on headlands; but these were probably mere bonfires, not regularly exhibited. The earliest lighthouse of which there is record as having been established at a particular locality, though obviously too excellent to have been the first erected, was at Cape Sigeum, now Cape Yeni-Shehr, at the entrance to the Dardanelles on the Asiatic side, about a mile south-west of Kum

Kale. A description of it was given by Lesches, a poet of about the seventh century B.C., and there are grounds for supposing that it was in existence five centuries earlier. A tablet found in Rome, and dating from the period of the first emperors, represents various incidents of the Trojan War, one of which shows Æneas, after the burning of Troy, embarking from the shore close to the tower of Sigeum, with an inscription stating that the lighthouse is depicted according to the description given by Lesches.

There is evidence of over a dozen lighthouses having been definitely established on the shores of the Mediterranean before the Christian era, and it is certain that there were many others which have not been chronicled. The spread of civilisation throughout Europe, the quickening of trade, the increased importance of navigation, and the consequent call for lighthouses followed intimately the Phœnician and Roman conquests. The first lighthouse in the British Isles was erected by the Romans in the first century A.D. Lighthouses and beacons were also put up by the Danes and the Norsemen, and others were erected in later times; but it was not until the seventeenth century that they began to be regularly established in this country. In the year 1799 lights were established at forty-two places in England, including lightships and five coal-fires; fifteen in Scotland, one being a coal-fire; and six in Ireland. It may be mentioned that the last coal-fire in England was abolished in 1823; the last in Europe was in Sweden, and was discontinued about 1846.

In Scotland, the earliest lighthouses to be established—leaving out of account traditions, such as that of a light from St Anthony's Chapel tower above Holyrood; even if authenticated, such a light would have been quite useless as a practical aid to navigation, though it may have been of religious significance—were in 1636 on the Isle of May at the entrance to the Firth of Forth, at the entrance to the Tay some time before 1640, on the island of Little Cumbrae in the Firth of Clyde in 1757, and on Leith Pier in 1758. All of these were erected by private individuals or at the instigation of the shipping interests of the localities. No general lighting of the Scottish coast was undertaken until 1786, when an Act instituted a Board of Commissioners, who were incorporated in 1798 under the title of 'The Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses,' and authorised the erection by them of four lighthouses, at Kinnaird Head (erected in 1787), Mull of Cantire (1788), North Ronaldshay (1789), and Island Glass (1789). The Commissioners, who have ever since controlled the lighting of the coasts of Scotland and the Isle of Man, as the Trinity House have controlled the lighting of the English coast, were empowered by further Acts of 1788 and 1789 to erect lighthouses at Pladda (1790), and at any other places whenever their funds from dues on shipping should permit; but they erected only one before the end of the century, at Pentland Skerries (1794). The other lights existing in Scotland in the year 1799 were at Portpatrick (erected before 1787), Southerness (1789), Ayr (1790), Cloch (1797), and also probably at Aberdeen and Dundee. At the Tay entrance, at Ayr, and at Pentland Skerries two lighthouses were established, and at Pladda two lights were shown from one tower. The history of all these lights is of interest; but it will be sufficient to deal only with the three oldest—those on the May Island, at the Tay entrance, and on Cumbrae Island.

In considering these lights, it is important to remember that the dioptric system of lighthouse illumination by means of refracting prisms, which is the system usually employed nowadays, was not introduced till the year 1821. Most of the ancient lighthouses—such as Sigeum, for instance—were merely an extension of the primitive idea of a bonfire on a hill-top, and consisted of a high tower, usually of masonry, to carry a fire from burning billets of wood. Later the fire was often of coal, and sometimes at one place a group of three or even four of these towers carrying coal-fires was established to give a distinctive character. Exposed wood or coal fires, and very occasionally an arrangement of oil-lamps or candles without reflectors, were the sole means of illumination in lighthouses previous to the eighteenth century, when the catoptric or reflecting system was introduced. Plane metallic reflectors were used at Cordouan Lighthouse in France in 1727; and parabolic reflectors were introduced at the Mersey lights in 1763, but did not come into general use till some years afterwards. They were introduced in Scotland about 1782 at Leith Pier light by Thomas Smith, afterwards engineer for the Northern Lighthouses, who later, in 1787, designed a greatly improved form of reflector, which he used at Kinnaird Head and elsewhere.

The May Island, a mile long and half a mile in breadth, right in the entrance to the Firth of Forth and over five miles from shore, is clearly of importance for a lighthouse, and it is not surprising that the first lighthouse to be erected in Scotland was placed here. The island formerly held a priory as well as a chapel, famous for its connection with Saint Adrian, who settled on the island, and was killed by the Danes in the year 807. At one time the island supported some fourteen families. Within sight, and lying to the north, is the Inchcape Rock, on which stands the oldest existing rock-tower in the world—Robert Stevenson's celebrated Bell Rock Lighthouse—lighted in 1811. According to tradition—and Southey—a bell rung by the motion of the waves was once fixed to the Rock by an ancient Abbot of Arbroath; but there is no definite record or evidence that this was so.

Probably the first proposal for lights on the

May was made in 1630, when a petition for the erection of a lighthouse or beacon was presented to Charles I., and remitted by him to the Scottish Privy Council, who directed the 'provost and baillies of Edinburgh, Dundie, St Andrewes, Caraill, Anstruther easter and wester, Pittenweeme, Dysart, Kirkaldie, and Bruntilland' to appear before the council, 'to give their advice and opinion anent the said propositioun.' Nothing seems to have come of the matter until 1635, when Charles directed the council to appoint a commission to take evidence at the burghs interested as to what should be done on account of the 'dangers at the entrie of the firth of Forth, and the frequent losses of our subjects liffes and goods, and of strangers adventuring there speciallie in the night time.' A commission of ten was appointed, of whom four were to be a quorum. The members being evidently much taken up with the troubles and agitations of the time, great difficulty was found in arranging sittings, and their powers had to be referred back to the council and the quorum reduced to three. Ultimately they completed their investigation, which was reported on in favour of a light by a further committee of seven members, of whom three formed a quorum, including always either Lord Traquair or Lord Lorne. The evidence of the witnesses in opposition seems to have been considered of little weight, they being referred to as 'few, and these not very considerable.'

In 1636 power by letters patent was granted to James Maxwell of Innerwick, and John Cunningham of Barns, the proprietor of the May Island, to erect a light and collect dues for its maintenance, at two shillings Scots (about twopence sterling) per ton on Scottish vessels, and four shillings on foreigners, including English and Irish shipping. The light, a coal-fire, was established in the same year, the tower being forty feet high and two hundred feet above the level of high-water, with a grate or chauffer on the top for containing the coals, which was about two feet high and three feet square, tapering in at the bottom. The architect who planned and built the tower perished in a storm, which some old women, supposed to be witches, were burnt for raising. Apparently the patentees found difficulty in collecting the dues, and in 1639, by an agreement between them and the Convention of Royal Burghs, which was ratified by the Scottish Parliament in 1641, the burghs undertook to assist in making the collection, the dues were to be decreased to one and a half shillings Scots on Scottish shipping, and to three shillings on foreigners, and the light was to be extinguished during May, June, July, and half of August.

From time to time bitter complaints were made by seamen as to the inefficiency of the light, and the reason is not difficult to understand. In a severe storm, when lights were most wanted, the exposed position of the chauffers of coal-fires rendered them very useless for navigation purposes, since they kindled to windward and were generally enveloped in smoke to leeward. Sometimes the use of bellows was found an advantage, but occasionally the coals were blown out of the grate altogether. One of the keepers at the May was found to have been in the habit of putting his arm through the windward bars of the grate for his own safety while he shoved in the coals with the other; and this has been noted by R. L. Stevenson in *Some College Memories:* 'The huge shock of flames of the May beacon stream to leeward, and the watchers, as they feed the fire, lay hold unscorched of the windward bars of the furnace.'

In 1786 a committee of the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce visited the island, and reported that when they lay at anchor at night off Gullane Ness, fourteen miles up the Firth, they could not see the light. They proposed, among other suggestions for its improvement, that the grate should be enlarged and raised to give access to the air underneath; that the fire-bars should be perpendicular and not horizontal; that the coals should be brought to the island in summer, and in shallow-draft boats, so as to land them dry; and that a new lighthouse should be built with a crane on the top for hoisting up the coals. The coal was got from Alloa, and was inferior; and they recommended that coal from Wemyss, in Fife, which was used at Heligoland and other Continental lights, should be supplied in future, as giving a steadier light. The keeper of the light, who, with his wife and six children, was the sole occupant of the island, received only seven pounds per annum, and was obliged to fish for a living. On occasions, in a storm, he had to put in to the Fife coast for shelter, and then there was no proper person on the island to look after the light. The committee also got a report from Thomas Smith, aforementioned, on altering the light to the system of oil-lamps and reflectors, to which the committee 'allowed much ingenuity, but were of opinion that a coal-fire should be continued.' He had estimated the cost of the improvement at three hundred pounds, and the annual expense of maintenance at fifty pounds. The trustees of the owner, Miss Scott of Scotstarvet, agreed to carry out the suggestions of the committee, and the light was thereby much improved; in fact, it was now the finest coal-light in Britain, the chauffer being double the capacity of any other, and burning nearly four hundred tons of coal annually. It was, however, still very inefficient in bad weather, when most required by the mariner. The Trinity House of Leith, in 1790 and afterwards, pressed on the Duke of Portland, into whose possession the light had come by marriage, the advantage of adopting the system of lamps and reflectors. In 1796 the Duke consulted the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, who now gave their approval to the proposal.

But nothing further was done, and the coal-fire was not interfered with.

In 1809 the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, on the suggestion of Robert Stevenson, their engineer, considered the advantage to the public if they were to take over the light; but it appeared that any improvement would have to be carried out by the proprietor. Consequent on the loss of two Admiralty frigates, the *Pallas* and the *Nymphen*, in 1810, by mistaking a fire on shore for the May light, the Admiralty asked the Commissioners to assume the light. Ultimately the Government gave a grant for the purpose, and the island and the rights of toll were purchased in 1814 for sixty thousand pounds, and vested in the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners, who reduced the dues to one penny per ton on all British shipping, and to twopence on foreigners. In 1816 the coal-fire was abolished, after an existence of just over one hundred and eighty years, and a fixed light from oil-lamps and reflectors was exhibited from a new lighthouse, and was described in a public notice of the time as like 'a star of the first magnitude.' The old tower was retained as a shelter for pilots and fishermen.

The revenue raised from the May light dues in 1799 amounted to nine hundred and seventy pounds, and the expense of its maintenance for the year 1790 was three hundred and seventy pounds, made up as follows: '£142 for 366 tons of coals; £84, freight; £69, three keepers; £29, discharging the coals, pilotage, carrying provisions to the island; £34, sundry accounts for hay, beans for the horse, ropes, blocks, freight and carriage of do., harness, slaters' and saddlers' accounts; also £12 for the former keeper's child.' The horse was used in carrying the coals up to the tower. The child was saved in a disaster of 1791, when the keeper, his wife, and five of his children were suffocated by the smoke, from the accumulation of cinders still glowing, thrown out from the grate after each night's burning, entering by the windows.

Lights at Buddonness, on the north side of the entrance to the Firth of Tay, were established some time previous to 1640. James VI. in a charter of 1601 granted the town of Dundee the right to levy a duty of twelve pence Scots per ton on all shipping making the Tay entrance, and to apply the proceeds for the erection and maintenance of buoys, marks, and signals on the sands at the entrance 'for showing and pointing out the dangers and depths of the waters to all navigators sailing to or from the havens of the said water of Tay for the safety of their ships, boats, and goods.' An Act of Privy Council in 1687 gave power to the Fraternity of Masters and Seamen in Dundee to erect lights and beacons in the Firth of Tay, and to collect dues. This was further confirmed by a charter of George III. in 1774. In Captain Collins's chart of 1689 two towers are indicated and are marked as 'Bottannais Lights,' and until 1726 they were generally known as the Lights of Tay. At first they seem to have been wooden structures, but later were two stone towers—a high and a low—a little distance apart to serve as leading lights. The expense of maintaining them frequently exceeded the amount they produced in dues. These lights are interesting as being not coal-fires but oil-lights. Before 1640 they did not burn during the summer months, and are recorded as consuming three barrels of oil per annum; after this date they burned candles until 1700—except in the year 1687, when four pints of oil were purchased to try two lamps, which, however, do not seem to have given satisfaction, as they were not adopted. In 1700 one of the lights, probably the lower one, was converted to oil, the higher light apparently also being converted about 1720. In 1714 forty stones of candles were used, and no oil; probably oil was too dear that year. In 1789 Thomas Smith replaced the sixteen common black lamps or 'cruisies' by six lamps and reflectors in the high lighthouse and three in the small one.

In the Firth of Clyde a lighthouse was erected on the island of Little Cumbrae in 1757, the Act constituting the Cumbrae Lighthouse Trust, now known as the Clyde Lighthouses Trust, who were empowered to erect it, being passed in 1755. Coals costing one hundred and twenty pounds annually were consumed on an open platform on the top of a stone tower, which stands on the top of the island to this day, and the cinders and unburnt coal from the old fire are still visible round the foot of it. The coal-light, like that on the May Island, was found very irregular and uncertain in its appearance, and frequent complaints were made as to its inefficiency. The keeper carried the coals up to the tower, a climb of two hundred feet, on his back, and received a yearly salary of thirty-two pounds. In 1792 the Trustees resolved to abolish the coal-fire on Cumbrae, and to substitute a light from oil-lamps and reflectors on the system that had been introduced by Thomas Smith, who was applied to for constructing the light upon the newest and best principles of the day. A new lighthouse, Robert Stevenson's first lighthouse work, was erected on the west side at a lower level than the old tower, which was considered from its height to be too liable to be obscured by fog. The lantern was constructed chiefly of timber, with small panes of crown glass and numerous astragals. Spermaceti oil was consumed in crusie-lamps with Argand burners, and thirty-six reflectors were fitted in at the cost of three guineas each, the whole improvements costing over four hundred pounds. About 1790 the Trustees had been pressed to erect a lighthouse on Cloch Point, just below Greenock, but the annual expense of the old

Cumbrae light alone was found to take up the whole income of the Trust. The new light on Cumbrae, however, was found so much less expensive to maintain than the old coal-fire that the Trustees soon found themselves with sufficient funds to allow them to undertake the erection of the Cloch Lighthouse, which was afterwards established in 1797, and it was found possible to maintain the two oil-lights on Cumbrae and Cloch for the same expense as the former coal-fire on Cumbrae.

It should be made clear that although attention has been drawn to the early condition of the illumination of these Scottish lighthouses, which according to present-day standards was imperfect indeed, yet it must not be supposed that such a state of affairs was obtaining in Scotland alone. Such an impression would be quite erroneous; for Scotland was in no way behind other countries in this, although as yet she did not occupy the remarkably pre-eminent position in lighthouse engineering which she held under the Stevenson family in the next century.

'OLE CAM'RON.'

CHAPTER III.

'IAN,' said Margot one late afternoon of a stifling hot day in August, as she came out to the veranda, looking cool and fresh in linen riding-skirt, her bridle in one hand, and a piece of mosquito-netting in the other, 'if I put this netting over baby, and leave him here to sleep in the hammock, could you keep an eye on him while I ride up to Light Cañon, and see how poor old Cameron is getting on? Kit is standing under the tree, so it will be no trouble to catch her, and I should like to ride.'

'All right, Meg,' replied her husband, 'if it won't be too hot for you and you don't mind going alone. Wait a second and I will get Kit and saddle her.'

'No, you won't!' contradicted Margot peremptorily. 'Please sit just where you are—you look awfully white, Ian *mochrae*,' she added gently in the soft Gaelic of their tenderest moments. 'Had I *better* go?' she asked abruptly, an anxious expression in the tender brown eyes.

For answer, her husband rose from the long chair (but not, alas! Margot noted, with the old glad spring), letting fall unnoticed several sheets of paper covered with figures in Ian's scraggly pencillings. 'Don't be silly, Meg; of course you'll go. Old Cameron's "kitties,"' he mimicked, 'will be out of condensed milk if you don't. So "get a move on," as our Western friends say; and I'll wake up the baby as soon as you are out of sight!' So saying, he snatched the bridle from Margot's hand, and a few moments later she was loping up the hill, constantly turning in the saddle and waving her hand to the tall figure at the bungalow gate. Well she knew that not for worlds would her undemonstrative husband wave back to her; it was enough to know that he expected *her* to wave, and that his gray eyes would follow her until she was out of sight. So she waved and smiled until a leafy turning hid him from view; then the smile died on her lips, and the brave, dark eyes filled with tears. No use trying to hide the truth from herself, her troubled thoughts ran; things were not well with her husband—very far from well. And he was trying to bear it all—to spare her the anxiety that was sapping his own strength. For anxiety it was, and not his lungs; of that she felt sure. Had not the famous specialist in San Francisco said that he was better? 'Wonderfully better in our wonderful climate,' had been his words. No; it must be *worry*, and Margot set her white teeth and drew her dark brows together in an anxious frown. All those rows and rows of figures over which poor Ian's pencil was constantly labouring—she had seen enough to realise that the vast majority were on a debit side of the paper.

Thus pondering, and casting about in her mind as to how she could more ably help her husband in his difficulties, she reached Old Cameron's cabin door. Within all was quiet—so quiet that Margot hesitated to knock. Gently lifting the latch, she looked in, and saw the old negro lying on his bed, his eyes closed, the thin, worn hands loosely clasped, and the breathing so light that for an instant the girl thought the old man's spirit had fled.

Then, as the coon, lying at his feet, suddenly uncurled, and jumped down to receive a titbit from the hand of the visitor, whom he had long since learned to recognise as a friend, Old Cameron stirred in his sleep, calling softly, 'Massa Robin—Massa Robin! Was yo' a-callin' me, suh?'

Margot's eyes filled with tears, as, setting down a basket of things for the invalid, she unfolded a fan she had brought with her, and began fanning the sleeping man. Presently, however, he roused, such a glad look spreading over the wrinkled face at sight of the fair girl beside him that Margot's heart swelled with pleasure.

'Well, my dear old friend,' she said gaily, 'you see I stole a march upon you, and even Toby here did not betray me! You've had a nice sleep, and now must take some of the jelly that I have brought you.'

The old darky smiled his gratitude, but had no appetite for even Margot's nice jelly, and of the grapes which she handed him he ate only one

or two, and then gave the bunch into the eager paws of his pet coon. 'An' how is de Cap'n, missy, an' lil' Massa Robin?' he asked, grinning broadly at mention of the latter. Then, after listening a while to his visitor's pleasant chatter, he suddenly looked at her rather sharply as she leaned across the bed to gather Toby's scattered grape-skins. 'W'at's de mattah wid yo'self, honey?' he asked anxiously. 'Yo' doan' look well, my dearie,' he went on, patting the white hand, and beaming upon the girl with eyes full of tender solicitude.

Something in the kind touch, the tender words falling unexpectedly upon the ear of the young Scotch girl, so terribly far from home and friends and with a great burden of anxiety upon her heart, burst the barriers of prolonged self-restraint and resolute pluck. For an instant she strove to evade the old man's questionings, then suddenly broke down, and sobbingly poured out all her griefs—how ill and fretted her husband was, not because of any real physical weakness, but from money difficulties; the failure of his vineyard and orchards, and the consequent disastrous columns of debts. Once the floodgates were opened, the poor girl, sure of a sympathetic listener, emptied herself of the whole sad story.

'And how we can ever pay off those debts, Cameron,' she was saying, 'I can't imagine; and Ian is too proud ever to ask his father for even a penny to tide us over. Oh, if only I had not selfishly allowed him to marry me—one who could bring him nothing but my love—he would never have come to this far-away land, never have been in such trouble!'

But at this point, suddenly her tears were checked, and her expression changed from one of distress to that of consternation, as she saw Old Cameron, half-sitting up in bed, his head, with its great shock of white woolly hair and beard, thrown back, and laughing so heartily that the coon, half-frightened, leaped down and hurried to a corner. Convinced that the display of her own distress, added to the effects of the heat on the old man's weakness, had turned his brain, Margot, bitterly reproaching herself, hastened to fetch some water, and strove to quiet him. But he only laughed the more, ejaculating, 'Trubble! Trubble! Why, *dat* ain't no trubble, honey, jus' 'cose you ain't got 'nuff money! Trubble! Why, jus' yo' dry dem purty eyes, my dearie, an' listen to Ole Cam'ron! Praise de Lawd, fo' now at las' de ole slave can repay his massa's kindness to him an' to his po' mudder, w'at he died fo' rather than sell to a cruel man! Quick! quick, Missy M'Leod!' he went on with increasing excitement. 'Yo' jus' do as Ole Cam'ron tells yo', an' dere doan' be no mo' trubble fo' yo' an' de Cap'n! Yo' see dat wooden plug on de win'ow-sill?' he continued, pointing with shaking finger. 'Tak' dat, missy, out to de spring, an' plug de pipe whar de wattah flow into de tub; den de wattah doan' run no mo', 'cept into de groun'. Den tak' de dippah, an' bail out de tub—quick as yo' kin, honey—an' den yo' *fin'* somet'ing!'

Margot, dreadfully alarmed, and still believing that the sick man was raving, thought it best to humour him; so she did as he bade her, and began emptying the tub, expecting any moment to see Old Cameron drop back exhausted on his pillow. But no! Propped forward on his elbows, he watched her through the tiny window, until, as she reached the last inch or so of water, she noticed an iron ring set into the slimy green bottom of the tub.

'Now, missy, pull de ring!' he called in cracked tones of tensest excitement.

Margot, exerting all her strength, tugged at the ring, and presently, with a loud, sucking sound, one of the boards came up, revealing a deep hollow, the circumference of the tub, carefully lined with stones. In this hollow, tightly packed, row upon row, were canvas bags of all sizes, such as prospectors use for their gold-dust! Margot, mute with astonishment, stared at the bags, till roused by a shrill call from the watcher through the window.

'Now, missy, yo' bring de gol' to Ole Cam'ron —*all his! all his!*—but w'at fo' does a po' ole niggah wan' ub so much gol'?' And he began to laugh again, clapping his hands and rocking back and forth.

Margot obediently lifted bag after bag, and, astonished at their weight and bulk, carried them to the old negro's bed. With eager, trembling fingers he plucked at the mildewed tape fastenings, and poured upon the faded quilt shining piles of nuggets of infinite size, shape, and beauty, such as the girl from the granite Highlands of Scotland had read of, but had never dreamed to see.

'Tak' 'em, honey—tak' 'em all!' cried the old prospector. 'Ole Cam'ron, he done fin' a "pocket" yeahs an' yeahs ago—an' he kep' all de gol' fo' his ole age!' Here he grinned gleefully. 'An' den, jus' w'en he begin to get *real* ole an' mebbe need a lil' money, 'long comes missy an' de Cap'n, an' tak' such good car' ub de po' ole black man dat he doan' haf to spen' any ob his gol' aftah all! Bress de Lawd fo' His goodness! So now, yo' see, Missy M'Leod, ole Cam'ron am dyin'. Dere! dere! honey; doan' yo' cry, my lil' dearie! Doan' yo' know dat I 'spec' to fin' ole massa an' young massa ober dere? An' I reckon dat eben in Hebben dey 'll sho' 'nuff need Ole Cam'ron!' His voice died away drowsily, as the shrunken figure settled gently back on the pillow, and the heavy lids began wearily to close over fast-dimming eyes. But all at once, as his old master's fair kinswoman bent anxiously over him, they opened wide again, a happy smile beamed on the wrinkled face, and, sitting up erect and alert, the old slave called out eagerly, 'All right, Massa Robin! I 'se a-comin', suh!'

THE END.

THE MILK PROBLEM.

A LESSON FROM DENMARK.

By W. J. HARVEY and C. REPPIEN, Authors of *Denmark and the Danes.*

JUST now, when the high price of milk—a food which is essential to the health and well-being of at any rate the children—is a matter of very serious concern, the method of the treatment of this problem in other countries is at least interesting, and may be very helpful. For instance, it is questionable whether the British system of the distribution of milk is the most satisfactory. With a very restricted labour market, a system which sends down one street, say, half-a-dozen different milk-carts in the early morning, and possibly twice later during the day, is, to say the least, wasteful in labour, time, and material. Why not deal with the daily supply of milk as the Post-Office deals with our letters? A method of delivery which prevents overlapping, and which is thus economical as to labour, the wear and tear of appliances, and materials, would at once reduce the cost to the consumer.

Nearly every large town in Denmark possesses a company or corporation, partly philanthropic in its aim, which exists to supply the populace with pure milk and cream at the cheapest possible rate. The most remarkable of these concerns is the celebrated Busck Milk Supply Company of Copenhagen, which has a capital of about twenty-five thousand pounds. This company limits its dividends to 5 per cent., although it could easily pay four times that amount, or more. The surplus over and above 5 per cent. is devoted to improvements in, and additions to, the machinery, equipment, and buildings. There is also a certain amount of free distribution of milk to the poor.

The company provides milk in four different grades: whole milk, half-skimmed milk, children's milk in sterilised bottles, and infants' milk specially prepared under the most stringent precautions. No cows are kept, the original supplies of milk being obtained from selected farms in the Copenhagen district.

The milk, on arriving at the company's depot, is tested and emptied into small vats, which are standing near a larger vat containing a mixture compounded of one part of salt water to two parts ice. This mixture is slowly pumped into lofty coolers, and the milk is then passed over the coolers and run into a tank, whence it is driven through a special sterilised filter made up of gravel and of cloth sheets. From the filter it passes into a large clean tank, when it is ready for distribution.

The cream, which has been separated by steam-driven Alfa separators, flows over cylinders filled with ice to an ingenious machine which has six long pipes, through which it passes into sterilised bottles. Nothing—milk, cream, butter, or cheese—is ever touched by the hand, and the extreme care with which the infants' milk is prepared has undoubtedly resulted in the saving of thousands of young lives, and contributed to the notable decrease in the figures of infant mortality for Copenhagen and the surrounding districts during the past thirty years.

A very efficient system of distribution has been devised by the company, and this attracted the special notice of Sir H. Rider Haggard during his inspection in 1910. He writes: 'All being prepared, the milk is distributed in the following fashion. Two hundred cans, each containing one hundred pounds Danish, are sent to the hospitals. Some goes to three shops the company possesses, while the rest is hawked by means of forty-four vans, which deliver it from door to door. These vans, which I saw, are extraordinarily well contrived and adapted for this purpose. The cans of whole and skimmed milk are placed on either side of the front portion of the vehicle, and locked up in such a position that the milk can be drawn through taps which are specially protected from dust. It cannot be otherwise got at even by those in charge of the van. Over the taps are written the quality and price of the milk. In the rear compartment of the van are trays which exactly fit the cases that hold the bottles of cream and of children's milk and buttermilk, the prices of which are inscribed over the door. These trays in summer are covered with a layer of ice. To draw its vans, the company keeps a stud of eighty horses, which I saw lying or standing on moss litter in beautiful stables. Not far from these stables are the ice-houses, where is stored the specially collected ice, three thousand tons of which are used every year. Much might be written about this company, but perhaps enough has been said to convey some idea of its remarkable character and the perfection of its management. It was the first society for the distribution of pure milk in the world, and I believe that even now, although some others exist in different countries, it remains the most important. If there is anything on the same scale and organised in quite the same way even in the vast city of London, the fame of it has not reached me. I suggest that here there is an opportunity for enterprising and philanthropic venders of milk in all the great towns of our country. Only could milk and cream thus collected and treated be sold at similar cheap rates in England. The charges made to the householders in London and other English cities do not seem to suggest that this would be the case. The London price [that is, in 1910] for new milk is a little under double the price for the same article in Copenhagen, whereas the difference

in the cost of cream is enormous. The Copenhagen company charges one shilling and twopence halfpenny per litre for its best cream, or, let us say, one shilling and sixpence (an outside figure) per quart, as against four shillings charged by the London dairies. Surely this is a matter that the corporations of cities might consider in the interests of the health of the population, and especially of young children. If a corporation may supply water or electricity, why should it not supply milk?'

Mr Busck's company, which started business in 1878 in hired premises, now owns eleven thousand three hundred square metres of ground, of which five thousand six hundred square metres are occupied by buildings and plant. Its daily sale of milk amounts to over twenty-five thousand quarts, and it employs a staff of one hundred and thirty men, one hundred and forty women, and two hundred and thirty boys. In cases of illness all the employés, as well as members of their families, receive gratuitous medical treatment without any deduction of salary.

All the cows used by the company are examined by veterinary surgeons twice a month, while cows supplying infants' or children's milk are tested every half-year with tuberculin. The animals are kept on pasture as long as possible. Immediately after the milking operations have been concluded the milk is cooled down to five degrees centigrade, but no pasteurisation is permitted, as this is now generally admitted to be an unnecessary proceeding, and fraught in some instances with considerable risk to the public, as, although it effectively destroys the bacilli of disease, it at the same time reduces the nutritive properties of untreated milk.

In an article published in *MacClure's Magazine* for December 1908, a contributor very succinctly stated that 'the dairyman who pasteurises good milk is a fool, and the dairyman who pasteurises bad milk a rogue. The only excuse for pasteurisation is that it is the lesser of two evils, and the Copenhagen Milk Supply Company has shown the world that it is unnecessary.'

In the well-known American review *The Outlook*, Professor J. E. Pope, commenting on his visit to Copenhagen in 1906, stated that in his judgment Copenhagen was the capital where milk is the best and cheapest. He noted particularly the importance placed upon the delivery of milk at a very low temperature, in contrast to the common practice in America and England of delivering it warm, in which case it deteriorates rapidly.

During the past thirty years the consumption of milk in Copenhagen has increased by a much greater ratio than the proportionate increase in the population would lead one to suppose. At the present moment the average consumption equals almost exactly one pint a day per person. In London and Manchester the allowance is less than one quarter of this quantity. The abundance and the cheapness of good milk has undoubtedly contributed in no small measure to the extraordinarily rapid growth of the temperance and allied movements in Denmark, as it has been clearly pointed out in the Press, the churches, and the schools that even ordinary buttermilk contains four to five times the food-value per volume of beer. Bavarian beer, for example, contains only one half-pint food-value of a quart of whole milk. A quart of Bavarian beer costs twenty-seven öre (slightly more than threepence halfpenny), while a quart of whole milk can be purchased in Copenhagen for sixteen öre (about twopence). From the point of view of cost, therefore, milk yields better value for money; while, if the relative food-values and nutritious properties are worked out, it can be demonstrated that Bavarian beer, which costs twenty-seven öre, should only be valued at four öre.

One of the most important of the appliances employed by the Copenhagen Pure Milk Supply Company is known as the hygienic milk-pail, the object of which is to collect and store the milk so efficiently cooled that it will keep long enough without pasteurising or other similar treatment. The apparatus consists of a cylindrical tinned steel pail, in the bottom of which is placed a pear-shaped copper receptacle, which is closed by means of a flat lid under the bottom of the pail. When the pail is in use the lid is unscrewed, the pail turned upside-down, and the receptacle filled with a mixture of one part common salt to three parts of crushed ice or snow. The cow is milked straight into this pail, and the milk thus loses its cow-heat. The micro-organisms are by this method immediately placed in an environment which precludes development, while the milk does not lose any of its nutritive properties.

This rapid cooling process has produced some very notable results. Dr Müller of Leipzig instituted a series of valuable experiments with Mr Busck's hygienic pail, of which we will quote one only. A certain cow, which yielded twelve quarts of milk, was milked from the two right teats into Mr Busck's pail, and from the two left into an ordinary pail, the specimens being placed side by side in bottles in a room at a temperature of fifteen degrees centigrade. The milk from the ordinary pail became sour and thick after eighty-two hours; that from the hygienic pail did not become sour until after having been kept for one hundred and forty-four hours.

In connection with the rapid cooling process invented by Mr Busck, it may be noted here that his company uses upwards of eighteen thousand pounds of ice daily, and that the whole of this enormous quantity is produced and crushed on the premises by a Danish Diesel oil-engine motor.

TWO, AND A CAVE.

By William Freeman.

SHE came upon him with startling unexpectedness, some ten feet within the cave, a point far beyond the wanderings of the average tripper. He was sprawling asleep in the autumn sunshine upon a bed of sand, still damp from the last tide, and for a space she stood motionless, looking down at him. He was wearing a shabby, gray lounge suit, his complexion had been tanned almost coffee-colour, and his chin bristled with a four-days' beard.

He stirred, yawned, and opened his eyes. The girl began to move away. He sat up, regarded her with a scowl that merged in a grin, and finally scrambled to his feet. 'Hallo! Have I been snoring?'

She shook her head. Then, seeing his eyes fixed on the string-bag she was carrying, she added timidly, 'I come back from shopping—of cakes, sixpennyworth, and bananas.'

'I suppose,' he began, and hesitated, 'you couldn't sell me some?'

'Do you mean that you are hungry?'

'Ravenous!'

She broke a couple of bananas from the bunch, and from its paper bag extracted a cake, bright with pink sugar.

'I buy some more as I return,' she exclaimed. 'I wander here because I am in no hurry, because Madame Pleckett has gone to a theatre, and I am glad to be alone.'

The man nodded, and after searching in several pockets, produced three pennies. These he offered to the girl, and when she shook her head, pitched them with gay dexterity into the open mouth of the bag.

'But I wish,' he said, as he began to peel a banana, 'that you'd share these with me.'

'I must be going back, m'sieu'.'

'Why? It isn't six o'clock yet, and I haven't had a soul to talk to for ages. It isn't as though I hadn't seen you before. Twice, yesterday, you came out of the end house on the Marine Parade, and'——

'But that does not count an introduction,' she protested.

'Then it ought to.' He flung away the banana-skin, and attacked the cake. 'Anyway, tell me something about yourself.'

'There is so little to tell,' she said simply. 'I come from Belgium, and I am given the position of maid to Madame Pleckett at the boarding-house they call The Laurels. I have to get up at six o'clock in the morning, and to dust the rooms and get the breakfast, and do many other things. I am blamed, very much, because I am slow and do not always understand. Madame speaks what you call "Cockney," and has a quick temper.'

'And how do you amuse yourself?'

She smiled. 'When I have finished my supper, I am too tired to do anything except go very gladly to bed.'

'I thought maids in England had fairly easy times nowadays.'

'Not the maids of Madame Pleckett, m'sieu'. It is only on Thursdays that I am free at all.'

He glanced at her so suddenly and keenly that she flushed. 'And so, like me, you're fed up with things?'

'Tell me of yourself,' she said hastily. 'Have you been ill?'

He shook his head. 'Why?'

'Because—well, you are young, m'sieu', and not in khaki. And I thought that all the English—all who were young and healthy, and not mad or in prison—were fighting.'

'Then we'll assume I'm mad, ma'm'selle. Because, although I'm extremely fit, I don't feel like fighting at present. That's why I'm here.'

'You mean,' she said, the delicate eyebrows arched unflatteringly, 'that you are in—in hiding?'

'That, ma'm'selle, is the position in a nut-shell. And, speaking personally, I'm fed up with the war, and all that belongs to it. The lunacy of the whole business won't bear thinking about. Here was I, in the thick of experimental work that was going to revolutionise half-a-dozen industries, and now'——

'Now the Government is wishful to make a Tommee of you, and you do not want them to. So you come to Whinsea, and bury yourself in a cave, like one escaping from prison.'

'And you,' he challenged her—'you're a prisoner, too. You're putting up with sneers, and snubs, and a slave's life generally, and the result'—he sauntered past her to the cave entrance, where the rocks that jutted out sharply on either side created a shut-in beach of their own—'the result of it all, my dear young lady, is that the pair of us are prisoners in a literal sense. We've been chatting too long. The fault, of course, was mine; but the tide in these parts is so tricky that the oldest inhabitant daren't trust it. On either side of the rocks the water is at least six feet deep.'

Her face paled. 'Then what are we to do, m'sieu'?'

'There's bound to be a solution of the difficulty. By the way, you haven't told me your name.'

'It is Dubrique—Célandine Dubrique. But at Madame Pleckett's I am called Alice, because the girl who was there before me had that name.'

'That so? My name's M'Vie. And now, as to escape. If we went to the entrance of the cave and shouted, we might attract attention.'

'But then they would find you, as well as me,

and you would be punished. It is not to be thought of, m'sieu'.'

'On the contrary, it's the first thing to be thought of.'

He went to where the water was rolling in with a steady, even swell, and shouted until breath and voice were gone. His only answer came from the wheeling gulls. He turned and regarded the cliff. From where they stood, it was utterly and hopelessly inaccessible.

'Remains,' he said to the girl, 'the cave itself. I don't know whether there 's another exit; but at the worst we ought to be able to find a ledge above high-water level, and to make our escape when the tide falls.'

'Which will happen—when?'

'It 's high-tide about nine. We ought to be able to get away at something past one in the morning. Call it two, and be on the safe side.'

'The safe side, m'sieu'?' She gave an hysterical laugh. 'But can you conceive the face of madame when I make my return?'

'Couldn't you explain'——

'Madame has little patience at the best of times; when I explain, she has none. She believes that no foreigner can tell the truth. I shall be sent out of the house with what she calls a fly in my ear—even as the first Alice, who was thought to have stolen a silver teaspoon, was sent.'

'Then,' said M'Vie, 'we 'll concentrate our energies on the immediate future. Mind the pools—there 's no sense in getting wetter than you need.'

They turned their backs on the sea, and an impudent little wave swirled round the wall of rock and followed them exultantly as they went. There was sand for about twenty yards inland, then pebbles, then scattered rocks and débris. The floor sloped to a ridge, and then went down again. M'Vie stopped to examine the walls.

'What is it?' asked the girl.

'I wanted to see where the high-water mark came. We 'll have to push on still farther.'

They were in almost total darkness when they came to where the cave divided into two narrower passages.

'It 's all right,' said M'Vie; 'I 've matches. Luckily, it 's a full box. But we 'll have to economise.' He took them from his pocket as he spoke, and lit the gloom with a tiny yellow flare.

'I don't know whether you 're what 's known as a fatalist, ma'm'selle,' he said, 'but I 've a feeling that the luck 's definitely on our side.'

'Why?' she asked.

With the match held high, he crossed to the opposite side, and returned triumphantly with a stump of candle some three inches long.

'It must have been left by a previous exploring-party,' he said. 'At the worst, it 's a couple of hours' extra illumination. Meanwhile, suppose we take the path to the left?'

She acquiesced, and for some distance they plodded steadily on.

'To me,' said the girl, breaking a long silence, 'it seems that the floor still goes downward; so that when the water comes over the higher part near the entrance'——

'Like to turn back?'

'We could at least try the other passage, m'sieu'.'

He turned back at once, glad that the darkness hid the growing anxiety in his face. They regained the main path, and M'Vie lit the candle.

'For once in my life I 'm going to be recklessly extravagant,' he announced. 'We 'll make up for it by putting on extra speed.'

'If we could only find another candle,' she sighed.

'I 'd prefer to find another exit. However, we can always go back to the ridge.'

Their second route had not the straightness of the first, and suddenly the girl slipped.

'It is because my shoes are so wet,' she explained.

M'Vie halted and looked down. A thin but active trickle of water was running along an obviously familiar channel in the middle of the path.

'On the whole,' he said, with an attempt at carelessness, 'I think it would be as well to turn back again.'

They turned back accordingly. But long before they regained their starting-place the trickle had become a vigorous little stream.

'Listen!' said the girl, clutching his arm.

A report, muffled and remote, was followed by another.

'They 're testing the big guns over at Fawsham,' said M'Vie. 'It sounds alarming, and the reverberation 's terrific; but'—— A patter of stones, followed by a deafening crash, ended the sentence.

'What—what is it?' gasped the girl.

'Wait here,' commanded M'Vie. 'Don't move. Here 's the candle, if the darkness is too much for you. I 'll be back in a jiffy.'

She waited, trembling, while he hurried in the direction of the ridge.

He returned, white with chalk, and with his knuckles bleeding. 'My remarks concerning luck,' he said, 'seem to have been premature. Those confounded guns have brought down a new mass of rock. I ought to have taken a hint from all that débris at the entrance.'

'Do you mean, m'sieu', that we cannot get out?'

'I 'm afraid that 's what I do mean—at any rate, by the main entrance. There isn't room for a decent-sized rabbit to squeeze through. We 'll have to wait until another landslip is obliging enough to set us free, or till the tide 's low enough for us to search for another exit.'

The girl's face went very white; but she made no comment.

'When I was a kiddy,' pursued M'Vie, his eyes on the water at their feet, 'I remember reciting a yarn called, "One Niche the Highest." It was about a boy who hacked his way up the face of a rock with his pocket-knife. That big chunk sticking sideways out of the roof there reminded me of it. It oughtn't to be very difficult to bring it down. If I hacked away at that soft stuff round the edges, another big-gun shot might finish the business. And if it fell without smashing, we'd have something to stand on high enough to bring our heads above the line of seaweed on the walls. Do you follow me?'

'Of course. Can I help in any way?'

'You can hold the candle. Don't let it drip.'

She stood, candle in hand, while he extracted a small but serviceable knife from his pocket. In another moment he was reaching up on tip-toes on his bunched-up coat, cutting at the rubble about the big boulder. It was risky work, and exhausting in the extreme. Presently she saw the knife slip and drop.

'Have you hurt yourself?'

'A trifle. Luckily, it's my left hand. I'll hold the light, if you'll bandage it.'

She bound the cut, which was bleeding considerably.

'By the way, what became of the string-bag?' M'Vie inquired.

'I must have left it at the entrance,' she faltered. 'Does it matter?'

'Not a great deal, though a small amount of nourishment would have come in handy.'

He gave her back the candle, and resumed the cutting.

'Stand back!' he shouted suddenly, and himself jumped.

She saw the mass of rock quiver, and then fall with a splash that drenched them with water and extinguished the candle. She became aware of M'Vie's presence against the wall near her.

'It's all right,' he said huskily. 'We've got our stepping-stone. But the corner of it caught my shoulder before I could get clear!'

He struck a match and relit the candle. The rock had turned over as it fell, leaving a jagged surface uppermost.

'All the better foothold,' said M'Vie. 'Can you scramble up?'

The girl, after one or two failures, succeeded.

'But you?' she asked.

'I'm all right for the present. How much candle have we left?'

She showed him—less than an inch.

'Better put it out for a time. We'll probably need it later. Take the matches first, though. If they get wet, we're done for.'

She took the matches from him, and blew out the light. For a time they waited in silence, that was broken only by the rushing gurgle of the water. Presently she felt a wave ripple over her feet.

'You must climb up here, m'sieu',' she insisted anxiously.

'Not yet,' said M'Vie. 'But give me your hand; I don't want to run the risk of our getting separated.'

She fumbled in the darkness, and touched his unbandaged hand. The human contact heartened them both.

'There's plenty of room here,' she begged when the stream was almost at his waist; 'I can squeeze against the wall. And it will be difficult to get up when the water is higher.'

'Hold tight, then,' said M'Vie. She heard him slipping and scuffling in the darkness, and felt the rock sway perilously. The next moment he was at her side.

'Couldn't we light the candle again?' she said. 'It will soon be difficult to keep the matches dry.'

He consented, though reluctantly. She coaxed one into a flame that lasted long enough to kindle the wick. The sight it revealed was nerve-shaking. Water, ink-black except where the walls fretted it into foam, was flowing past them in a steady, sullen stream, to fall over some distant declivity with a low roar.

'Doesn't look particularly rosy, does it?' said M'Vie grimly, as their eyes met. 'Queer how Providence brings a man up against the unexpected. I've imagined myself in all sorts of tight corners, but never one like this. There's one other scheme that occurs to me, and that's risky. Still'——

'Tell me, m'sieu'.'

'Well, the chunk of rock we're balancing on came out of the ceiling, didn't it? And though the cave slopes downward, the ground above, as I happen to know, slopes more sharply still, and our stepping-stone must have made an appreciable difference in the thickness of a roof that wasn't particularly thick to start with. If—and I admit it's a big "if"—a man were to take a sort of flying jump, and get his head and shoulders in the hole and his feet buttressed against the wall, he might be able to worry among the rubble and earth until he burst through into daylight.'

'It might be worth trying,' she admitted dubiously.

'It's a chance, anyway. But in case it should end badly'—the man's voice changed—'I'd like to tell you that I'm not quite the bad egg you labelled me. My name isn't M'Vie, but M'Vicar, of the Royal Flying Corps.'

She drew her breath sharply.

'The Major M'Vicar who destroyed the aerodrome at Lille?'

'That's so. The papers made an absurd fuss over the affair. The G.O.C. gave me a month's leave, and I went down to Fawsham to see the new guns—a regular bus-driver's holiday. But

some confounded reporter from London tracked me, and the holiday looked like being ruined. So I shed my khaki, and started to grow a beard, and hid myself here. And while I was loafing about I saw a girl come out of a big house on the front; and after that—there wasn't another girl in the universe so far as I was concerned. I didn't use to believe in love at first sight, but I know better now. I saw the girl six times in all—four times when she was dressed as a housemaid—or was it a house-parlourmaid?—and twice when she wasn't. But nothing she could have worn would have made any difference.'

He stopped. The girl's face was flooded a warm crimson in the candle-light.

'I—I, too, have to confess, m'sieu'. I came to England because our château was destroyed, and—well, one must have occupation—and I wanted to learn something of the country. So I became a maid-servant. But when my father, the Count, returns to Belgium, we shall no longer be poor. Indeed, I think that even Madame Pleckett might speak to me if we met in the street. I should not tell you these things, but you have been so good'——

There was a little pause; and then M'Vicar spoke. 'If we get out of this place alive,' he said gravely, 'do you think you could contemplate the prospect of keeping company with me? I believe that's the correct expression. It's the stage before one's properly engaged, you know.'

'The "if" is so big, m'sieu',' she answered softly, 'that I will risk disillusioning you, and say "Yes." But we must waste no more time talking now.'

'True,' he said, and gave her the candle to hold again. 'Grip the wall as tightly as you can.'

She nodded, and watched him gather himself for the leap. There was a scuffle, a deluge of small stones and earth, and then M'Vicar's head and shoulders vanished in the black gulf above. His feet groped for support against the wall, and she guided them to a projection.

'You're not hurt?' she called anxiously.

'No. Be careful with the light; I'm going to shift some of this rubble.'

The deluge of fragments began afresh. The girl, as she waited, wondered dully how long it would be before the water swept her from the rock. She had no idea of what he expected to burrow through, or how thick the roof really was; she only knew that he would have to be quick—desperately quick. The minutes that passed were filled with all the agonised confusion of a nightmare. Presently she heard a shout from M'Vicar.

'Hold on—for Heaven's sake, hold on!'

She huddled against the wall. There was a wild rush of débris, followed by an avalanche of earth that choked and half-stunned her. The candle was swept from her hand, and vanished. She gave a faint cry of terror, and peered upward. Through a ragged gap she could see the moon, pale and clear, and a multitude of stars. She heard M'Vicar's voice.

'Stretch up your arms, and I'll try to pull you through!'

A wave, more powerful than the rest, swept her from the rock as the man's hands closed over hers. She was conscious of being drawn upward, slowly and with immense effort. At the very brink there was a pause that made her heart stop beating, and it seemed as though she must inevitably drop back into the gulf again. And then, before she fainted, she felt the touch of wet turf on her face and hair, and knew that she was saved.

She opened her eyes with the sting of neat spirit on her lips. A gray-haired man was bending over her.

'Better?' she heard him say. 'Good! No, you're not much hurt. It's your friend who's come off second best. If, as I judge, he dragged you from the cave, he did it with a dislocated shoulder. He must have suffered excruciatingly. The friend who was with me has gone back to the village for some sort of vehicle. My name is Selby—Dr Wargrave Selby. We happened to be taking a moonlight stroll when we stumbled over you.'

The girl sat up, brushing the hair from her eyes. 'But—but Major M'Vicar?'

'We've every reason to hope he'll pull round, but it's bound to be a matter of a week or so. He's conscious now, if you'd like to speak to him.'

She rose dizzily, and went over to where M'Vicar was lying in the shadow of a clump of gorse. He smiled faintly as she came near.

'Well, we pulled it off, and that's something to be grateful for. I wonder if the excellent Mrs Pleckett will let me call and see you when they've patched me up again? Or doesn't she believe in followers?'

'Whether she does or does not, m'sieu',' said the girl softly, 'I shall try to tell you of my gratitude.' Then, as he made a little shamefaced movement of appeal, she bent, and, flushing hotly, touched his lips with hers.

OLD HAUNTS REVISITED.

ALL lovely things were lovely as of yore,
The beanfields had the scent of long ago.
From the blue hills to yonder distant shore
All nature basked beneath the sunlight's glow.
Flowers in the nooks we used so well to know
Stood smiling as of old, with gracious look,
As if they said, 'We bloom for thee alone;
Pluck us, and wear us;' and the tiny brook
Went on its silvery way o'er mossy stone;
And Death and Time, who stole so much away,
Seemed quite forgotten in the blessed light
Of childhood's fancies, which returned this day,
Making old places new and fresh and bright.

J. C. H.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

AT the beginning of the war, when the people of London thought little and realised less, they were agreeable to shout as they were told, and be blindly 'patriotic;' but suffering has changed that attitude. When the war was young the spirit of its people still contained elements of injudiciousness and stupidity. In those days, for instance—when, indeed, we suffered far less from German brutalities and inhumanities than we have done since—it was the custom to believe that nothing that ever came out of Germany was, or could ever have been, good. There was nothing lofty in that form of 'patriotism.' It has, however, long since been recognised that our cause is much too noble and splendid to warrant vulgarities of the grossest kind about our enemies. Some journalists felt for a time that it pleased our people to have jokes presented to them upon 'Big Willie' and 'Little Willie,' and pictures in keeping with the jokes; but the people never really desired this stuff, and they resent its being still offered to them in a few places, as if this appalling struggle were no more than a parliamentary by-election. Not because they think that for the Kaiser and his son, or the chiefs of the German State, there is one word more to be said than there was at the beginning; on the contrary, they are all more than ever persuaded that on these heads rests the blame for the agony of the world. All are determined that they shall suffer for their sins, if it is possible to make them suffer. And, again, there can be no doubt that with militarism ground into their spirits from their first days of consciousness, and with, as it appears to us, a certain barbaric taint in their blood which only needed opportunity and encouragement to burst out as an ugly disease, the German people are in the main rougher, coarser, far more brutal than the other peoples of Europe, and are not to be considered among the best civilised members of the human family. We are sure of that now when we think in calm and contemplative judgment. But yet we see to-day how stupid it was at the beginning to condemn utterly everything in living Germany, as was so regularly done. There are good men and women even in Germany—thousands of them, no doubt; and as their civilisation has been wrongly directed in recent times, the best humanity and the best German civilisation, as it might be considered, are regularly found in the lower places and not in the higher, which are Kultur-infected. The Germans may be fools because they do not rise as one man and annihilate their oppressors who are leading them and their country to destruction; but then it is not an easy thing to be revolutionarily wise. The humbler Germans have thought of the Fatherland, and their own homesteads, and their loved ones in the war, and they have realised the tremendous power of the militarism to which they have become chained. And then they have just determined to stick it out. There is something even to admire in that; but our people would not admire any German at the beginning, when the whole nation seemed slavishly to take the word of official and unofficial leaders for all that they were to like and dislike. It is a remarkable thing that of all the communities of the Allies, those which think best of the enemy now are our own soldiers. That is an accepted fact, and it has become the most striking feature of the psychology of the war during the last few months. This appreciation reaches its highest point in the case of the air services; but it is in existence in the others. In it there is no excusing of the leaders, or of the crimes of the early armies, more imbued as they were with foul Prussianism than are those which have taken their places. The man who walks in London now, or sits in his club, or is one of the gossips in the suburban trains—though people do not gossip so freely now as once they did—murmurs about our enemies in a temperate way, such as would have earned for him contempt, and maybe something worse, in the autumn of 1914, and he is quick to criticise our own leaders as he would not have done then. His attitude towards the enemy is not one of tolerance, nor is it one of forgiveness. It is not a disposition to be less thorough than ever in punishment—very far from that; it is discriminating reason. A poor German wife and mother who lives in a little cottage, has never been within hundreds of miles of Potsdam, loathed war even before she felt it, and, having felt it, has lost husband and several sons in this ghastly business, is not less deserving of compassion and sympathy than

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a British matron in like case. Possibly her future lot is a subject for even greater pity, for the truth will come upon her, if it has not done so yet, that her sacrifices were forced upon her for an unholy cause. What has she to do with Wilhelm or Hindenburg? It is in this new reason, this judicial discrimination, that our own people have now become greater than they were. They think a little as they did not think before; they judge for themselves, and so they are attaining the heights of patriotism.

* * *

One cannot fail to be struck with this changed feeling in an examination of the best of new literature, for the literature of a people generally conveys the sense of the people as do neither newspapers nor orators. Two years ago the novelists and the rest depicted for the most part an enemy devoid of any redeeming feature even in single individuals. At that time to suggest that a Dalmatian puppy was not a poisonous brute was to be counted among the pro-Germans, and for a time it was bad taste on the part of a lady did she play the 'Moonlight' sonata of Beethoven. I wonder what would have been said of Mr E. F. Benson and written to him by the indignant but then uneducated patriots if in the first six months of the war he had produced the novel *Mike* which has been so much enjoyed of late. In it one of his two heroes and a heroine are German, and play great and noble parts right through a story that is yet as finely English as it could be. Hermann and Sylvia are splendid creatures, and we see why Hermann, with the spirit of the Rhine flooding his artistic being, was glad to fight for Germany. Mr John Buchan in *Greenmantle* puts his Major Hannay into a woodcutter's cottage in southern Germany, where the poor woman, whose husband has gone to the war, gives him good shelter and comfort when he is ill and in danger. He sits with her children by the fire and reflects that this poor soul knew nothing of the causes and purposes of the war, and had no bitterness against anybody, not even the Russians if they would spare her man. 'That night,' says Hannay, 'I realised the crazy folly of war. When I saw the splintered shell of Ypres and heard hideous tales of German doings, I used to want to see the whole land of the Boche given up to fire and sword. I thought we could never end the war properly without giving the Huns some of their own medicine. But that woodcutter's cottage cured me of such nightmares. I was for punishing the guilty, but letting the innocent go free. It was our business to thank God and keep our hands clean from the ugly blunders to which Germany's madness had driven her. What good would it do Christian folk to burn poor little huts like this and leave children's bodies by the wayside? To be able to laugh and be merciful are the only things that make man better than the beasts.' One might say now that this is merely trite, and that nobody ever dreamt of burning such woodcutters' huts. But at the beginning of the war many people saw nothing good or innocent in any part of Germany, and such statements stand for the new reason. Over and over again in the books of to-day we encounter evidence of this new discrimination and reason, and as a fighting people, knowing better than ever the justice of our cause, we are strengthened by it. Here and there may be found signs that some of those who have led us are still out of touch with the new wisdom of the people. They do not understand that we do not believe that every man who by his own will or otherwise is on the other side is necessarily a devil. The whole of British history is not to be represented emblematically as a white flower. Why, then, should Serbia and Russia be counted as lands of innocents and heroes only? They contain heroes and innocents in thousands and tens of thousands, but there have been very bad men in every country in the world.

* * *

Now our new reasoners, while they believed that the Hapsburg record was an evil one, resented the line taken by the flashiest of the public educators when they utterly condemned the young man who, not by any choice of his own, was called suddenly to the high succession of the Austrian throne. He was a fool, they said, a knave, weak, and a mere German puppet. In these present days worldly ambition might well hesitate at the throne of one of the Central Empires. Carl determined he would try to do his duty, and there is evidence that in his first thoughts and acts he indicated his abhorrence of the war and his ardent desire to free his people from it. His face is frank and open; from his blue eyes there seem to beam confidence and good-nature. At the worst, monarchical knavery and ugliness are not things developed in the very young, and the new emperor is not yet thirty. I had the opportunity recently of considering a character sketch made of him by one who had personal knowledge—made since the war began, but before old Francis Joseph died, and when the present monarch was still the Archduke Charles. It is not impossible that Carl will take a step that will bring the war nearer to its end. Think, then, of a careful estimate of him by one who is on our side.

* * *

Through his boyhood and his youth he had no thought of thrones. Not till the murder that served as the prologue of this war did he become the heir-presumptive, and until that murder his chance of succession seemed very far away. So he was happy and careless in his youth, did that which pleased him most, and old Francis Joseph, liking him as all others did, was known to wish he were the heir and not Ferdinand, for Carl gave no trouble with his love and other intrigues, and was of a happy kind. Carl loved England

next to his native Austria from the beginning; an English governess taught him our language as soon as he began to learn any foreign language. He liked games such as the British play, and the outdoor life, and the Austrians of the upper and other sets murmured that this Carl was too British for their tastes. He loved dancing and many pleasures; perhaps he loved some of them more than was good for him, but he was hardly worse than frivolous. The women liked him, and because of his popularity in Vienna, his guardian, the uncle Ferdinand, the heir who was murdered, had him sent away with his regiment. Ferdinand could not speak Hungarian, Czech, French, Italian, German, and English as Carl could, and he was liked by few. Carl, impulsive, fell in love with a distinguished Viennese actress, who was nearly old enough to be his mother, and she, with wisdom, instead of taking advantage of him, played the mother and counsellor to him, became his confidante, and was the first to be told at length that the Archduke Carl had fallen really in love with an old schoolfellow. He married the Princess Zita of Parma for love only. Zita was in some ways a lovable girl. Part of her education was English, and she spent many of her early years in a convent in the Isle of Wight. She was a careful, wise-thinking girl, defended herself ably against intrigues, and tried to make herself popular. When she went into the country with her husband and walked among the rustic people, she tapped at the doors of the cottagers, and, without a murmur, bought poultry from them at the fancy prices they wrongfully asked her to pay. This was the game of being a princess. But do not imagine that these two young people, with such a destiny before them, were without character. Carl had strength. Precedent and etiquette are tremendous things in Austria; but he was afraid of neither precedent nor etiquette. From the first day of his becoming heir he showed a certain independence that shocked the old officials who knelt near to the Hapsburg throne. After the Sarajevo murders, when his uncle was killed and he became heir in his place, he attended the funeral, and angered the vastly important Master of the Ceremonies of the Vienna Court by walking behind the funeral coach. The Master of the Ceremonies, with the traditions and customs and instincts of many generations of Hapsburgs settled in his conscience and his being, had determined that no Hapsburg should demean himself by following the dead on foot. But Carl, on arriving at the railway station and having this pointed out to him, declared hotly to the astonished Master of the Ceremonies that he was now the heir to the throne, and would decide for himself what was the proper thing to do. And he alone, as first mourner, walked behind the coffin of the dead Archduke and Archduchess. In the days before the war he liked the British people, and—thanks, perhaps, to wifely influence—the Italians better than any others except his own. The Kaiser overlooked him as a young man of no importance. Possibly he may be a poor emperor; but certainly his was not a case for silly contempt when fate called him to the dread Hapsburg throne. Yet some of the paid writers, who do their work so carelessly, derided him, spoke of him as the lackey of Potsdam, and as a born enemy to Britain, France, and civilisation. In one place it was said that Carl was a young man, but that he would be very old indeed before we should trust him. Now it is quite certain that for these superficial judgments there was no basis in fact. Strange events are moving in the uncertain realms of the unhappy Hapsburgs, and stranger still are half expected. Above all things, it is clear that less than many monarchs in Europe is young Carl disposed to be the lackey of any other. So far from his being weak and light, this young emperor has a mind of his own, a sense of the overpowering seriousness of things, and a determination to exert himself for the bettering of a desperate situation. Remember this—for it is highly important to remember it—of all the belligerents Carl alone as monarch can say that he had nothing to do with the beginning of the war. His hands are clean; he neither willed it nor prepared for it, nor assented to it. His position is, therefore, unique, and to him, and perhaps to others, it is a splendid blessing. It plainly pointed a way to him when he mounted that Hapsburg throne. A personal record that was unstained by a single drop of European blood was not lightly to be abandoned. He mounted the emperor's throne wishing for peace. He saw, thanks to the folly of old Francis Joseph, this always shaky empire at the very point of disintegration and ruin. Never was its plight so pitiable, so seemingly hopeless. Austria never wins wars.

* * *

In the City and other places where financiers work they have a common expression which signifies the taking of drastic measures for wisdom's and safety's sake. They say, when things are going heavily against them, that they will stop short the business which is proving bad, that they will 'cut their losses.' Carl determined that the best thing for Austria would be to 'cut her losses,' and no man could do it with such good front as he, the innocent. He had no personal quarrel with Britain, France, Italy, or Russia. He liked them all; they had all been pleasant to him; they would be disposed to be so once more perhaps. He would like to make from those crumpled, unhappy bits of empire of which he had assumed command something like a happy country again. No young emperor ever faced a more disheartening task than Carl did on this occasion. A fair-minded enemy would admit he faced it manfully, bravely, and even wisely. It was not in his

power to stop the war himself upon the instant; but he showed that he would be a factor in arrangements from then on. He dismissed Ministers; he gave orders; he wrote to the Pope about peace; he caused it to be known far and wide that he hated war, and this war more than any other, and that he wanted peace. 'Peace!' The new emperor, the youthful king who had taken the place of the tottering Francis Joseph with the sinister look, an old dodderer who cringed to Potsdam and wrote hypocritical letters to the Kaiser about the successes of their 'glorious arms'—this new ruler spoke of peace, divine peace, and was the first of the leaders of Austria to do so since the war began. And the word sounded like a whisper from heaven to the ears of the stricken Austrian and Hungarian peoples. They were crushed, broken, beaten to the earth by the hated war. The Kaiser, with his uniforms and his eagles, came to Vienna to bestow his patronage on the new emperor at the funeral of Francis Joseph. He came to lord it, and to show the Austrians his greatness again. He expressed his intention of attending the funeral in the capacity and with the style of Supreme War Lord. Carl caused it to be known to him that he did not approve of this intention, and that Vienna and the graveside of the dead emperor was not the place for a Supreme War Lord of the Prussian or any other variety. He would, therefore, be good enough to attend as German Emperor only. It was then that the symptoms of a cold so rapidly developed in the Kaiser, and that he considered it were wise he should hurry back to Berlin without a moment's delay. He did so. Never since very many years ago, when the Reichstag gave him some hints that he should moderate his imperial ways, has the head of the Hohenzollerns received such a snub as this. It amazed him. But at the same time it drew the filmy covering from the ground in front of him, and he saw there yawning the deep black gulf that fate had prepared. Carl, it was clear, was going on his own way; he was for 'cutting the losses' of Austria, and, with such strength and tact as he could gather, was for steering for peace. Germany's game may have been settled before; but it was absolutely settled then. A few days later the Germans, desperate, made their first bid for the stoppage of the war.

* * *

Francis Joseph was a strange mixture of humankind. Many of his people loved him; almost all regarded him with sorrow and sympathy. He certainly had much sorrow in his long life, though we are not satisfied as to how deeply it hurt him. There was much selfishness in Francis Joseph, much cunning, much worldliness. He was not diabolical like the Hohenzollerns, but he was not of the kind of men who are humanly great. The Hapsburgs have been a wonderful family. They have been dukes and archdukes of Austria since 1282, kings of Hungary and Bohemia since 1526, and emperors of Austria for more than a hundred years. In their time Hapsburgs have been Roman emperors, kings of Spain, and German kings, and they were at the height of their glory and power in the reign of the Emperor Charles V., when their sway extended over some of the most important and richest states of Europe. Since those far-off days there have been many Hapsburg rulers, but few good men among them. Europe as a whole has rarely taken kindly to this breed. But in our own time there was one who seemed a better Hapsburg than any for ages past, and that was the Archduke Rudolph who was murdered. Some said at the time that it was a case of a love suicide; that was the way in which, for convenience' sake, the mysterious tragedy was explained by the Court authorities. But in Austria for some time past strange stories have been told, and they say that the truth is coming out. Rudolph, the heir to the throne, he who would have been emperor now had he lived, was enormously popular everywhere—except in Germany. He was specially popular in England; he was one of the intimates of King Edward when Prince of Wales. He was popular also with his own people, because he loved them, was an enlightened prince, with strong and original views, was of the most pronounced democratic tendencies, and had a grand scheme for the regeneration of his country when the time came for him to take command of it. All his spirit, his imagination, and his intention were adverse to moving on with Germany. In him Germany saw the greatest possible danger to her future plans. With Rudolph emperor nothing could be done for Germany; much might be done against her. And it is enough to add that not by gossips and scandal-mongers, but by responsible persons, office-holders of the past, the story is now being told, in the stress of circumstances, of how Rudolph was murdered in his bed, how with devilish conspiracy cunning details of the plot had been fashioned for years beforehand, so that the tracks of the murderers could be covered up afterwards and peoples be deceived. And it is told how the murderers were Germans working under very high command. The most absolute detail is furnished, and this story is far too circumstantial and well supported to be ignored. There has taken the place of Rudolph another Hapsburg prince, also gentler and more pacific than the rest, and he is emperor now.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XII.—*continued.*

AND what a supper that was! What tongue could tell the gaiety and utter content that possessed them all three? What pen describe all Hermione's glowing beauty, or how her blue eyes, meeting eyes of gray, would, for no perceptible reason, grow sweetly troubled, waver in their glance, and veil themselves beneath sudden, down-drooping lashes? What mere words could ever describe all the subtle, elusive witchery of her?

And Spike ate, of course, in blissful silence for the most part, and whole-heartedly, his attention centred exclusively upon his plate; thus, how should he know or care how often, across that diminished turkey, gray eyes looked into blue? As for Ravenslee, he ate and drank he knew and cared not what, content to sit and watch her when he might—the delicious curves of white neck and full round throat, the easy grace of movement that spoke her vigorous youth; joying in the soft murmurs of her voice, the low, sweet ring of her laughter, and thrilling responsive to her warm young womanhood.

'But, Mr Geoffrey,' she inquired suddenly, 'if you hate Mulligan's as much as I do, whatever made you choose to live here?'

'A thrice blessed fate,' he answered. 'I came because—er'——

'You were a poor, lonely guy,' added Spike hastily.

'Precisely, Spike. Compared to my sordid poverty, Lazarus was rich; and as for the loneliness of my existence, the—er—abomination of desolation was a flowery garden.'

'And how did you happen to meet Ar'——

A plate crashed to pieces on the floor, and, turning, she beheld Spike very red and rueful of visage. ''Fraid I've bent a plate, Hermy,' he explained, and, winking desperately at Ravenslee, he stooped to gather up the fragments.

'Oh Arthur! and we have so few.'

'Yes, I know; but it's only the old cracked one, Hermy.'

'You've broken an awful lot of things lately, boy dear,' she sighed. 'Never mind; get on with your supper, dear.'

'Oh, I'm all right, but what about you? Gee, Hermy, you sure do talk!'

'Do I, dear?'

'Well, I guess, you keep on at poor old Geoff so, he don't get a chance for a real proper chew.'

'But then, you see,' said Ravenslee, 'I would much rather talk than eat—sometimes.'

'But say, Geoff'——

'Miss Hermione, you were asking how I met'——

'Hey, Geoff!' said Spike hoarsely.

'How I met your brother,' continued Ravenslee, silencing the boy with a look. 'Miss Hermione, I'll tell you full and free.' Here Spike took a gulp of tea and choked, also his brow grew clammy, and he stared with dilating eyes at Ravenslee, who began forthwith: 'Once upon a time, Miss Hermione—that is to say, upon a certain dark night—a man sat alone, physically and mentally alone, and very wretched because his life was empty of all achievement; because, having been blessed with many opportunities, he had never done anything worth while. And as he sat there, looking back through the wasted years, this miserable fool was considering, in his wretched folly, the cowardly sin of self-destruction because he was sick of the world and all things in it—especially of his own useless self. But I hope I don't—er—bore you, do I?'

'No,' she answered a little breathlessly, and gazing at him with eyes deep and tender; 'go on—please go on.'

'Well,' continued Ravenslee gravely, 'Destiny, or Heaven, or the Almighty, taking pity on this sorry fool, sent to him an angel in the shape of —your brother.'

'Of—Arthur?' she exclaimed, while Spike's rigid attitude relaxed and he drew a sudden deep breath.

'Of Arthur,' nodded Ravenslee. 'And Arthur lifted him out of the Slough of Despond, and taught him that life might be a useful thing after all, if he could but find some object to help him; one who might inspire him to nobler things. And so he came here, hoping to find this object.'

'An object?' she inquired softly.

'The Definite Object!' he answered, 'with capital letters. One who might make life truly worth while. One who, teaching him to forget himself, should lift him to better things. An object to live for, work for, and if necessary to —die for.'

Here Spike, finding himself utterly forgotten again, sighed in deep and audible relief, and, taking up knife and fork, fell to with renewed appetite; while Hermione, chin rested on folded hand, gazed into Ravenslee's grave face.

'Do you think he will ever—find his Object?'

'Oh yes.'

'You seem very confident.'

'I am. You see, she's found.'

'She!' exclaimed Hermione, her eyes beginning to waver.

'With a capital S,' said he, leaning nearer—'The Woman! And it's right here that his difficulties begin, because, in the first place, he is so humble and she is so proud and'——

'Proud?' said she, glancing up swiftly.

'And so very beautiful,' he continued.

'Oh!' said she, and this time she did not look at him.

'Say,' quoth Spike, 'I think I could go another drumstick, Geoff.'

'And, in the second place, he is so unworthy, and she so'——

'An' a bit more stuffin', Geoff,' sighed Spike.

'Can she help him?' inquired Hermione, stirring her tea absently.

'She is the only one who can help me.'

'Oh!' said Hermione again, very softly this time, and stirring a little faster; and, conscious of his glance, she flushed deliciously and was silent a while. As for Spike, he glanced from one rapt face to the other, and unostentatiously helped himself to more turkey.

'But,' said Hermione at last, 'how can she help?'

'By constant association,' answered Ravenslee. 'By affording me the daily example of her sweet self-forgetfulness and blameless life.'

'Are you sure she is so very good?'

'I am sure she is braver and nobler than any other woman I have ever known.'

Once more Spike glanced from the flushed beauty of his sister's half-averted face to Ravenslee's shining eyes, and boldly helped himself to more seasoning.

'Have you known her very long, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Long enough to know she is the only woman.'

'Say, Geoff,' sighed Spike, 'I guess old Pffeff. was right about this bird; she kind o' melts—'n', say, she 's meltin' fast. If you two don't stop chewin' de rag an' get busy you 'll be too late for this bird; because this bird is sure a bird o' passage; an'—— Holy gee!' he broke off as a knock sounded on the outer door, 'who 's this, I wonder?'

Before he could rise, Hermione had vanished into the passage. 'Say, Geoff,' he whispered, 'how if it 's Bud?'

Ravenslee frowned and pushed back his chair.

But at that moment they heard Hermione's glad welcome: 'Why, Ann, you dear thing, you 're just in time for the turkey. Come right in.'

'Turkey, my dear!' spoke the harsh voice of Mrs Trapes. 'Turkey—land sakes! But I only jest stepped over t' ask if you 'd happened to find that lodger o' mine anywheres. Why, lord bless me!' she broke off, halting in the doorway as she beheld Ravenslee—'lordy-lord, if he ain't a-settin' there, cool as ever was! If he ain't a-eatin' an' drinkin', an' me cookin' him at this moment the loveliest mutton-chop you ever see. A mutton-chop wiv a kidney as he ordered most express; lord, Mr Geoffrey!'

'Why, to be sure,' said Ravenslee, rising. 'I forgot all about that chop, Mrs Trapes.'

'Didn't you order it most express—cut thick, an' wiv a kidney?'

'I did,' said Ravenslee penitently.

'Well, there it is, cooked to a turn, an' nobody t' eat it. An' kidneys is rose again; kidneys is always risin', lord, Mr Geoffrey!'

'Why, you see, Mrs Trapes, we—that is, I—had a birthday not long ago, and we 're celebrating.'

'And so shall you, Ann,' said Hermione. 'Sit down, dear.'

'An' me in me oldest apron?' said Mrs Trapes, squaring her elbows. 'My dear, I couldn't an' I wouldn't. But, oh! Mr Geoffrey, what about that beautiful chop? I might warm it over for your breakfast?'

'Heaven forbid!'

'Then I must eat it myself, I suppose, though it do seem a shame to waste such a lovely chop on Ann Angelina Trapes!—But, Hermy dear, I just been down to see Mrs Bowker, an' her little Hazel 's very bad—her poor little hip again; an' she 's coughin', too, somethin' dreadful.'

'Poor little Hazel! Did she ask for me, Ann?'

'Well, my dear, she did, an' Mrs Bowker did ask if you 'd go an' look at her; but I do hate t' disturb ye, that I do.'

'Oh, it 's all right, Ann. Tell Mrs Bowker I 'll be right down.'

'I will so; but it 's a dratted shame as you should shoulder everybody's troubles, that it is.'

'Oh Ann! as though I do. And then, how about yourself, dear? What of the Baxters and the Ryders, and Mrs Tipping's baby, and'——

'My land!' cried Mrs Trapes; 'that chop 'll be a cinder!' and, speaking, she hurried away.

'Poor little Hazel,' said Hermione, crossing to a small corner cupboard. 'She 's such a dear, quaint little person. You must have seen her on the stairs, Mr Geoffrey.'

'I see so many on the stairs, Miss Hermione, and they are always small and generally quaint.'

'Hazel 's got a game leg, Geoff,' said Spike; 'an' she hops around on a little crutch. She told me yesterday she thought you was—I mean were—a fairy prince, because you always bow an' tip your lid to her when she says "Good-mornin'." So now she waits for you every mornin', Geoff; says it makes her feel like she was a real fairy princess in a story-book. Sounds kind o' batty to me, though.'

Hermione was standing on tiptoe endeavouring to reach a certain bottle upon the top shelf, where were ranged many others of various shapes and sizes, when Ravenslee's big hand did it for her; but when she would have taken it he shook his head. 'I should like to go with you, if I may,' he said, 'to be—er—formally introduced to the princess.'

'But'—— began Hermione, hesitating.

'Also I could carry the bottle for you.'

'Why, if you will do all that'—— she smiled.

'Thanks!' he answered, and, putting the bottle in his pocket, he opened the door.

'Hey, Geoff,' Spike called after him, 'you've forgot to kiss the turkey good-bye.'

'Why, then, you can do it for me, Spike!' he answered, and followed Hermione out upon the stair.

Side by side they descended the stairs, in the doing of which her soft shoulder met him once, and once he thrilled to feel her hand touch his in the shadow; but this hand was hastily withdrawn. Also, though the light was dim, he saw that she was frowning and biting her red underlip.

'These stairs are rather narrow, aren't they?' said she, drawing to the wall.

'Delightfully!' he answered, drawing to the rail; and so they went down very silently, with the width of the stairs between them.

(Continued on page 215.)

INCOME-TAX ADJUSTMENTS.

By JOHN BURNS, W.S.

WITH an income-tax which has reached a 'normal' rate of five shillings per pound, it is not only a right, but a duty, of prudent and patriotic citizens, men and women, to see, on the one hand, that they do not wrong their country in a time of peril by land and sea; but also, on the other hand, that they husband their resources, and commit no waste, whether in income-tax or in any other direction. To many readers the matters mentioned below will be at best reminders only, but useful as such; to others they may convey new lessons.

When the rate of tax was more moderate there was reason to believe that many people who were entitled to total or partial repayment injured themselves by letting it slip. That might be through either ignorance or lack of energy. It is more difficult to believe that this can be true to any considerable extent to-day, when the tax amounts to so large a proportion of the income, and that income is so greatly required to meet the increased cost of food and other necessaries. But, at the same time, one must remember that the number of people entitled to repayment is now vastly increased, it being probably not far wrong to estimate that 99 per cent. of persons who are liable to pay *some* income-tax are yet not liable for the five-shilling rate which has been deducted from them, and so are entitled to claim partial repayment. That is one reason why it seems useful to bring the subject before our readers. Another reason is that the recent changes due to the war have altered all the rules, so much so, indeed, that even some of the official forms are not yet up to date. Finally, the subject is urgent about this particular date, for if any tax is reclaimable for the financial year from 6th April 1913 to 5th April 1914, it will be lost if the claim be not sent in so as to reach the department at latest on (but better say before) 5th April of this year. Any one, therefore, who is in that position must act at once, or sustain to that extent a distinct loss. But, in truth, even as to later years, the tax is so heavy that it is rather a serious matter to lie out of the money, and the way to avoid that is to claim without further delay. A claim may be made for the four years from 6th April 1913 to 5th April 1917.

We shall confine attention mainly to incomes other than business profits. We shall purposely avoid many technicalities even at the expense of the loss of strict accuracy, for to go into all refinements would confuse instead of aiding. Our object will be accomplished if attention is concentrated, action incited, and general lines indicated.

CALCULATION OF INCOME.

This is a matter which has little interest for those whose incomes are derived from investments, from the interest or dividends on which income-tax is deducted before they are received. But private traders are assessed on an assumed income, which is arrived at by taking the average of the profits for the three previous years. Our reason for referring to this well-known rule is one application of it which is not so well known, and that is its extension in some districts to cover the case of many salaried employees, such as clerks, bookkeepers, travellers, and certain teachers. The importance of this lies in the fact of increase of salaries by war bonuses, so that by taking the average of the past three years the tax will probably be less than if it were charged on the actual income of the year.

INDIVIDUAL INCOME.

It should be clearly understood that, in applying the scales to determine rights of exemption and abatement, the test is the income of each individual by himself or herself alone. Thus, two sisters living together, and jointly entitled to a total income of £200, should get back all the tax. The one exception to this is the case of husband and wife, who are treated as one, with the result of assessing the husband on the income of both taken together, and leading to interesting income-tax questions in the first year of marriage of a lady with an income of her own and in the first year of widowhood. But there is a sub-exception when both husband and wife are engaged in separate businesses, and the whole incomes of both taken together do not

exceed £500. In that case, while the husband pays the whole tax, it is calculated as on two separate incomes, so that each may have the benefit of exemption or abatement.

Incomes Earned and Unearned.

Unless the total income soars to a figure over £2500, every one is interested to secure that such part, if any, of his or her income as is entitled to be reckoned as 'earned' shall obtain that benefit. In a sense, any investment 'earns' interest or dividend, but that is not the meaning of the word for income-tax purposes. The idea is income earned by personal exertions, not by capital; but yet it is extended to cover pensions given in respect of past services, whether the pension be paid to the worker or to his widow or children. On a total income between £130 and £500 the present rates are: earned, 2s. 3d.; unearned, 3s. This merely illustrates the divergence, which holds with variations all the way up to an income of £2500.

Exemption Claims.

In the years 1913–14 and 1914–15 any one whose income did not *exceed* £160 was entitled to repayment of all income-tax which had been charged against him in any form. For the years 1915–16 and the current year 1916–17 the free limit is reduced to £130. The £160 limit still holds for the two earlier years, so that a person whose income has been steady at £160 is still entitled to total repayment of tax for those two years, if not already obtained. But in many cases an interview with the Surveyor of Taxes will make it clear how, for the future, the necessity for claiming repayment may be obviated by the far better method of avoiding the payment altogether. This can practically always be arranged when there is any direct assessment for tax, whether on the rent of land or houses, or on the profits of a business.

Abatement Claims.

These are claims for partial relief from income-tax. Here, too, claimants may proceed either by way of avoiding the excessive payment, or obtaining the appropriate part repayment. The former is the better, and a meeting with the Surveyor is the method. The grounds or classes of abatements are numerous and various. Most of them are referred to below, but just a little care is required to avoid confusion in regard to the relation and working of the different abatements, and we shall try to make these things plain to the general reader. At the outset it may be made clear that whenever different parts of the same income are taxable at different rates (part being 'earned,' and part 'unearned'), all abatements are, as far as possible, given off the lower rate of tax. The result, and indeed the object, is to minimise the abatement.

Scale Abatements.

This is the oldest form of the principle of graduation. For the four years which may have to be dealt with in a claim for repayment the scales are:

Income.	The Concession is an Amount Equal to Tax on 1913–14 1914–15	1915–16 1916–17
£161 to £400	£160	—
£131 to £400	—	£120
£401 to £500	£150	£100
£501 to £600	£120	£100
£601 to £700	£70	£70

Over £700, for 1916–17 and future years only, see the paragraph below on marginal abatements.

It will be observed what exactly the concession is. The tax-payer's income is not deemed to be less than it actually is. On the contrary, it is taken at its actual amount. That gross amount fixes the rate or rates of tax. The tax is calculated on the whole of the gross income at the appropriate rate or rates, and then from the amount so brought out there is knocked off an amount equal to tax on the appropriate abatement. Perhaps a simpler way of expressing it is to say that the abatement is deducted from the income, but only *after* the *rate* or rates of tax have been fixed according to the gross unabated income. This may be called abatement No. 1. It is confined to people with small or medium incomes. Of course, no one can obtain it twice for the same year. Thus, if a man has a salary of £120, paid to him without deduction of tax, and if he and his wife between them derive £50 a year from investments, all taxed before receipt, he is no doubt entitled to an abatement of the tax on £120; but he has already got that in the shape of his tax-free salary, or, let us say, he gets it in the shape of not being required to pay direct to the Revenue any tax on his salary. At any rate, he can bring up no abatement No. 1 claim as against the £50, though the rate of tax on that will require to be modified as stated below. Again, if a lady living on her means has a total income of £500, all taxed before receipt except £10 bank interest, the scale abatement of £100 has already been enjoyed by her to the extent of the £10, and all she can further demand on this head is repayment of tax on the balance of £90.

Graduation Abatement.

This is abatement No. 2. It applies, not in the same degree, but in graduated degrees, to persons with small, moderate, and large incomes. The idea is to vary the rate of tax according to the assumed ability of the tax-payer to bear it. The rates are distinctly confusing, the figures varying according to the year, the amount of income, and its nature, whether earned or unearned; and the lower steps in the scale have

also varied. The following table shows the position for four years to date:

Total Income not exceeding	Nature.	Rate of Tax. 1913–14.	1914–15.	1915–16.	1916–17.
		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
£130	Earned	Free.	Free.	Free.	Free.
	Unearned				
£160	Earned	Free.	Free.	1 $9\frac{1}{5}$	2 3
	Unearned			2 $4\frac{1}{2}$	3 0
£300	Earned	0 9	1 0	1 $9\frac{3}{5}$	2 3
	Unearned	1 2	1 4	2 $4\frac{1}{2}$	3 0
£500	Earned	0 9	1 0	1 $9\frac{3}{5}$	2 3
	Unearned	1 2	1 $6\frac{3}{4}$	2 $9\frac{1}{5}$	3 0
£1000	Earned	0 9	1 0	1 $9\frac{3}{5}$	2 6
	Unearned	1 2	1 8	3 0	3 6
£1500	Earned	0 9	1 2	2 $1\frac{1}{2}$	3 0
	Unearned	1 2	1 8	3 0	4 0
£2000	Earned	0 9	1 4	2 $4\frac{1}{2}$	3 8
	Unearned	1 2	1 8	3 0	4 6
£2500	Earned	1 0	1 $6\frac{3}{4}$	2 $9\frac{1}{2}$	4 4
	Unearned	1 2	1 8	3 0	5 0
Over £2500	Earned	1 0*	1 8	3 0	5 0
	Unearned	1 2	1 8	3 0	5 0

Note, however, that in addition there are great concessions to soldiers, sailors, and others engaged in the war; also the concession to all, for the current and future years, of the marginal abatements treated below.

The same person may enjoy abatements No. 1 and No. 2. In fact, every one who gets No. 1 must also get No. 2; but the converse does not hold, for the income limit for No. 1 is (broadly) £700, while for No. 2 it is £2000 as to 'unearned' and £2500 as to 'earned' income. It may be expressed thus: Abatement No. 1 exempts so much income from taxation; abatement No. 2 reduces the rate on the balance of income which remains taxable.

Marginal Abatements.

This seems the best place at which to mention a recent and very sensible rule adopted in order to avoid a person being actually prejudiced by a rise in his income. Thus, £130 is now the free limit; but if one has an unearned income of £131 the former rule worked thus: deduct the abatement of £120; that leaves £11 to be taxed at 3s., which is £1, 13s. of tax, and so the person is 13s. to the bad by obtaining an increase of £1 to his income. Or, again, a lady with an unearned income of £700, and six children under sixteen, is entitled to an abatement of £70, and a further abatement of £150 for the children; so that she is taxed on £480 at 3s. 6d., which is £84. But if her income rose £5, the former rule was that she lost her abatements, and would have to pay 3s. 6d. on £705, which is £123, 7s. 6d.; so that she lost £39, 7s. 6d. by gaining £5. All these absurd results are made impossible by the new rule, which is that nothing of that kind shall result in the payment of more tax than would be payable if the rise, or gain, or excess over the scale did not exist, plus the amount of that rise, or gain, or excess. Thus, the man whose old income of £130 becomes £131 will pay £1; and the lady with the equally unfortunate addition to her income will pay her old tax of £84, plus £5 = £89. In short, they cannot lose more than they gain. All that is said above and below regarding scale and abatements must be read as qualified by this new and valuable rule. In particular, it is not now correct to say that no one with an income over £700 can have any benefit from the scale abatement or the abatement for children. These concessions to reason are limited to the current year and future years.

Abatement for Children.

The allowance is an amount equal to the tax on £25 for each child or step-child in life on 6th April of the year of assessment, and then under sixteen years of age, provided the parents' total income does not exceed £700, but with the possible benefit of the marginal abatement. These are the conditions for the current year 1916–17. In case any of the three previous years have to be dealt with, it may be noted that the income limit was then £500, and the allowance for each child was—1913–14, tax on £10; 1914–15, on £20; and 1915–16, on £25.

Apart from these statutory concessions, there may be a relief in respect of children without the above restrictions. Thus, sometimes a widow is entitled under her husband's will to the income of his estate under the express burden of maintaining the children. It may then be open to her to allocate a reasonable annual sum for each child, and so bring down her personal income, with the result of obtaining for herself and the family large repayments of tax from which she and they would otherwise be excluded. It will be observed that this is radically different from the statutory relief. It is an actual reduction of the amount of the mother's income, and may thus give her the benefits of a larger abatement and a lower rate of tax on the reduced amount.

Those who delight in subtleties may consider whether, in a proper case, it may not be possible for the same person to obtain the benefits referred to in *both* of the above paragraphs. They may also ponder how the statutory abatement will operate on, and especially in the first year of, the remarriage of a widow who has both an income and existing children or step-children, more especially if her second husband also has children or step-children.

Life Insurance Premiums.

The money applied in paying premiums of insurance on the life of one's self or wife, or towards a widow's fund, or for a postponed annuity to self or widow, is entitled to total

* In 1913–14 the rate on earned income became 1s. 2d. above £3000.

exemption from income-tax. This is subject to a limit of one-sixth of the income, and there are now certain other restrictions which will not in practice come into operation very often, and we do not trouble our readers by stating them. The one-sixth limit is most properly waived as regards extra premiums for war-risk. If the income for 1913–14 was greater than the income of the year of assessment, one-sixth of the 1913–14 income is allowed to be substituted as the limit. This insurance abatement is allowed to every one, no matter how large the income may be.

Loan Interest.

If you have had advances from a bank, you will find that you have been charged interest without deduction of tax. When that is so you are entitled to repayment from the Revenue of an amount equal to the tax on the interest in question. The bank will furnish a certificate certifying the figures. If, again, the loan is from a building society, it is usually repayable by instalments; and more probably than not you would find it very difficult to say what proportion of the fortnightly payments is for interest on the diminishing debt. But some part must be interest, and on that part you are, in one form or another, entitled to deduction of income-tax in your favour.

Maintenance of Land and Houses.

In assessments on land and houses deductions are allowed of an estimated sum for rates, and one-sixth (houses) and one-eighth (land) as a fund or estimated sum, to cover maintenance, repairs, insurance, and management. But these sums are often not sufficient, especially now in the case of houses, owing to war-risk insurances. The owner is in certain cases allowed further relief on making application and producing an account. There is no rental limit in the case of land, but houses over £12 a year are excluded. If on a five years' average the cost of maintenance, repairs, insurance, and management has exceeded the above proportions, the tax on the excess will be repaid. There is reason to believe that persons entitled do not avail themselves of this relief in many cases owing either to ignorance, forgetfulness, or fear of the trouble involved; but again, we say, when tax is so high many things are worth claiming which might at other times be allowed to slip. The mere fact that the ordinary allowances may be sufficient, or more than sufficient, in the case of one property, is no reason for not obtaining the full extra relief on another separate property. There is no income limit.

Dividends 'Free of Tax.'

These last three words are a trap to not a few. The receiver of the dividend thinks that he is paying no tax, and, therefore, that he has no claims to a return or abatement. This is a complete fallacy. The words simply mean that the company in question is distributing a larger sum than appears. The company pays the tax, but it does so for the shareholders. Therefore a lady who receives a dividend of £3 'free of tax' is just as much entitled to apply for repayment of tax on that dividend as on any other part of her income. Now 5s. per £ on £3 is 15s.; but that is not enough. The true question is, What is the dividend which, after deduction of tax, would leave £3 net? The answer is £4, the tax on which at 5s. per £ would be £1; and that is the true amount of tax which the lady has suffered on that particular dividend. In point of fact, not many companies now follow the practice of paying the dividends free of tax. Our readers will be good enough to note that this paragraph does not apply to income from the new 4 per cent. 'tax-compounded' War Loan.

Annuities 'Free of Tax.'

This case is treated by the authorities as quite distinct from that of a dividend free of tax. They will not recognise the right of the annuitant to obtain any repayment of tax. Neither will they admit that the person entitled to the balance of the income has suffered the tax corresponding to the annuity. The matter is a little involved, but probably the official view is on both points correct. The result is that it is sometimes a mistake to bequeath an annuity free of income-tax. Thus, suppose a testator leaves an estate yielding, after payment of income-tax, a clear £300 a year, and that he means to give his mother or sister £100 a year, and the balance of the income to his widow. If he leaves his mother or sister an annuity of £100 'free of tax,' his trustees will require to pay her that full sum, which will leave only £200 for the widow. But if the annuitant's total income is of such amount that she is exempt from taxation, a better way is to omit the words about tax. In that case the trustees pay her £100 a year, less tax—say £75 net; she gets back the £25 from Somerset House; and thus enjoys, as before, £100 a year. But the difference is that the widow gets a yearly income of £225 instead of £200.

Trust Beneficiaries.

A very great number of people are in the position of drawing the whole or a large part of their income from or through trustees. Of these the great majority are annuitants, life-tenants, or life-renters. Very often there are more than one beneficiary, so that the income is divided up among them in equal or unequal shares. In all these cases the investments stand in the names of the trustees, and, accordingly, the certificates of deduction of tax will run in their names also. This only means that on the occasion of the first claim for repayment it is necessary to produce a further general certificate

by one of the trustees or by their solicitor, showing the nature and extent of each beneficiary's share in the income. The detailed certificates are lodged along with the claim of one of the beneficiaries, and the one set, being thus in official custody, then serve for the claims of all the other parties. According to our experience the amount of the claim is measured by the gross, and not the net, trust income. Thus, if the gross income is £130, all taxed at 5s. per £ before it is received by the trustees, the life-tenant, if exempt, gets back the full £32, 10s., notwithstanding that there are income-costs for the year within the trust to the amount of £10, which would have reduced his income to £120 at any rate, even though there had been no such thing as income-tax.

Foreign and Colonial Income-Taxes.

Not all countries have been accustomed to such taxes for so long as we have; but the idea is spreading. If your income is subjected to foreign tax, that tax is a deduction from the income for home tax, which is then chargeable only on the income less the foreign tax. That is some relief, but not much. The case is different when it is Colonial tax which is first taken off, for that raises the grievance of double taxation within the Empire. The idea then is to deduct the Colonial tax, not merely from the taxable income, but from the British tax. But that idea is carried out in a very halting manner. Unless the receiver has a total income exceeding £1000 he does not obtain this relief at all, and even in these comparatively rare cases the relief is always curtailed so as to leave a 3s. 6d. British rate. Thus, if an Australian dividend of £20 is taxed 4s. in Australia and 4s. here (£4 in each place), there is no Australian relief, and the total British relief is 6d. per £, or 10s. in all.

Half-Yearly Settlements.

Payment of income-tax half-yearly is very familiar, it being the usual method on loans and investments, when the tax is deducted from the half-yearly interest or dividend. The same rule is now applied to certain direct assessments—namely, those technically known as schedules B, farmers, and D, mostly traders, but also applying to many employees. Further, half-yearly applications for repayment of tax have been introduced so as to mitigate the hardship of people being kept out of money which is truly theirs, which they need for daily purposes, and the want of which would not be compensated even if interest were allowed on it while withheld, which is not done.

The Application.

Consider which of the above paragraphs apply to your individual case. What is the income on which you ought fairly to pay, and have you directly or indirectly paid on more? What is the rate of tax at which you ought to be assessed, and have you paid at a higher rate? To how many of the abatements and allowances mentioned above are you entitled, and which of these have you not received? Remember you may go back to 6th April 1913. If you have not certificates of deduction of tax from all companies and persons who have paid you interest or dividends, get them at once; companies have their own forms, and forms for individuals will be supplied to you by the Surveyor of Taxes with the courtesy which characterises the officers of the department. In future keep all these certificates carefully. But meanwhile do not delay in sending in your claim because some certificates are missing. Send in the claim; the certificates can follow. Talk over the whole matter with the Surveyor, and get from him official forms to enable you to get back what is due to you at present, and to prevent, as far as possible, overcharge against you in future. With the kind and expert assistance of the Surveyor there is nothing to prevent your managing the whole thing yourself. Try; the first is the worst. Act at once.

THE TRAGEDIES OF WILD LIFE IN THE BATTLE ZONE.

By H. Thoburn-Clarke.

THE history of wild life is a succession of tragedies, and apparently the, comparatively speaking, wholesale slaughter of the innocents is one of the immutable laws of nature which it is impossible for men to ignore, beast and bird, insect and reptile, being created to prey upon each other. This being so, any increase or undue predominance of any one creature in a district will be followed immediately by a corresponding increase in the numbers of its natural enemies. Hence we see the application of this law exemplified on the Western battle-front. Mice and rats, to say nothing of other vermin, have increased at such an appalling rate that a *pro rata* number of their natural enemies, the kestrels, sparrow-hawks, and owls, with other birds of prey, have found a happy hunting-ground in No Man's Land and among the works to the rear of the British armies. Almost any hour of the day one can witness the small tragedies of natural life. The butcher-bird, because nature has denied him the claws with which to rive and rend, impales his victims on the spines and barbs of the ancient thorn that grows near our position, and tears them to fragments with his powerful beak. But as he slays for the sake of

slaying, his larder is always full of victims dangling from the thorns that surround his untidy nest. It is not a pretty sight, this natural tragedy of the wilds; and a hawk rending its tiny, feathered prey with savage greed is another unpleasant aspect of the subject.

The great barn-owl is a pretty hunter. Perhaps the soft moonlight covers up the worst of the tragedy. There is something moth-like in the great owl's soft, dodging flight, up and down, over the wire entanglements, and among the bushes and dried grass. His sudden swoop resembles a drop from out the blue. He comes down softly, with wings outspread, upon a tuft of grass, literally spread-eagled over the spot where a mouse had sought shelter. Then he feels about with his great beak for the tiny animal cowering beneath him. I have seen the manœuvre repeated a dozen times before the great bird rose with a field-mouse in its claws, and flew off to its fluffy young ones in the ruins of a barn within reach of our position.

But outside of the necessary tragedies of wild life there are many unhappy deaths due to warfare. Although the number of wild creatures actually killed appears to be comparatively small, still the close observer will always find little tragedies that come within his immediate ken. Take the great barn-owl, for instance. I have spent many an idle hour watching him dodging up and down in the moonlight. I have even approached the ancient ruin of a pigeon-cot, the sole remnant left of a large shed, and listened to the noisy snorings of his fluffy brood. The cot was supported by such precarious remains of walls that none of us would venture to climb up the ruined portal and peep into the cot which had once formed the roof of a very large stone porch. We had, however, seen the baneful gleam of the mother-bird's round eyes, and heard her angry remarks upon our intrusion.

Evidently the Germans thought that the cot concealed our gun, for one evening, just at sunset, a couple of 'whiz-bangs' came over and landed close to the cot. Another shot, more successfully aimed, ripped off a corner of the roof, and shattered the ruined wall. As we watched the falling débris, the great owl flew out with a rush and disappeared; then his mate followed more slowly. She fluttered around the ruins, then settled, and endeavoured to enter one of the openings. It was obvious that she was badly wounded, for her wings drooped heavily, and it was with difficulty that she maintained her perch on the edge of the ruined wall. Yet even in her grievously hurt condition she was anxiously seeking for her young owlets. Her mate came back, and it was pleasing to see his anxiety. He tried to steady her hold upon the crumbling wall, and evidently urged her to seek safety in flight. When finally the feeble claws relaxed their hold, and the dead owl slipped—an inert mass of creamy feathers—down on to the shattered stones beneath, he would not leave her body; he flew down, and lingered beside her for hours, even bringing her dead field-mice in the hope of rousing her from her last sleep. Just before dawn he flew off in the direction of the German lines, and I never saw him again. Later on we heard an indignant protest from a baby-owlet, and rescued him from a corner of the ruined nest. His baby-brother had been crushed to death by a falling brick, no doubt the one that had also injured and killed the mother.

A few days later I was examining an old disused French gun-pit. Evidently the Germans had managed to secure a direct hit, and it was thoroughly smashed in. As I explored the ruins I came across a hedge-sparrow's nest that had been built in a small dead bush used for concealing the position. On looking into it I saw that the centre of the nest was filled by a piece of high-explosive shell, yet the structure was absolutely in perfect condition, while underneath lay the skeleton of the bird, with some feathers still sticking to the bones. Lifting up the skeleton, I found that there had been four eggs; three had been broken, but the fourth was still perfect and unharmed. How so large a piece of shell could fall with sufficient force to kill the bird and yet not destroy the nest or damage that egg was rather puzzling. Yet there are thousands of such puzzles to be seen on the battlefields.

On the same day I was opening another disused French dug-out in which our Allies had stored their reserves of ammunition. It was in a very ruinous condition, and smelt rather highly. I thought perhaps some of the old occupants had left a limb or two behind, but I could see nothing. An empty shell-case was standing nearly upright against the wall, apparently placed there to receive the drops from a leak in the roof above it. I lifted it up for some reason or other, and inverted it. Out dropped the decomposing body of a mole. On examining the walls, I found the ends of a couple of moles' 'runs' just above the place where the empty shell-case had stood. The 'runs' were old ones, and had been constantly used, yet the shell-case must have stood there half-full of water for many months. Why, then, had the tragedy that ended that mole's life only taken place so recently? It must have passed across the edge of the shell-case hundreds of times in going from one hole to the other. There was evidence that the shell had been used for the purpose, but in the end the mole had missed its footing, and had fallen in and been drowned. The moles' 'runs' and hills are so close to the surface of the ground that the little animals frequently fall victims to gun-fire. I have often found them terribly injured, evidently thrown up out of a shell-hole, yet, in spite of their wounds, crawling feebly about seeking shelter from the fury of the shell-fire. How such a feeble creature manages to survive amid the battle-scenes is

a mystery. Practically sightless in strong daylight, with tiny, scratching feet, it apparently contrives to escape the fate that lurks on every side, and still exists in spite of its numerous disadvantages and many enemies.

Telegraph-wires and the wings of aeroplanes frequently destroy life among the birds. Once I saw a French aeroplane that had caught a hawk in one of its flights. The hawk had been pursuing a small bird, and had dashed between the wings of the aeroplane; and although its prey had escaped, the hawk had been caught by the wings in the wires. When the aeroplane came to the earth, the unfortunate bird was hanging dead, suspended between the wires. On another occasion an airman told me that he had been observing over the enemy's lines, when a great flight of wild ducks dashed against him, and he distinctly saw several fall to the ground, either stunned or dead. New telegraph-wires often claim their toll of victims before the birds learn to avoid them; and I have even seen a couple of foxes hunting each morning under an old-established telegraph-line, seeking for the stunned or dead birds lying underneath. The red animals trotted along steadily, keeping to the same line of country, and evidently finding enough to make them repeat the experiment each morning just at dawn. At least I have seen them, morning after morning, slinking softly through the undergrowth, arousing the partridges as they ran. Apparently they must have returned by another route; for, although I saw them going, I never saw them coming back again.

On another part of the line I picked up six greenfinches that had dashed during the early morning against a stretch of wire-netting. They were to all intents and purposes limp and lifeless. I thought the gunners' cat would like a feed, so I placed the six birds in a box and shut down the lid. When I returned several hours later the birds were making a furious din in the box, and on my lifting the lid they all flew off, evidently none the worse for their adventure. But all such adventures do not end so happily, and these are the only birds that have survived, although I have kept many in the hope of their ultimate recovery.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

HUGE NATIONAL WASTE OF COAL.

WE are being told by sundry learned professors and others who understand the problem that coal should never be used in the raw state for producing heat, while to burn it in an open fire is the height of folly from an economic standpoint. Various methods of using coal with a view to getting the greatest value from it are suggested by different authorities; but all combine in demanding treatment which will extract the tar, gas, sulphate of ammonia, and other valuable by-products, leaving only the gas and residual coke for generating heat. Electrical enthusiasts advocate the production of electricity from the gas and coke at the coal-pits, the electric current being distributed all over the country for supplying light, heat, and power. This system has many advantages, as, for instance, an enormous saving of traffic on our railways owing to the absence of coal-trucks, which make up a large proportion of our goods trains. Moreover, electricity, if produced on this enormous scale, could be supplied at very low prices, one farthing a unit being quite within the range of possibility. There is, however, a grave disadvantage in this system, which consists in the enormous loss of heat always incurred when fuel is turned into power. If, therefore, heat is derived from electricity this loss is entailed, as it can only be produced by first turning the fuel into power. For example, when electricity is derived from gas or coke, only 20 per cent. of the heat in the fuel can be got out of it from electric radiators and cooking appliances; whereas coke burnt in an open grate will give out 42 per cent., while in a closed stove three-quarters of its heat is utilised. So far as heating and cooking are concerned, therefore, it is far more economical to distribute coke or gas to householders than electric current. On the other hand, the supply of electricity all over the country for running railway trains, working factories, and even for domestic appliances is a perfectly sound proposition, as the power must be produced from fuel in any case, entailing the above-mentioned loss, and it is cheaper to produce it on a large scale. Whatever may be the final solution of this problem, it is clear that the burning of coal without extracting the valuable by-products contained therein must cease, and we may expect legislation to this effect so soon as the alternative coke is available. In this connection the coke referred to will be much richer than the present gasworks variety, and it will light as easily as coal, although giving off no smoke. Some of these problems were touched on here in the articles 'Coal Economy' (1916, page 536) and 'The Problem of Fuel' (1917, page 25).

RESUSCITATING SPENT REFILLS FOR ELECTRIC TORCHES.

An ingenious method of resuscitating spent electric-torch refills has been suggested by a Mr Wright. According to this gentleman's plan, two run-down refills are used to charge a third in the following manner. In order to make the

method clear it is necessary to explain the connections from the refill to the lamp and back through the case. On examining the refill or cell it will be noted that a metal strip or plate at the top connects with the lamp, while another strip of metal makes contact with the other end of the cell. Now if we have three refills so far run down that each one only makes the lamp a dull red, two may be connected in series and made to pass current back through the third, this operation really having the effect of charging it just as is done with electric accumulator-cells. To do this, connect the lamp connection of one cell to the other connection of the second cell. We now have two cells with a spare return connection on the first and a spare lamp connection on the second. These connections must be coupled to similar connections on the third cell which is to be charged, the lamp connections being coupled together, and likewise the other end connections. The connecting up may be done with pieces of copper wire after scraping the ends bright with a knife. They should then be pressed against the metal plates or strips on the cells by paper fasteners, rubber bands, or in some other way. Care must be taken, however, that the wires do not touch anything between the connections, particularly metal-work, and that they are not in contact with each other. The charging is very slow, and the cells should be left connected for two or three days.

INGENIOUS SEAT FOR USERS OF CRUTCHES.

Walking with crutches is a distinctly tiring operation, especially at first, and frequent rests are essential. In urban districts public seats are generally available at intervals, but along country lanes no such accommodation is to be found, and the wayfarer is reduced to perching upon stiles or gates. For whole persons this form of seat serves the purpose fairly well, but it is by no means adapted to the needs of the crippled warriors on crutches. This difficulty has been completely overcome by the 'Swarren' Crutch-Seat, which consists of a strip of stout canvas webbing ready to be slung between the hand-grips of the crutches. This device, which has plated steel attachments at the ends, can be clipped in place in a moment, while it will roll up into a small compass for carrying in the pocket. Large numbers of these crutch-seats are already in use, and they are proving a source of comfort to many of our disabled fighting-men.

FLOATING AN UNDERGROUND RESERVOIR INTO POSITION.

An unusual method of building a concrete reservoir has been carried out recently at Strassburg, Alsace, by German constructors. When it is necessary to build a reservoir of this nature below-ground in porous soil, grave difficulties from the presence of water are sometimes encountered. Such was the case at Strassburg, where a tank for storm water from the sewers had to be built in gravel, in which water was encountered about five feet below the surface. The tank is one hundred and sixty-four feet in length by forty-nine feet wide; consequently a steel or cast-iron structure was quite out of the question, on account of its large size and the high cost of these materials. An adjacent stream whose water-level was only a few inches below the surface of the ground gave rise to the idea of building the reservoir at a higher level than its final position, and floating it into place by the aid of water from this stream. A large shallow pit was therefore dug next to the site, in which the reservoir was built dry, the excavation for the final position being prepared in the meantime. When the work was completed, the stream was run into the shallow construction pit and floated the tank. Subsequently the wall between this pit and the site excavation was removed, with the result that both recesses were filled with water to the level of the stream. It was then a simple matter to float the reservoir into position. The stream having been dammed back into its original channel, water was pumped out of the site excavation until the reservoir rested on the bottom. Concrete, reinforced by steel beams and bars, was used for the construction of the reservoir, and the shell was strengthened by a network of cross-beams of the same materials. The structure floated in a little over three feet of water. This method of floating into position large tanks or reservoirs built of concrete is not entirely new, but it had never previously been applied on so big a scale.

DISCOVERY OF AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN FOOD.

Vitamines are a recently discovered essential element in food, a small quantity of them being necessary to health in man and other mammals. Unless enough vitamines are contained in our food we become liable to certain diseases, such as scurvy, beri-beri, and other ills known as deficiency diseases. The effects upon vitamines of cooking, and preservation in tins or by other means, are of particular interest, and it has been proved that with many foods heating to two hundred and fifty degrees (Fahrenheit) destroys the effect of these vital substances. Preservation in tins or other airtight receptacles appears to have similar effects upon milk and animal foods, but is not so harmful in the case of vegetables. Certain forms of vitamines, also, are injured by drying in the sun. It would seem, therefore, that vitamines are not destroyed by boiling, although baking, grilling, or frying may have injurious effects on them. Alkalies, such as soda, have a tendency to destroy vitamines, whereas the acids which are contained in milk and fruits are beneficial to their growth. The risks run in maintaining good health for long periods upon a diet of preserved foods are well known, especially in connection with expeditions into foodless

country, and the discovery of vitamines goes a long way towards explaining this feature. Efforts are being made to produce vitamines for the treatment of deficiency diseases, and Dr Atherton Seldell is said to have already obtained this substance, in suitable form, from brewers' yeast.

NOVEL METHOD OF FISHING.

Any device which will increase our supply of fish is welcome in times such as these, and a recent invention by a Dutchman bids fair to have a marked effect in this direction. The apparatus is based upon the principle of the sand-dredger, whereby vast quantities of sand and water are sucked up through a huge pipe, the end of which is lowered on to the sea-bed. Powerful centrifugal pumps draw up the mixture, and deliver it into hoppers in the dredger, where the water runs off, leaving the sand to be taken out to sea and dumped in deep water. Fish are often drawn into these appliances, and the invention relates to certain modifications which attract the fish and ensure their entry into the suction-pipe. For fishing, the end of the pipe is lowered to the most likely depth at which the fish it is desired to catch are to be found, and a funnel-shaped net leads to the mouth. An electric-lamp is fixed in the small end of the net near the end of the pipe, and attracts the fish, which swim towards it until the indraught of water is so rapid that they cannot escape. On the deck of the fishing-dredger a special contrivance takes out the fish before they reach the pumps, where they would be in danger of being broken up by the rotating impellers.

CLOTH WATERPROOFED WITH CORK.

Cloth is being produced in France which has a thin layer of cork cemented to one side of it, or, if greater strength be desired, the cork is interposed between two thicknesses of cloth. The result in either case is a material, suitable for raincoats and leggings, which is absolutely waterproof, while being very light. Cork in its ordinary form is too brittle for this purpose, but when the resin has been extracted by a chemical process it can be doubled without injury.

PAPER FROM SEAWEED, AND COAL FROM WOOD-PULP.

The effect of the war in raising the price of all commodities both in belligerent and neutral countries has been that many startling schemes for using materials which had previously been considered worthless have been brought forward. One of these schemes relates to a certain form of seaweed, locally known as rice-grass, which is rapidly covering Poole Harbour. The idea of utilising this weed, which originated with the Bournemouth Society of Natural Science, has recently been taken up by the Poole Harbour Commissioners, at whose instance Professor Quain of University College, London, has investigated this question. According to the professor's report, there is reason to hope that rice-grass seaweed can be converted into paper, and that its exploitation would prove profitable. Another useful development is the process devised by a Swedish engineer for producing what is practically coal-powder from the waste product known as sulphate lye, which is obtained in large quantities when paper is made from wood-pulp. This waste product contains more than half the wood used, which the new process turns into coal. Careful tests of the product show a heat value approaching that of good coal, and a company has been formed to exploit the process.

LARGE RESERVOIR DAM IN SPAIN.

What is claimed to be the largest dam in Europe has recently been constructed near Barcelona. Measuring nearly three hundred and forty feet in height, with a length of over seven hundred feet, this dam is built of concrete no less than two hundred and thirty feet thick at the base, and decreasing to fourteen feet at the top. The reservoir at the back of it, which has a width of nearly four miles and extends for sixteen miles, is intended partly for irrigation purposes and partly for the production of electric-power. Canals carry the water to distances of over a hundred miles, where an area of nearly a hundred square miles, at present unproductive owing to its dryness, is to be irrigated. Turbines and dynamos of twenty thousand horse-power have been installed for producing electricity, which will be distributed at a high pressure by copper wires carried across country upon poles. This is, however, only a beginning, the doubling of the power being contemplated at a later date. Fortunately materials for making the enormous amount of cement needed for the concrete were found in the district, as were also the sand and stone for mixing with it. The scheme, which was carried out by American engineers, included the building of a road ten miles long through difficult country.

CLOTH FROM NETTLES.

Strong as have been the inducements in this country to discover processes for utilising what has hitherto been considered useless animal, vegetable, or mineral matter, it has only been a question of economy with us, whereas our enemies have worked in this direction from dire necessity. Particularly has this been the case as regards textile materials, owing to the effects of our blockade and the requirements of the German army and navy. Clothing the civilian population has therefore become a vital problem for the Central Empires, and German investigators have tried almost every conceivable substance for this purpose. Among unlikely plants from which to weave cloth, the common nettle has been experimented with, and it has been found possible to obtain from nettle-stalks a

fibrous material which can be woven into very serviceable textile goods.

VOLUNTARY WORKERS MAKE STEEL SPLINTS FOR THE WOUNDED.

An interesting development in surgical practice which has taken place during the war is the supersession of wood in favour of steel for splints. Steel splints known as the 'Thomas' are often applied in the trenches, as they allow of a man with a broken leg being removed without a stretcher. These implements are very rigid, and, of course, have to be padded with leather or felt. Others of a lighter description are made from sheet-steel, with a view to their being bent to suit wounded limbs. Large numbers of these appliances are being made at an establishment attached to the Kensington War Supply Depot, where men past military age give their services for this work. The superintendent and his voluntary workers have shown much skill in devising special implements for individual cases, and many of these have proved highly successful. The workshops are well provided with machines for working in wood and metal, while women as well as men are devoting their time to this beneficent work.

TORPEDO-BOAT CONTROLLED BY WIRELESS.

Most of us have heard of torpedoes controlled by wireless telegraphy from the shore, although little news has come to hand indicating the employment of these weapons during the present war. The principle has now been carried a stage further by the invention of a wireless controlled torpedo-boat, of which an American named John Hays Hammond, junior, is the originator. Not only can the boat be controlled, but its torpedoes can be discharged from shore stations up to ten miles distant. The boat is by no means a toy, as it measures fifty feet in length, and it is fitted with engines of four hundred and fifty horse-power, and has a speed of over twenty-five miles an hour. The inventor claims that he has been able so to control the boat from a distance of three and a half miles that it will hit a pole in the water ten times out of fifteen. The purpose of this type of boat is coastal defence from a succession of control-stations near enough together to pass a number of similar boats from one to the next. It is also claimed that the boats can be controlled from aircraft. When compared with the torpedo, this boat shows the important advantage of being able to keep up its speed, and its power of launching torpedoes, for many hours; whereas the torpedo makes one dash, and then becomes useless.

A NEW GUINEA INDUSTRY.

Nowhere else do sago-palms attain such perfection as on the moist, and often steaming, banks of the winding rivers of New Guinea. Groves of these tall, handsome trees—with their scaly trunks, each marked like the skin of a mammoth snake, and topped with great coronets of cool green fronds—line, and are reflected in, the dark, crocodile-infested waters. Travellers in New Guinea are deeply impressed by the singular beauty of these unique waterways. Here and there the grotesque houses forming a native village are built upon piles driven far down into the oozing mud, for where the sago-palm flourishes there also are the aborigines found. The white mass of pith concealed in the shell-like trunk of the sago-palm will provide food for a man for many months, once it is taken out, beaten, washed, and dried. By these means the nourishing starch is all extracted and the fibre left behind. Jellies of an exceedingly fine flavour can then be made from the sago, perfect alike in taste and in strengthening properties when eaten with coconut-cream. Sago treated in the New Guinea way is quite unlike the insipid stuff sold in civilised countries, and one can only conclude that some further ingredient, for the purpose of adulteration, is added before the article is ready for sale. The man who goes into the sago-getting business needs to possess unlimited tact, an iron constitution, and nerves of steel, for the natives at times are difficult to deal with, and the life is one of constant toil and hardship in an atmosphere of excessive heat. There are tangible dangers to be faced, which, however, pale into insignificance before the weird stillness that occasionally prevails, a stillness that frays even the strongest nerves with its mysterious menace.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

SPRING.

THERE is a mist of bluebells in the lane;
Bright daffodils are dancing on the brae;
A wealth of golden gorse adorns the plain;
The balmy air is drenched with fragrant May.

A wood-dove 'midst the pine-trees cool and dark
Sends forth at morn and eve his liquid note;
In the blue heavens an ever-soaring lark
Pours forth a hymn of praise from joyous throat.

In daisied meadows lambkins skip and play;
Nature is glad in hedgerow, field, and grove;
Fair spring has come to our dear land to-day;
It is the time of faith and joy and love.

B. DUNBAR DEY.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st.* All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd.* For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd.* To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th.* Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

IN THE 'FORTY-FIVE.

By P. H. DITCHFIELD, M.A., F.S.A., Author of *The Parish Clerk*, *The Old-Time Parson*, *Faithful Jess*, *The Sorceress of Paris*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

MISFORTUNES never come singly. Fate has seen fit to decree that I should be the most unlucky man in the world. But there —why should I, Michael Fairborne, be thus moaning against fate? We Fairbornes are of yeoman stock, the backbone of England, as my father used to say; though, bless him! I wish he had had a little more of that sterling stuff about him, and then, perhaps, he would not have left me this tumble-down old farmstead and a poorly cropped farm. But it is no use whining, and moaning, and groaning, and knocking my head against the stones of this old roof-tree. I was bred and born in this Lone-Lane Farm nigh the Sinfin Moor, and my father before me, and his father before him, and I know not how many generations back; and now 'I, even I only, am left,' as old Parson Russell read out of the big Bible in church about the prophet Elijah.

Things were not so bad while mother lived. Her bright, cheery ways kept the old farm going. Her butter and cheese and eggs used to fetch the top prices in Derby market, and the sheep did well, and father put his heart into the farm, and the days were never too long for him. But when mother died he was like a watch that had lost its mainspring. He used to moon about the farm like a lost spirit, and everything fell into rack and ruin.

I was just eighteen then. I had won some distinction at Abington Grammar School. I was head of the school, had gained the school scholarship at St Catherine's College, Cambridge, and might have won an open scholarship also. It was always mother's wish that I should have a university education. But I soon found that my proper place was at home, to help my poor father in the farm, to try to cheer him in his loneliness, and to keep the old home together. Father did not long survive his dear wife, and they sleep together in our peaceful churchyard, which mother always used to call God's acre.

So here I am the owner of Lone-Lane Farm, a deserted-looking, gaunt stone house, with a lead roof that leaks when the rains pour down upon it, and haunted by the memories of past Fairbornes—not a very lively possession for a young man who is barely twenty-one years of age. Our old servant Martha 'minds me,' as we say in Derbyshire, one of the best old souls who ever lived. What I should do without her, Heaven only knows.

I may as well confess it at once; I had other troubles besides the burden of this old farm—its loneliness, its poverty, and fearful ghostliness. Close to the church stands the Manor House, where Colonel Medhurst lives with his only child Mary. Mary and I have known each other since childhood. In the old days we used to play together, when Lone-Lane Farm was not so lonely. We used to ramble in the woods together bird-nesting, or wander off to Sinfin Moor and watch the sheep, and hide in the heather, and build castles in the air, and were the best companions in the world. Then Mary went away to school; and afterwards the Colonel took her abroad for a long spell, and when she came back our old days of comradeship seemed to cease. She had grown into the loveliest girl I had ever seen. She had eyes of the purest blue, and—but there, I cannot describe her, though I see her wherever I go, when I am minding the sheep on the moor, or helping old Jan with the ploughing, or driving to Derby market.

One day I was out with my gun looking for a rabbit in Downham Wood soon after her return to the Manor, and I suddenly met her at a corner of the copse.

'You see I 'm trespassing, Michael,' she said.

'You trespassing! Just as if there is a spot in the old farm that would not welcome you! Don't you remember, Mary, how we used to wander in this wood looking for hawks' eggs? But perhaps you 've forgotten all those happy days, now that you 've been travelling in foreign parts, and have grown into such a fine lady that I hardly dare to speak to you.'

'Oh Michael, I don't so easily forget. We 're old friends, you and I; indeed, you seem to be the only real friend I have.'

'It does my heart good to hear that, Mary; but how does it happen that we never meet now? I 've called at the Manor three or four times since you returned, but I never see you;

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and the Colonel is quite different in his manner to me. He does not seem glad to see me, and hums and haws, and wants to know about the farm; but he never speaks of you, and seems glad to say good-bye.'

Mary blushed and stammered and looked down, and could not answer me.

'Ah! I see how it is, Mary. He is trying to separate us. He wishes to try to unfasten the ties of our old friendship. When we were boy and girl together we used to dream dreams and see visions. We said that when we were old enough we would be married, and now your father knows—and he is right—that I, with my broken fortunes, am not good enough for you, dear. You are a fitting mate for a lord or a duke, and not for a poor yeoman with a broken-down farm and a poverty-stricken home. I have no right to love you, dear; but I do so with all my heart, though I may never marry you.'

'Michael, you break my heart. You know I have always loved you. But father says it is impossible that we should wed. He wants me to marry some rich man who will care for me when father dies, as he tells me he will not have much to leave to me. It is all so hopeless, Michael.' And Mary raised her kerchief to her eyes and wept.

What can a man do when a woman weeps but try to comfort her? I told her I was young and strong, and would find a way to win wealth for her I would sell the old farm and start afresh in life, and win her in spite of a hundred fathers. And Mary's bright eyes shone through her tears, and inspired me with vain hopes and longings that might never be realised. I need not tell you that we kissed at parting, and vowed that we would be for ever true to each other, and were quite sure that all would yet be well. Such is the blind faith and hopeful confidence of youth.

CHAPTER II.

THERE was a mighty stir in our village, and indeed throughout all England, when the news came that gallant Prince Charlie was marching from Scotland with an army of seven thousand infantry and four hundred cavalry, to invade England and pluck the crown from King George's head. It seemed to us all rather a mad undertaking; but there were many Jacobites in England, and in Derby market the wiseacres shook their heads and said crowds of folk would join him, that he would reach London and dethrone the king. I had never seen 'Bonnie Prince Charlie;' but many praised him as a very gallant and brave man, who exercised so great a charm that all men loved him and were ready to die for him. I am no Jacobite, and my neighbour, the Colonel, who had fought in the Low Countries, was a staunch Tory, and loyal, as becomes a soldier, to his sovereign. But there were several squires in Derbyshire, and more in Lancashire, who used every night to pass their wine over their finger-glasses, and drink the health of 'the king over the water.' Would they join the Prince, and make his march a victorious progress and triumph?

Some of my neighbours said, 'He will never get so far as Derbyshire; we shall be safe enough.' However, news reached us that he was at Wigan; and then, when I went to Derby, they told me that Manchester had been captured by a sergeant, a drummer, and a drunken woman, who rode up to the 'Bull's Head' on horses with hempen halters, where they dined, and then proceeded to beat up recruits, and in less than an hour listed about thirty. The farmers who dined at the ordinary at the Bull Inn in Derby told me that all the rascals in Manchester, the scourings of the streets, had joined the Prince's army, and that a man they called the Duke of Perth said that if the Devil had offered a shilling more than the Prince they would have preferred the former.

The townspeople of Derby and the neighbourhood formed a company, which mustered one thousand strong, to resist the Scots if they should come our way. They called themselves the 'Blues,' and wanted me to join them. But I had my farm and my sheep to look after, and I did not think very much of this swaggering force of shopkeepers and loafers, who talked so loudly of what they would do to the brave Highland laddies when they came. It was with a heavy heart that I drove my mare Kitty homeward in the dusk of the November evening, and I wondered what the future had in store for me and for our country.

Would wild roving bands of Scots career over the hills and dales of Derbyshire, and take my sheep and plunder my farm? One thing I was sure of—they would not find 'muckle siller' at Lone-Lane Farm, as they say in their Scotch lingo. But then there was the Colonel's house, and there was my Mary. What would happen to her if the Prince's followers came to Deddington? I could not dare to think. All the world seemed full of trouble, and I had to bear such a weight of it that Kitty must have felt the load very heavy as she dragged the cart along Lone Lane. However, she pricked up her ears and dashed along like a four-year-old as we neared the farm; and Martha was waiting with a lantern at the kitchen door when we entered the yard, and she helped me to unharness the mare. Kitty never seems either 'sick or sorry,' and always knows her master's mind. I turned her into the loose box, gave her a rub down and a feed of corn, and left her quite happy and contented.

Martha was keen to know all the news of the Prince; but she restrained her curiosity and impatience until I had refreshed myself with a good wash and sat down to supper before a roaring log-fire in the kitchen.

'And now tell me all about it, Master Mike,' she said.

I told her all I knew.

'It strikes me yon must be a brave lad, that Prince Charlie, to come and invade England with a bit of an army like that. I like them Scotch laddies. My mother were a Scotchwoman, as you know, Master Mike, though them clansfolk be a thievish lot. Whatever shall we do if they come here? We ain't far from the London road, and I 'spects them Highlanders will go foraging.'

'You shall stand at the door, Martha, and tell them you 're Scotch, and it will be all right. They say the Prince has a rare eye for beauty, and perhaps he 'll make love to you, Martha, and then you can plead for your master and his few chattels.'

In spite of her years Martha blushed like a girl. 'For shame, Master Mike; but you allays will have a bit o' your fun, and like to tease your old Martha. But there—I know what we mun do. We mun hide the siller. How much did you bring back to-day?'

'I only got three pounds five shillings. The people in Derby were too excited to do much business.'

'Give it to me, Master Mike. See, I 've made a bit of a secret hiding-hole in the chimney. The siller 'll be quite safe there if yon long-legged laddies come to rob us.'

'Bless you, Martha; you always think of everything.' And Martha was as pleased as Punch as she hid away the contents of my poor purse. 'But what shall I do with the sheep? The clansfolk won't have much commissariat, I think, and, like their grandsires, they will be living on the country as they march through it.'

'Oh, that 's easy, Master Mike. You ken the old quarry on the Sinfin Moor. In my young days there used to be a bit of a cave at the bottom. Haply it be there still.'

'Fie, Martha! I believe you used to go courting there,' I said, to tease her.

'None of your nonsense, sir'—she always called me 'sir' when she was a little angry—'I was never a foolish wench, and it isn't right'——

'All right, Martha; it was only my foolish tongue wagging a bit too freely. But that 's a grand idea. Yes, the cave 's there right enough, and the entrance a little overgrown; but Jan can easily cut a way into it, and the sheep will be there as safe as houses. Really'——

I was just going to tell her what a grand housekeeper she was, when there was a loud knocking at the door.

'Whoever can that be at this time of night?' she said, as she rose to attend to the impatient summons. 'It can't be them Scotch laddies yet, I 'm thinking.'

I heard her heavy tread going down the passage; and presently, when she had unlocked and unbarred the door, the Colonel's voice was inquiring whether I was at home. And soon she ushered him into the kitchen, saying, 'Sure, it 's the Colonel come to see you, sir'

I was not overpleased to see him. There were the remains of my scanty supper on the table, and the kitchen, though the most comfortable room in the house, was not what you might call a stately chamber, and looked somewhat homely after the Manor House drawing-room. He was attired in evening-dress, while I wore my usual rough, homespun farming suit and bright-red slippers that Martha had made for me.

'Excuse my calling so late, Michael, but I could not rest until I had heard the news from Derby. You have been there to-day. How about these rascally rebels?'

'The Prince has got as far as Manchester, I hear, and he has been stopped a little, as our people have blown up two bridges to bar his road.'

'Good luck to them! Is it thought that these confounded Scotch rascals will come any farther?'

'No one seems to know, sir; but the "Blues" seem to think they are ready for them if the enemy get as far as Derby,' I replied with a smile.

'The "Blues"! A silly lot of tomfools! They would have no more chance of fighting the Scots than a herd of donkeys. Those Highlanders are some of the best fighters in the world. See what they did at Prestonpans! And the young Prince is a born leader. We have no General worth his salt, no army that could stand against a company of niggers. England has been going to the dogs since Marlborough's time.'

'You do not think much of the Duke?' I asked.

'The Duke of Cumberland is a braggart, and Johnny Cope a fool and a coward. The Prince is worth a dozen of either, though I 'm no Jacobite. I really do not know what I ought to do. It is quite possible that the rebels will march on London. They have many sympathisers in the south. Oxford is honeycombed with sedition, and there are not a few neighbours of ours who may join the Prince. If his army should pass this way, it may be rather disastrous to us. You see, I am not alone, and I am anxious about Mary.'

'Would it not be wise to take her with you and go westward, out of the line of march?' I suggested. 'If anything should happen to her'—— A strained silence pervaded the room, and for a few minutes neither of us spoke.

At last the Colonel said, placing his hand on my arm, 'Yes, Michael, I know your secret; I 'm afraid you love her dearly. You were old playmates together. But it cannot be, my boy. Think of it calmly. Are you in a position to marry?'

'Well, no, sir; I've little money, and an impoverished farm. But I am going to sell the

old place and start afresh. I have plenty of brains, I know, and a good heart, and there is no reason why I should not succeed.'

'Yes, yes, Michael; but my time may not be long, and I want to see Mary settled in life before I die. Sir James Sandleford is coming to stay with us next week, and'——

'Sir James! Why, he's old enough to be her father!' I exclaimed indignantly.

'Well, he is rather old for Mary; but he is rich, and he loves her.'

'And you propose to sell Mary to that old man! No, Colonel, I will not believe it. I will not give up hope. I believe she returns in some measure the love I have for her, and'——

'You would bring her to be mistress of Lone-Lane Farm, and of this'—— He spread his arms rather theatrically, indicating the poverty of my poor kitchen. 'No, Michael; no one can blame you for being poor. It is not your fault. I am bound to look after Mary's interests. Forgive me if I have wounded your feelings. We will not quarrel about it. There's my hand, Michael; and now I must hurry home, or Mary will think I am lost. Good-night, my boy; be brave, and face your troubles like a man.'

And so he went out into the darkness. There was a darkness in my heart, a darkness which, like the plague of Egypt, 'could be felt.'

(*Continued on page 233.*)

FROM A NORTHERN SEABOARD.

By Henry Hilton Brown, F.E.S.

WHEN Laurence Sterne wrote *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, he spent little time and used few words in describing the places which he had visited. He described no city or country, church or château, but exercised his inimitable humour in the delineation of human nature and the exhibition of freaks of human sentiment.

I am going to sketch a sort of sentimental journey along the coast from the mouth of the Spey to the Old Bar beyond the Findhorn. The article will be 'sentimental' in the sense that it will treat only of subjects which have human interest; but it will not exactly correspond with the term as used by Sterne, because the happenings mentioned in it were not experienced by the narrator himself, and thus did not in the first instance appeal to his sentiments. But this circumstance does not greatly matter, since the history of these events was obtained from the persons in whose experience they happened, and consequently the sentiment is only once removed. The tale of the events is connected with a particular journey, for the reason that they were associated with that strip of seashore as closely as the beads of a necklace are connected by the string. If my readers fail to recognise the necklace, they may at least be pleased to look at the separate beads.

When the railway was brought along the coast of the Moray Firth it was necessary to build a bridge across the Spey not far from its mouth. As the river when in flood carries a heavy volume of water, and is always rapid and impatient of obstacles, the foundations were strongly laid. In this work powerful pumps were used to remove the water, and steam was supplied by means of a vertical boiler. As one boiler did not yield sufficient power, a second boiler was attached to the first.

At the dinner-hour one day a boy of ten and his little sister carried their father's dinner to the works, and while he was eating it amused themselves by looking at the machinery. Nothing could have seemed more harmless and innocent than the second boiler at the pumps. The fireman had just fed it with coal, and was in the act of starting the injector to replenish its water-supply. The two children stood for a few minutes gazing at the boiler, and then the boy cried out in fear, 'Rin, Jeannie, rin; she's gaun to burst.' They ran over a heap of rubbish, and had barely gained the slight shelter thus afforded when the boiler exploded with a rending crash.

Various theories were put forward to explain why the boiler exploded, but it was agreed that the steam-pressure must have been very great. This may be estimated from a fact which was told to me at the time. A shipmaster was walking up from the mouth of the Spey to Garmouth. The left bank of the river rises in a considerable hill, cutting off his view of the bridge works. To his surprise, he saw a boiler sail silently into the air from behind the hill, and rise, as he judged, fifty feet above the ridge. A loud report which followed in a few seconds told him what had happened.

I asked the boy how he knew that the boiler was going to burst. He answered at once that he had seen the steam-gauge, and the index was pointing at a figure far higher than anything he had seen on any previous visit, so he was frightened, and thought it better to run. His quick observation and rapid deduction saved his sister and himself from a terrible death.

Leaving the mouth of the Spey, and trudging over miles of curving beach—partly shingle, partly sand—one reaches the river Lossie, and beyond that a region of shore rocks. Great reefs break up the coastline and stretch far out to sea, forming dangerous skerries. There are coves and channels among the rocks where the bottom is pure, hard sand, and where good bathing is to be got at most states of the tide.

On a summer morning about seven o'clock, a friend, whom I shall call Scott, went down to bathe. The tide was unusually far back, so that the great tangles growing on the outer reefs were uncovered, and their broad fronds gleamed in the sunlight like straps of wet leather. The sea was calm and still, except for innumerable ripples on which the light sparkled, casting on the sandy bottom reflections in the form of bright circles and semicircles. It was a fine example of the 'many-twinkling smile of ocean,' as Keble happily translated a phrase of Æschylus. And yet that calm and sparkling water concealed death sudden and terrible.

The channel which Scott chose was about thirty yards in width from rock to rock, and curved gradually seaward. He turned to float in about four feet of water; but when he tried, in a few seconds, to stand upright, his feet swung clear of the bottom, and he found that he was out of his depth. When he made to swim inward he discovered the peril concealed in the still water. A strong tidal current was running out between the reefs. He realised that he was in for a terrible struggle. He told me that it seemed as if a hand were pushing him out to sea, and that he could feel the current rippling against his shoulders as he forced inward. He was not a strong swimmer, but he did his best, striking out for the rocks somewhat farther east than the point where he had entered the water. There seemed to be little probability that he would reach his goal. His arms ached with the effort, and his head had dipped ominously under water once or twice, when his foot slightly touched the bottom. With renewed hope he struck out afresh. The touch became more decided, and finally he secured a firm foothold and gained the rocks; but he was never nearer to death than he was on that peaceful and sunny morning.

Incidentally I learned a fact which interested me. I asked Scott whether he did not feel an overpowering sense of fear when he realised his perilous situation; but he replied that he did not. He said that his mind was entirely engrossed with a fixed determination to reach the shore if possible, and he had not time to feel afraid. As he was an ordinary individual, I think we may fairly assume that in cases of extreme danger his experience is general. However terrible the thing may be, the suffering is not aggravated by terror, and this is a comforting thought when we read of men being placed in circumstances of great danger.

Within three miles of the spot where Scott fought his battle with the tide the character of the coast is changed. The sea is now bordered by sandstone cliffs, rising in places to more than a hundred feet. These curve out and in, here touching the waves, there drawing back so as to leave slopes of fresh green grass between the foot of the precipice and the beach. Such sheltered slopes are rich in wild flowers; and butterflies of many kinds and colours, white and tawny, brown and blue, flit about in great numbers on sunny days. The memory of these beautiful hordes, probably larger in retrospect than in reality, leads me into a digression from the straight line of my journey. In my youth I read a touching story of an aged naturalist who was no longer able to follow his favourite pursuit. He used to walk slowly out to a glade frequented by white admiral butterflies, and, leaning on a stile, watch their graceful movements for hours. At that time I was inclined to doubt the accuracy of the record. It seemed to me then that if one were privileged to see white admiral butterflies on the wing the sight would galvanise one's limbs though paralysed. The lapse of years has modified this opinion. I am inclined to sympathise with the old fellow, and to hold that his powers of observation might be more usefully employed in watching the flight of his favourites than in attempting to secure specimens for his cabinet.

The cliffs are pierced with caves, many of which have been occupied by human beings since prehistoric times. At present they are the occasional residence of tinkers, those degenerate representatives of the more mysterious gipsies. An old man of this class had been born in one of these caves, and was in the habit of living in it for a period every year. During a spell of cold weather the farmer of the adjoining land, pitying the old man lying at night in such a den, offered him the use of an unoccupied cottage. The aged tinker moved in, but not for long. Next morning his son arrived at the farm in great excitement. 'Ma faither 's gotten 's daith,' he said. Accustomed as he was to the pure, though chilly, air of the cave, the close and germ-laden air of the cottage had caused the old man to contract a severe cold. He returned to his cavern forthwith.

At Burghead the rocky coast ends, and here there was once a sad accident, followed by an act of great courage. The month of February had been tempestuous, and the men whose duty it was to set the stake-nets for salmon had been unable to carry out the work at the usual date. At last an afternoon came when they thought it was possible to effect their purpose. It was not a good day for such dangerous work, as there was a heavy ground-swell running in, with the weight of the North Sea behind it; but they felt that they must not put off longer. They set out in their coble, with the nets and anchors piled in the stern. The coble was brought close inshore for the purpose of laying the first anchor. While the men were engaged in this delicate operation, a big wave ran in under the coble and capsized it, end over end. The poor fellows were caught in a trap, and no help could be given them; for, although they were not far from the beach, a line of sharp rocks lay between, upon which the waves were breaking with violence. A crowd soon gathered, and the

agonised spectators could see the helpless bodies raised on great green seas and dashed upon the jagged points.

As the folk were debating what should be done, a man came down to the beach. Pushing the spectators aside, he called for a rope, which he fastened round his waist. He then plunged into the surf. At first it was thought that he must of necessity be thrown on the rocks and killed; but it was not so. He fought for two hours—fought until the rising tide and falling darkness made further effort useless. Through his gallant exertions two of the poor, battered corpses were brought to land.

Such actions are not uncommon on our coast; but there are some points in this case which are not common. The man was bred a sailor, and so was fully aware of the risk he ran. The men in the coble were not related to him. To carry out his purpose meant not only the risking of his life, but enduring hours of exposure to wet and cold. He had not even the spur given by the hope of saving life, because it was clear before he came down that the men were past that hope. On weighing these facts, it has always seemed to me that this man's act was a fine example of courage and endurance, and I am not sure that its high qualities have ever been sufficiently recognised.

Is Burghead the Winged Camp of Ptolemy? The Ordnance surveyors suggested that it is, and the question, involving as it does the relation of the Romans to the north of Scotland, has been debated with learning and ingenuity. No other northern port surpasses Burghead in evidence of long-continued use — remains of successive lines of ramparts, a subterranean 'well,' sculptured bulls, and other relics. The sentiment of these things is rather more than 'once removed,' yet it merits a passing thought. There is little doubt that those 'ancient mariners,' the seamen of Tyre and Sidon, called here in their coasting voyages. Without too much stretching of probability, we can fancy, as we stand on the rocky headland and look across the sea to the distant hills, that men speaking strange tongues had stood there gazing at the same mountains, and thinking of Taurus and Lebanon and the hills beside the Euxine. The men are gone, their cities have vanished, their language is forgotten; but the rocks, and the sea, and the far-away hills remain almost unchanged. '*Pulvis et umbra sumus.*'

The long line of sand-dunes curving round the Bay of Burghead to the mouth of the Findhorn is associated in my mind with two curious stories which were told me there. Mr Forbes was a well-read and well-educated man, and as unlikely to be deceived as he was incapable of stating as fact what he knew to be untrue. He was talking about education and our capacity of rendering our senses more keen and acute by training. He mentioned instances of what can be done in this way, and then went on to speak of our faculty of receiving spiritual impressions. It was in this connection that he told me the stories, and just as I was unable to explain them then, so I shall not attempt to explain them now. I tell them as they were told to me.

Mr Forbes and his wife had been in London. They had made the acquaintance of an English family, by whom they had been invited to visit at their country house. Neither Mr Forbes nor his wife knew anything of the family circumstances. On arrival, and before they had an opportunity of hearing of family matters, they took a short walk in the grounds. Approaching the front of the house, Mrs Forbes saw some red object at a window, and drew her husband's attention to it. As they came nearer they made out that a man dressed in a scarlet hunting-coat was standing there. Both saw the man, and remarked on the oddity of a huntsman in full dress being there at that season and hour. At tea the lady asked her hostess about the gentleman in pink, but got no direct answer. Mr Forbes afterwards learned that the room where the man appeared was closed, that no one ever entered it, but that the figure of a man in hunting-dress was occasionally seen at the window.

In this case the perception was by sight; in the second it was by hearing. Mr Forbes and his wife were on a visit to a family of whose private affairs they knew nothing. In the room assigned to them they heard distinctly the sound of steady talking. It was not possible to distinguish words, but the nature of the sound was unmistakable. On inquiry they learned that the room had been occupied for years by an old lady lately deceased, who had spent most of the day in conversation with a companion.

A well-known professor of science recently wrote in a volume of essays: 'We have no reason to suppose that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy.' In view of the history of philosophy and science the remark is a rash one, and disheartening besides; but it well illustrates the attitude of students of science to such tales as the two which I have just told. These impressed me strongly at the time, because they were related to me as absolute facts by the person in whose experience they occurred, and I am not going either to offer any explanation of them or to base any dogmatic theory upon them.

If it is suggested that Mr Forbes may have been mistaken in his observations, we encounter a serious difficulty. In both cases he was a stranger. He knew nothing of the gentleman in pink or the old lady. If it had not been for what he asserts he saw and heard, he would not have known about either of them. The difficulty which seems inexplicable is to account for the fact that the previous history of these persons did not suggest the manifestations, but the mani-

festations led to Mr Forbes becoming acquainted with the previous history, of which till then he was ignorant.

If it is objected that the manifestations were trivial, I must point out that this is not a logical objection. The extent of what we see does not necessarily imply that there is nothing more to be seen. No one ever saw or heard all that it was possible on some occasion to hear or see. It has often been argued that if the spirits of the dead were permitted to manifest themselves to the living, the manifestation would be of a solemn and important nature. But is this sound reasoning? Surely it is obvious that the extent to which a human being perceives such a manifestation is a measure not of the full extent of the manifestation, but of the human being's capacity to perceive. We have an analogous case in physical science. Even so recently as my boyhood the motive and lighting force of electricity was a curiosity of the laboratory. Pretty experiments were performed, but nothing important was effected. A critical person, reasoning on the lines which I have indicated, might have said that electricity was evidently a force of no practical moment, because it manifested itself in such a trivial way. We now light houses and drive machinery by means of electricity, yet there is nothing in electricity to-day that was not in it when these experiments were being made. The change is due to the circumstance that we are better able to appreciate the possibilities of the force.

I do not say that the same experience will follow the more extended study of spiritual matters, but I maintain that it is illogical to say that evidence of manifestations is to be rejected merely because they are of a trivial nature. The recorded manifestations, if they are to be referred to at all, can only be regarded as indicating the measure of an individual's capacity to apprehend such things, and not as indicating all that he might have apprehended if he had been endowed with sufficient capacity. But I give the stories as I received them, and my readers will no doubt either put them aside or take them into thoughtful consideration, just as they are swayed by preconceived ideas.

The real journey, of which this is in a Sternean sense a sentimental account, ended on the evening of the third day at a point opposite a sandbank called the Old Bar, lying to the west of the mouth of the Findhorn. The sun was setting gloriously behind the north-western mountains. In its descent it illuminated glens and straths which had been concealed in the gray distance, and revealed ranges of hills far away which had been invisible until they were lighted by the level rays. There was no appearance of life except the sea-birds wading in the shallow water. The sea murmured ceaselessly on the soft sand, the waders and the gulls piped sadly as they wandered to and fro, and a train roared faintly as it passed, going toward Forres on the distant line. The place was the perfection of solitude.

One could not avoid asking whether this place had always been so solitary. A little imagination pictured the coast in a long-past age as a busy thoroughfare. When the huge sandstone rock, pierced with caves, which lies to the east of Burghead was separated from the mainland, as we know it was, by an arm of the sea, it must have been a prehistoric Gibraltar. In its secure recesses it sheltered a large population, and there would be a constant coming and going. As the mainland was covered with forests full of wolves and wolf-like men, the seashore would afford the safest passage and the way most free from ambushes. We may reasonably believe that long before the beginning of reliable history men traversed this beach, now so lonely, in hundreds and thousands.

The Dryasdusts will scornfully reject my suggestion because it is imaginary. It may be none the worse on that account. There have been imaginings which folks can scarcely distinguish from truth, and an instance is not far to seek. Three miles inland from the Old Bar a hill is still shown as the spot where Macbeth met the witches. 'How far is't called to Forres?' The blasted heath was imaginary, yet I am sure that to a large number of my readers it will seem more real and come more closely home than any of the beads of my sentimental necklace, the truth of which is not doubted.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By JEFFERY FARNOL.

CHAPTER XIII.—WHEREIN MAY BE FOUND SOME PARTICULARS OF THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF PERHAPS.

MRS BOWKER was a small woman, worn and faded like her carpets and curtains and the dress she wore; but, like them, she was very clean and neat.

'Tis real good of you to come, Miss Hermy,' said this small, faded woman; and Ravenslee thought her very voice sounded faded, so repressed and dismally soft was it. 'I wouldn't have had the face t' send for you, Miss Hermy; only Hazel calls an' calls like she 's doin' now—listen!'

And, sure enough, from somewhere near by a small voice reached them, pitifully faint and thin: 'Hermy dear, come t' me! oh Hermy dear!'

'She allus lays an' calls like that lately when her poor hip's worse 'n usual,' sighed Mrs Bowker. 'An' your gentleman friend, would he like t' see her too?'

'Thank you, I should,' answered Ravenslee in his soft, pleasant voice.

'Oh, Mrs Bowker, this is Mr Geoffrey,' said Hermione a trifle hurriedly; 'he came with me to—to'——

'Be presented to the Princess if she will honour me,' he added.

'Ah!' said Mrs Bowker, looking up at him with a faded smile. 'Hazel told me you had a pretty voice, sir, an' I guess I know what she meant. She sets out on the stairs when she's well enough, an' has often seen ye.'

'Hermy dear, come t' me! oh Hermy dear!' called the little voice.

'Yes, go in, my dear; you know your way, I guess,' sighed Mrs Bowker, passing a small, worn hand across her faded eyes. 'There's five dozen more collar-bands I must stitch an' buttonhole t'-night, so go your ways, my dear.' So saying, Mrs Bowker went back to her labour, which was very hard labour indeed; while Hermione led the way into a tiny room, where, on a small, neat truckle-bed covered by a faded quilt, a small, pale child lay fading fast. But at sight of her visitors two big brown eyes grew bigger yet, and her pale, thin little cheeks flushed eagerly.

'Oh Hermy dear!' she cried, clasping frail hands. 'Oh Hermy, you've brought him; you've brought me our fairy Prince at last!'

Now what was there in these childish words to cause Hermione's eyes to droop so suddenly as she took the bottle from Ravenslee's hand, or her rounded cheek to flush so painfully as she stooped to meet the child's eager kiss, or, when she turned away to measure a dose of the medicine, to be such an unconscionable time over it? Observing all of which, Ravenslee forthwith saluted the small invalid with a grave bow, his battered hat gracefully flourished.

'It is truly an honour to meet you, Princess!' said he, and, lifting the child's frail little hand, he touched it with his lips. Thereafter, obeying the mute appeal of that hand, he seated himself upon the narrow bed, while Hermione, soft-voiced and tender, bent above the invalid, who having obediently swallowed her medicine, leaned back on her pillow and smiled from one to the other.

'And now,' said she, drawing Hermione on her other side and snuggling between—'now please let's all tell some more fairy tale; an' please you begin, Hermy, just where you had t' leave off last time.'

'Why, I—I'm afraid I've forgotten, dear,' said Hermione, bending to smooth the child's pillow.

'Forgotten—oh Hermy! But I 'member quite well you got where poor Princess Nobody was climbing the mountain very tired an' sad, an' carryin' her heavy pack, an' all at once along came the Prince an' took her heavy bundle, an' said he 'd love to carry it for her always if she 'd let him. An' poor Nobody knew he was the real Prince at last, the Prince she 'd dreamed of an' waited for all her life, 'cos he 'd got gray eyes so brave an' true, an' he was so big an' strong an' noble. So he helped her to the top of the mountain, an' then she thought at last she could see the beautiful City of Perhaps. That's where you got to, don't you 'member, Hermy dear?'

Now why should Hermione's shapely head have drooped and drooped until at last her face was hidden on the pillow? And why should Geoffrey Ravenslee reach to touch the child's soft dark hair with hands so light and tender?

'The beautiful City of Perhaps!' said he gently. 'Why, Princess, where did you learn about that?'

'From dear Princess Nobody, oh Prince!'

'And who is she?'

'Why, she's Hermy, Prince—and I'm Princess Somebody.—And, oh, Hermy dear, you do 'member where you left off now—don't you?'

'Yes, I remember; but I—don't feel like fairy stories now, dear.'

'Oh, are ye sick?' cried the child anxiously, touching Hermione's golden hair with loving fingers. 'Is it a headache like my mumsey gets?'

'N-no, dear; only I—I don't feel like telling any more of our story—to-night—somehow, dear.'

'Princess,' said Ravenslee, 'do you know much about the wonderful City of Perhaps?'

'Oh yes—an' I dream about it sometimes, Prince—such beautiful dreams!'

'Why, of course,' nodded Ravenslee, 'because it is the most beautiful city that ever happened, I guess!'

'Oh, it is!' cried the child. 'Shall I tell you?'

'Please do, Princess.'

'Well, it's all made of crystal an gold, an' every one's happy there, an' never sick—oh, never! An' all the children can have ices an' cream sodas whenever they want, an' lovely doll-carriages with rubber on the wheels, an'—an' everything's just lovely. Of course, every one's daddy's got lots an' heaps an' piles of money, so they never get behind with the rent, an' never have to sit up all night stitchin' an' stitchin' like mumsey an' Hermy have to sometimes. An' I 'm Princess Somebody, an' Hermy 's Princess Nobody, an' we 're on our ways through the valley of gloom, tryin' to find the beautiful City of Perhaps; but, oh, it 's awful hard to find!' she ended, with a weary little sigh.

'And yet, Princess, I 'm sure we shall find it.'

'We? Oh, are you comin' too, Prince?' cried the child joyfully.

'To be sure I am!' nodded Ravenslee.

'Oh, goody, I 'm glad—so glad, 'cause I know we shall find it now!'

'Why?'

'Well,' answered the child, looking at him with her big, wistful eyes, ''cause you look like you could find it, somehow. You see, Prince, you 've got gray eyes so brave an' true—an' you 're big an' strong, an' could carry me an' Hermy over the thorny places—when we get very. very tired—couldn't you?'

'I could,' answered Ravenslee almost grimly, 'and I—surely will!'

'When we get there, Prince, I want first—a doll-carriage an' a doll with lovely blue eyes that wink at you, an' a big box of candy, an' a new dress for my mumsey, an' no more work; an' I want lots an' lots of flowers for my daddy, 'cause he loves flowers—oh, an' I want my leg t' be made well.—What d' you want, Hermy?'

'Well, dear, I want to—say good-bye to my sewing-machine for ever and ever and ever!'

'Why, Hermy,' exclaimed the child, 'last time you said you wanted some one who could give you your heart's desire.'

'Perhaps that is my heart's desire, little Hazel,' said Hermione, rising and taking up the medicine-bottle.

'An' what do you want, oh Prince?'

'I want a great deal,' answered Ravenslee, smiling down into the big, soft eyes. 'I want some one who is my heart's desire now and for ever and ever. Good-night, dear little Princess!'

'You 'll come again, Prince?' she pleaded, holding up her face to be kissed. 'You 'll come again soon?'

'As soon as—Princess Nobody will bring me.'

'Good-night, Hermy dear—you 'll bring our Prince again soon?'

'If you wish, dear,' said Hermione, stooping to kiss her in turn.

'Why, Hermy—what makes your cheeks so hot to-night?

'Are they? said Hermione, making pretence to test them with the back of her hand.

'Why, yes,' nodded the child; 'an' they look so red an'——

'Of course you believe in fairies, don't you, Princess?' inquired Ravenslee rather hurriedly.

'Oh yes, Prince; I often see them in my dreams. They just wait till I 'm asleep, an' then they come an' show themselves. Do you ever see any?'

'Well, your highness, I fancy I have lately, and when fairies are around things are sure to happen—wishes get the habit of coming true. So, little Princess, just go on wishing and dreaming, and—watch out!'

Then Ravenslee turned and followed Hermione out upon the dingy landing; but as he climbed the stair there went with him the memory of a little face, very thin and pale, but radiant and all aglow with rapturous hope Silently as they had come they mounted, until, reaching the topmost landing, they paused as by mutual consent.

'Poor little Hazel!' said Hermione very gently; 'if only there were real fairies to spirit her away to where the air is sweet and pure, and flowers grow for little hands to gather—the doctor told me it was her only chance.'

'Why, then, of course she must have her chance!' said Ravenslee with a sleepy nod.

'But, Mr Geoffrey, how?'

'Well—er—the fairies. You said something about fairies spiriting'——

'The fairies!' said Hermione a little bitterly. 'I guess they are too busy over their own affairs to trouble about a poor little sick child. Besides, what fairy could possibly live five minutes in—Mulligan's?'

'Which leaves us,' said Ravenslee thoughtfully—'which leaves us the beautiful City of Perhaps. It is a wonderful thought that!'

'But only a thought!' she sighed.

'Is it? Are you quite sure?'

'Well, isn't it?' she questioned wistfully.

'No,' he answered gravely; 'the City of Perhaps is very, very real.'

'What do you mean?'

Now once again their hands touched in the shadow, but this time his fingers closed upon her hand, the hand that held the medicine-bottle, drawing her nearer in the dimness of that dingy landing.

'I mean,' he answered, 'that for every one of us there is a City of Perhaps waiting to open its gates to our coming; and I am sure we shall reach it sooner or later, all three of us—the Princess and you and I—yes, even I when I have done something worth while. And then, Hermione, then—nothing shall keep me from—my heart's desire—nothing, Hermione!' As he ended she felt an arm about her in the dimness; an arm fierce and strong that gripped and swept her close, then as suddenly loosed her. For a breathless moment he stood with head bowed in seeming humility; then, stooping, he crushed her hand, medicine-bottle and all, to lips that burned with anything but humility.

'Good-night, dear Princess Nobody!' he said, and watched her turn away, nor moved until the door had closed upon her.

That night he smoked many pipes, weaving him fancies of the beautiful City of Perhaps, and dreamed dreams of what might be, and his eyes glowed bright and wide, and his mouth grew alternately grim and tender. And that night, long after he lay asleep, Hermione's golden head was bowed above her work; but more than once she stayed her humming sewing-machine to look at one white hand with eyes shy and wistful—the hand that had held the medicine-bottle, of course.

(*Continued on page 226.*)

PEAT.

By George Bolam.

IN the easy-going prosperity, largely inherited from our forefathers, which we have so long enjoyed in this country, we have grown accustomed to jogging along very comfortably without worrying unduly over such details as developing to the utmost all our native resources. In certain directions, as in coal-mining and the metal industries, we have maintained an easy lead, though in many cases working, perhaps, with a prodigality that future generations may have cause to regret; but in others we have allowed some nations to leave us far behind. In no country in the world has agriculture been carried to such a high state of perfection as in some of the favoured districts of Britain. But, having admitted so much, we must also acknowledge that, despite all modern scientific improvements, we have not maintained the premier position so unchallenged as our fathers did. Nor, with so much waste land in the country, can it be claimed that, as farmers, we make as much use of our land as we might do. Of course, one cause of this, and no doubt the main one, has been the facility with which we have been enabled to import food-stuffs and other articles from abroad; but it can never be sound economy to buy from others that which we can equally well produce ourselves, and this is one of the lessons which the war is every day impressing more and more urgently upon us.

One of the commodities lying ready to our hand, which has hitherto been almost entirely neglected in this country, is the subject of this article; and it is a striking comment upon that neglect that in the majority of cases the removal of the peat from its surface would discover a more fertile soil beneath, and so add to the value of the land from which it was removed, quite irrespective of the uses to which the peat itself might be put. It follows, therefore, that if the peat can be successfully worked on a commercial basis, the owner of the land upon which it is found may not only enrich himself by its manufacture, but hand on to his successor an estate enhanced in value by the operation. Surely a fortunate position for any landlord to find himself in in these days!

But, of course, all peat-beds are not equally favourably placed for exploitation. Many of them occupy high plateaux amongst the hills, where their situation, and the absence of good roads, place them for the present beyond the reach of the manufacturer. But, on the other hand, some of the most extensive bogs cover low-lying tracts, sometimes adjoining an already existing railway line, or at least within easy access by road. It is these that appeal for immediate development. On one or two of the flat moors of Yorkshire and Lancashire large quantities of peat have been dug during the past twenty years, most of it finding its way to market in the form of peat-moss litter; and that there is good money to be made out of it is proved by the dividends paid by the companies that work it, and the high premium at which their shares stand in the market. There is a great and ever-increasing demand for peat in this form, but as yet only the merest fraction of that used in this country is of home manufacture. Up to the beginning of the war the vast bulk of it was imported from abroad, largely from Germany; and, as will presently appear, there are other and perhaps more lucrative ways of dealing with peat than converting it into litter.

It is scarcely more than twenty years ago since the merits of moss litter began to be recognised in this country, and it was the enterprising Teuton who first drew our attention to it. He pointed to the great advantages it possessed over straw as an absorbent of liquid manure; and, having secured contracts for supplying some of our military stables, he went home to develop the peat industry of his Fatherland. He talked knowingly of the superior qualities of German peat over that found in this country, no doubt enlarging also upon its cheapness; and to his guile, or our simplicity, must be attributed the fact that he has during all the intervening years retained most of his contracts, and succeeded in maintaining the fiction that what he had to sell us was in some respects more fitted for its purpose than our native article.

Variously designated as bogs, peat-mosses, floes, and the like, the accumulations of peat in many places in this country are equal in quality to anything we import from abroad; but Britain has lagged behind most other civilised countries in the development of her peat industries. That her resources of the raw material are not inconsiderable may be gathered from the following figures. In the official returns of the land it has been estimated that there are in Great Britain and Ireland nearly six and a half million acres covered by peat, of which about three million acres lie in the Emerald Isle. One Irish bog on the Shannon is between two and three miles wide by about fifty miles in length, and the peat upon it varies in depth from thirteen to fifty-seven feet. For the sake of comparison, it may be added that Canada has over thirty million acres covered by peat, the United States about twenty millions, and Germany nearly five millions.

Left to nature, these wide areas of peat in this country produce little that is more valuable than heather. If the ground be fairly dry and 'sound,' its grazing value for sheep may be a shilling or two an acre; but in order to command even that rent a considerable sum has usually to be spent upon it in surface drainage and fencing. If it happens to lie in a favourable district another shilling an acre may be added as the value of the grouse-shooting; but here again this rent can only be obtained after considerable expenditure in draining. In a general way, the removal of surface moisture required by the sheep-farmer is the same as that which the grouse-shooter demands, so that one expense ought to be sufficient to secure both rents; but the drains and fences, of course, require attention to keep them in order after the initial outlay, so that the 'prairie value' of the surface of the peat-covered land is seen to be very small indeed.

It is true that some of the mosses might be planted with coniferous trees, or with birch or alder, and in that way be brought to yield some prospective return. A good deal of such land has, in fact, already been so planted in certain parts of the country; but, even where the trees are doing well, growth is slow, and the return on capital invested is so long deferred as to make the experiment anything but tempting to most private owners. As has already been pointed out, much of the peat overlies soil considerably more fertile than itself, and in exceedingly few cases is the underlying soil less suitable than the peat itself for the growth of timber or any other crop.

A sarcastic politician once said of the peat-bogs of Ireland that they were interesting as geological studies, and for the remarkable elks' heads they yielded, but chiefly important because they contributed to the poverty of the people. Perhaps he may have been ahead of his time, or have spoken more literally than he knew or than his audience appreciated. In any case, there seems no reason why the judicious removal of her peat should not now materially increase the welfare of the island, and at the same time leave her land permanently improved by the operation.

But although its conversion into moss litter may be one of the simplest methods of dealing with peat in a profitable and wholesale manner, it is not the only use to which it may be advantageously put; while, like the coking of coal, it may be made to yield several valuable by-products in the process of drying. For years past our Teutonic enemies have been paying ever-increasing attention to the extracting from peat of acetate of lime, a source of acetone, one of the essentials in the manufacture of cordite and other high explosives. They also obtain from it no inconsiderable quantity of sulphate of ammonia, a source of nitrogen, the importance of which at the present time needs no comment. Naphtha, paraffin, and other volatile oils are likewise extracted in paying quantities, and from peat charcoal carbon pencils for electric-light are manufactured. Previous to the outbreak of war our own navy and army were largely dependent upon Germany for the supply of carbons for searchlights, and how far British engineering companies were likewise dependent upon her might form an interesting subject of inquiry.

By a process invented by Sir William Ramsay, a good many gallons of alcoholic spirit may be extracted from a ton of peat; and it is said also to enter in quite considerable quantities into the composition of certain cattle and poultry foods, and even into dog-biscuits. But even these do not exhaust its sphere of usefulness. Almost from time immemorial peat has been the only fuel burnt in many remote dwellings amongst the hills, and the comforts of a peat-fire are pretty generally known. It is less effective than coal; but where pits are distant, or leading difficult, the ease with which peat can be 'won' enhances its value as an economical substitute. In distilleries a good deal of it is used in order to impart the 'peat-reek' flavour to whiskies. It was at one time much in favour as a fuel in certain kinds of engineering work, but it has latterly been found more efficient to make use of peat in that connection for the manufacture of producer-gas by which electrical generating and similar machinery may be driven. And, lastly, Professor Bottomley of King's College, London, has for some years past been carrying out extensive experiments in the treatment of crude peat with a view to realising its inherent capabilities as a fertiliser. A certain measure of success has apparently rewarded his labours, and if the results obtained in his laboratory prove to be applicable on a large scale outside, the value and importance of peat in the near future must be enormously increased.

And what, it may now be asked, is the origin of this brown or blackish substance which we call peat, and which is seen to be so different in composition and properties from ordinary soil? The answer, with certain reservations, is simple enough. It is an accumulation of decayed vegetable matter, very largely composed of the sphagnum mosses, which still continue to grow upon most damp moors where peat already exists. An abundance of moisture is essential to its formation. Mixed with it may be found the roots and remains of heather, and often also of birch, alder, oak, and other trees.

Under ordinary circumstances such substances, decaying upon the ground, are turned into common mould through the agency of bacteria which reconvert organic matter into its component gases. But it is only under favourable conditions that such micro-organisms are able to carry on their appointed functions. More than a given proportion of certain acids in the

soil puts an end to their activity, or may entirely kill them off, and it is when conditions of that kind prevail that the growth of peat probably begins, to continue with ever-increasing certainty so long as moss or other vegetation subsists upon the surface, or until the arrival of some other agent liberates the acids or counteracts their effect.

UNOFFICIAL NEWS.

By ÆSCULAPIUS.

I.

DEPUTY SURGEON-GENERAL BISCOM came into the operating-theatre of the Royal Naval Hospital, Bermuda, in the lofty way which it is the privilege of principal medical officers to assume. His staff-surgeon was at the moment finishing an operation for appendicitis.

'He ought to do well, sir,' the staff-surgeon mumbled from behind the surgical mask that covered his mouth; 'the thing had not yet perforated.'

'It 'll probably be the last case you 'll ever do here, O'Brien,' Biscom said sternly.

O'Brien tore the mask off his face. 'What 's wrong, sir?' he asked anxiously, running his eye over the tray of instruments.

The deputy surgeon-general's innuendo, however, did not refer to a stray pair of scissors left in his patient's abdomen When Biscom was satisfied that the staff-surgeon had 'risen' sufficiently, his features relaxed into an expression of rapturous triumph. 'Can't you guess the reason why?' he said, chuckling with pleasure at having 'pulled the leg' of his staff-surgeon. 'Your appointment to H.M.S. *Alcibiades* has come, and you 're to join her at Devonport.'

'Hurrah!' exclaimed O'Brien, who had recently been 'panicking' to go to sea again. 'You may carry on with the dressing, Sister Blaine, please,' he said, discarding his operating-gloves. 'At the risk of a court-martial, I decline to do any more work to-day.'

II.

A week later O'Brien's relief arrived. The staff-surgeon 'shoved off' the following day by the Quebec Steamship Company's S.S. *Bermudian*. He intended staying several days in New York before sailing for England. When the ship was a day out from Bermuda, they received wireless news of Austria's declaration of war on Serbia. A short time before arriving at New York, the operator handed O'Brien a marconigram:

'You had better sail on board *Accatania* if at all possible. BISCOM.'

The *Bermudian* docked only at 3.30 P.M., while the *Accatania* was due to sail at 4 P.M., and lay at her pier some distance away. Nevertheless, by a liberal distribution of gratuities, the staff-surgeon was able to walk up the gangway just as several warning whistles informed friends and passengers alike that the moment for parting had come. Amidst the enthusiastic cheers of an American send-off, the monster liner backed out of its slip into the stream.

O'Brien found the sights of New York Bay extremely interesting on that pleasant summer evening; and it was not till after Sandy Hook was passed that he shook off his preoccupied air, and realised he must see the purser at once concerning his accommodation.

III.

The purser's name was MacFlecknoe, and a deck-steward showed the staff-surgeon to his office. He was a stodgy little man, with a bald head and ginger-coloured beard. 'What can I do for you?' he asked pompously, concentrating his beady eyes upon O'Brien. 'I 'm very busy.'

'I 'd like you to give me a cabin, or berth of some sort,' the staff-surgeon said easily.

The hairs of MacFlecknoe's wing-like moustache bristled ominously. His tufty eyebrows became curiously agitated. A whistling sound preceded actual vocalisation of his indignant feelings. 'What on earth do you mean?' he finally sputtered.

'Exactly what I say,' O'Brien retorted. 'The fact is, I hadn't time to book.'

'Am I to infer, then,' the purser said angrily 'that you have dared to come on board the greatest liner in the world without a ticket?'

'You 're quite right in your assumption,' the staff-surgeon assured him.

'Then where in thunder is your authority for acting in this illegal manner?' screamed the purser.

'The most legitimate in the world,' O'Brien said—'the exigencies of the King's service;' and he handed MacFlecknoe the deputy surgeon-general's telegram—'which, by the way, please regard as confidential.'

The purser's manner changed instantly. He left his revolving-chair, and grasped the staff-surgeon's hand effusively 'This makes all the difference in the world, doctor,' he said. 'Really, the shock of your first announcement has left me so weak that I 'm going to have a whisky-and-soda,' MacFlecknoe declared, pressing the button. 'Will you join me, doctor?' he asked.

'Thanks very much,' O'Brien replied, laughing. 'I think that perhaps one is indicated.'

The purser ordered the drinks. 'And mind you bring none of your ordinary smoking-room

stuff,' he warned the steward.—'I hope you'll excuse my late rudeness,' MacFlecknoe said to the staff-surgeon. 'We have over seven hundred saloon passengers this trip, and they have almost driven me frantic answering all sorts of silly questions. Besides,' he said, lowering his voice, 'we've a fabulous amount of specie on board.'

Some one knocked.

'Come in,' said MacFlecknoe.

'Is this the purser?' an austere-looking lady asked, levelling her lorgnette at him.

'It is, madam,' he responded sourly.

'I've booked to Liverpool for myself and maid,' she said. 'If I decide to disembark at Fishguard instead, will it be all right?' the lady inquired.

'Certainly, madam,' MacFlecknoe replied. 'Let us know definitely a few minutes before we're due at Fishguard,' he added sarcastically.

'Thank you,' said the lady, backing out stiffly. Unhappily, she collided with the too energetic steward, and the drinks went crashing to the deck. 'I'm sorry,' she said, as she disappeared.

'So am I,' snapped the purser. 'That's the sort of thing I'm up against all the time, doctor,' MacFlecknoe said bitterly, looking sorrowfully at the mess. 'However, we'll have more drinks.'

'Oh, never mind just now,' observed the staff-surgeon, rising. 'I'd be obliged, though, if you could fix me up.'

The purser referred to his plans. 'You may have Cabin V on the boat-deck,' he said. 'We don't usually put saloon passengers up there; but at least you'll have it to yourself.'

'Right-o,' said the staff-surgeon.

'Steward,' MacFlecknoe ordered, 'show the doctor to his cabin.'

IV.

A crosswise alleyway gave access to several sections of cabins abaft the funnels. V was the port outside one, and had a square window overlooking the boat-deck. There was still that close odour about which liners develop in port, and O'Brien left his door ajar in order to let in the fresh air. He began unpacking his box, but had not proceeded very far when a black-coated gentleman appeared, holding a bottle of beer in each hand.

'Say, pard,' he said, 'have a pint of Bass with me, and tell me who is "your gentleman."'

The staff-surgeon looked at him in astonishment. 'What the deuce are you driving at?' he demanded.

'Excuse me, sir,' the man replied, somewhat taken aback, 'but I thought you were "one of us."'

'One of whom?' inquired O'Brien.

'Why, one of us valets, of course,' the man answered impatiently, 'this being the valets' flat.'

The staff-surgeon sat down on his bunk and roared with laughter. 'This is the limit,' he said. 'MacFlecknoe has a sense of humour after all.'

'I'm sorry, sir, if I've made a mistake,' the valet said humbly.

'By way of a reprisal,' said O'Brien, 'might I ask who's "your gentleman," as you say?'

'He's Albrecht von Rex,' the man replied.

'I once met a young man of that name, but he was a German naval officer,' O'Brien said reminiscently.

'It's the same, sir,' said the valet, 'although he hasn't done much orficering since I've been with him this past year. He's a queer bloke,' the man went on, with a strange mixture of cockney jargon and Yankee disdain for superiors. 'Now, what do you think he wants with a bag of sand on board?'

'I don't wish to hear anything about his private affairs,' the staff-surgeon said testily; 'but if you'll take my card to your master, and say I'll meet him in the smoking-room in half-an-hour, it'll compensate for some of your infernal impudence.'

'Very good, sir,' answered the valet, assuming his professional manner.

'It seems a long time since I met Rex,' the staff-surgeon mused, as he began dressing for dinner.

V.

Two years previously O'Brien's ship, H.M.S. *Rosemary*, was lying off the Golden Horn. One night an accident on board recalled the staff-surgeon from a dance at Admiralty House. The picket-boat steamed close to the shore. O'Brien sat in the stern-sheets bewailing the unkindness of a fate that tore him away from a charming partner whom he might never see again. There was no moon, but the stars of a brilliant sky were reflected in the silky sea like so many glorious jewels, and shed sufficient light to outline the palace of Dolmabagche, on the brink of the deep Bosporus.

Suddenly the serenity of the scene was broken by a human form being launched into the sea. A head bobbed up near the picket-boat. Please help me,' it gasped.

'Who the devil are you?' asked O'Brien, stopping the boat, and ordering the coxswain to throw him a rope's end.

'I'm an *ober-leutnant* in the German navy,' said the young man, climbing in.

'You look more like a Turk,' the staff-surgeon said suspiciously, alluding to his being dressed in native garb.

'A liaison with a fair Circassian maiden is responsible for my masquerading like this,' the officer replied, after he had got his breath. 'We arranged to meet in the palace gardens, but were discovered, and I made my escape by jumping off the parapet.'

'You were certainly taking chances,' O'Brien remarked.

'Apart from the danger to life a European

runs in an *affaire de cœur* in Turkey,' declared Rex, for such was the officer's name, 'it so happens I'm in a particularly delicate position at the present moment. My Government occasionally employs me on missions of a diplomatic nature. That's where my facility for speaking several foreign languages comes in,' said Rex, who spoke English perfectly. 'This time it is the Bagdad Railway, and the principal shareholder with whom I have to treat is a rich Turk, who is also the lord and master of my inamorata.'

'Allah be praised!' O'Brien murmured.

'Discovery would therefore have meant the lopping off of my official head,' Rex said, as the staff-surgeon dropped him at the officers' gangway of his ship, S.M.S. *Göttingen*, 'and I'm ever so much obliged to you for picking me up.'

'Oh, that's all right,' said O'Brien, giving the signal for the picket-boat to 'carry on;' 'it's all in the day's run.'

According to the valet's dark hints, the scope of Rex's diplomatic efforts had been greatly extended of late.

VI.

The smoking-room of the *Accatania* was the most famous of its kind in the *ante-bellum* liners. Its Jacobean decorations, rich frescoes, and absence of vibration gave one the impression of being in the spacious quarters of a West End club rather than travelling through the seas at twenty-five miles an hour. As soon as Rex spotted O'Brien, he dashed up to the staff-surgeon. He was singularly dark for a German, and in his dinner-jacket did not look unlike an Englishman.

'This is an unexpected pleasure,' Rex said enthusiastically. 'Have a Martini?'

'Thanks, I will, Rex,' said O'Brien.

'What's the occasion of your unservice-like trip?' Rex asked.

O'Brien told him of his new billet. 'And you?' he queried politely.

'Oh, railways again, and other things,' Rex replied. 'I've been anywhere from Peru to the Peace River district,' he said, waving his arms about him in a grandiose fashion.

'What has Germany got to do with railways on such a vast scale?' inquired O'Brien.

'Ah, now you're asking,' Rex answered enigmatically. A moment later he said, 'You're returning home at an interesting time.'

'In what way?' O'Brien asked.

'Well, this Serbian business, for one thing,' said Rex.

'I don't see how that'll affect us,' O'Brien answered. 'I fancy it'll take a good many Serbias to make our country enter the arena of a European conflict.'

'Well, here's hoping you won't,' said Rex, raising his glass.

'Cheer-o,' O'Brien responded.

'I don't know, though, O'Brien,' Rex said reflectively; 'there's a modicum of occultness about your diplomacy that's a bit bewildering to our secret service people.'

'Secret service will be the death of Germany,' declared O'Brien.

'Why?' Rex asked.

'Because you build too much on information acquired in an unnatural way.'

'Perhaps you are right,' Rex admitted.

'At any rate, let's have dinner before an Anglo-Germanic disruption takes place,' O'Brien suggested; 'the bugle went some time ago.'

VII.

They dined at a small table in the grill-room, in preference to the rather garish Louis XIV. restaurant. After he had drunk a couple of glasses of champagne, Rex said, 'You can't imagine what I've been doing during the past six months.'

'There are so many by-products connected with your activities,' O'Brien replied gibingly, 'that I haven't the remotest idea.'

'I've been clerking for the Canadian Pacific Railway,' said Rex.

'What in the world made you do that?' O'Brien asked.

'When Germany finally takes over the government of the world,' Rex boldly declared, his eyes flashing and his cheeks flushed with wine, 'we shall make great use of that stupendous repository of British Empire secrets, the Canadian Pacific Railway. Through its medium I've seen and heard things that will whet the Wilhelmstrasse appetite for world-wide dominion, and incidentally make me sight my guns all the more accurately in the navy.'

O'Brien smiled on him indulgently. 'Rex,' he said, 'you're without doubt the greatest "pipe-dreamer" I've ever come across.'

'At least you'll concede one material result of my work in Canada, of which I'm very proud,' Rex said exultingly, extracting a folded slip of paper from his wallet. It was a certificate for five shares of Canadian Pacific Railway stock. 'They gave me this for translating their annual report into German,' he said. 'It was extra work, and naturally brought me into intimate association with high officials, with what I hope will be splendid results for the Fatherland.'

'Time will tell which of us is the fool,' O'Brien said thoughtfully as they went on deck.

VIII.

Life on board the *Accatania* soon took on the usual transatlantic phase. The weather was fine, and the decks were crowded with passengers. The hours passed very quickly on such a vast liner, with its private suites, palm-court, and hundred and one pleasant diversions. Of course, the usual busybodies began organising the 'amusement' potentialities of the saloon, and certain characters loomed large in the public eye in this respect. There was one man in particular, a Mr Draw-

cansir, of Kalamanzoo, Michigan, who, early in the voyage, got up an elaborate programme of deck sports. Captain Bramble, however, decided to spring a surprise 'lifeboat drill' and 'abandon ship' exercise on the passengers about the same time. The two events conflicted, and, of course, the sports were off. Drawcansir was incensed, and made some offensive remarks to the captain on the inopportuneness of his arrangements. The captain retaliated by prohibiting deck sports as being a public nuisance.

Drawcansir, however, was able to carry off an aquatic competition in the swimming-pool of the *Accatania*. This gave him an opportunity of 'boosting' his patent self-inflating life-belt, and he booked many orders, which he filled from his stock in the luggage-room. Among other people, Rex bought one.

'Nelson would have scorned the idea of a naval officer possessing such a thing,' O'Brien sniffed.

'Wait till you see what the next war does to your Nelsonian traditions,' Rex said cynically.

(*Continued on page 237.*)

THE MYSTERIES OF THE PACIFIC.

By R. W. Reid, New Zealand.

GREAT are the mysteries, seemingly impenetrable, of the Pacific. Its immense area is strewn in places with green hilly islands, fairy islets, and palm-bearing atolls, on the white, glistening shores of which the waves are ever breaking in long ridges of silvery foam. These islands, some two thousand five hundred in number, are the work of two forces widely divergent in character—the one volcanic, the other the coral insect. The Pacific Ocean is girded with volcanoes. On several of its islands are active craters, and at frequent intervals, from the far north to the far south, are experienced both earthquakes and seaquakes. So immense are the depths met with in different regions that certain scientists have suggested that the moon may have been flung from this part of the earth. Mighty chasms exist, principally at Tuscarora Deep, near Japan; at the Kuriles; at the Aldrich Deep, east of New Zealand; and between Midway Island and Guam. Hither and thither over its surface flow veritable rivers —rivers of the sea—always a most fascinating study.

Ethnologists have a rich field provided them in the Pacific. Its aboriginal inhabitants occupy a relatively humble place in the scale of present-day civilisation; but the inhabitants of these islands were not always of the uncivilised order. Evidence has been brought to light, and new discoveries continue to be made, that at one period a powerful race, possessing some degree of culture, lived and ruled in these Pacific Islands. Here is provided basic material upon which to build speculations as to whether the once civilised natives of the Pacific have retrograded, been annihilated by a more powerful race, or been absorbed by less civilised immigrants.

At Ponapé, in the Caroline Group—north from, and comparatively near to, Australia—there stands to-day a series of ancient ruins on a shelving reef. These ruins are part of what at one time was a Venice in the Pacific. The town had been built upon about fifty tiny islets, each islet surrounded with deep water, which provided numerous and intricate waterways. The storms and the salt-laden blasts—the Pacific frequently belies its name—have been loosening and crumbling the heavy masonry, and the tropical vegetation has lent its aid. Great blocks of stone have been lifted and displaced; thick walls have been rent asunder by the grasping, spreading roots. Many buildings in that eastern Venice seem to have been large and imposing. One feature of these great structures evident to-day is the extraordinary thickness of some of the walls. In several instances they are from fifteen to sixteen feet thick. But not all the buildings had walls such as these; the majority of the houses appear to have possessed walls not more than two feet thick. Two temples, at least, were within the confines of the city; but what form of worship their interiors witnessed who can tell? Away in the remote past this Ponapé city was probably the capital of an archipelagic empire. Its builders doubtless came from other lands. They must have been skilful navigators, and, as one investigator says, held mastery over their empire by their mastery of the sea. A curious ethnological fact has recently been brought to light concerning the chiefs of Ponapé, namely, that they alone among the many chiefs in Polynesia traced their lineage through the fathers. The common people of Ponapé, like all the rest of the Polynesians, traced their descent through the mothers.

The empire and city builders of Ponapé are held by certain scientists to have hailed from Japan. A water-city, similar to that of Ponapé, once stood on the west coast of Japan, and this fact is advanced as proof that the builders of the island city of the Pacific were Japanese. Moreover, the type of physiognomy found at the present time in the regions of the Carolines is often distinctly Japanese. Ancient pottery collected from several Polynesian islands is exactly similar to that found in the kitchen-middens of Japan. The present-day looms operating in the Caroline Islands, and south-

wards to and including Dutch New Guinea, are precisely the same as the primitive looms of Japan. In early days the Japanese seem to have been rovers of the sea on a much greater scale than are their descendants. Indications of their presence are said to have been discovered as far south as New Zealand; but these seem to be of a very slender nature. The Maoris many years ago, it is stated, possessed a *korotangi*, a model of a bird carved in stone. This was looked upon as an emblem of some kind—precisely of what has not been made clear—and it was carried by its possessors into battle. In time, however, it was supposed to bring bad luck, and it was buried. Generations afterwards it was found again, and the chiefs met and held a *tangi* over it. A *tangi* is the Maori ceremony of wailing and weeping over the dead. Then *waiatas*, or songs, were composed in honour of the *korotangi*, and these were handed down orally from generation to generation. In them reference is made to the bird having been brought from far-off Hawaiki. This mysterious little model is still in existence. The carving upon it is not Maori, and, according to competent authorities, could have been executed nowhere but in Japan.

But the builders of Ponapé were surrounded by powerful enemies. There are still great piles of rocks on each side of the main entrances to the city from the sea. These were evidently utilised in times of danger to block the waterways and secure, as far as possible, the safety of the city. Ponapé seems to have ultimately fallen into the hands of a barbarian enemy. To-day traditions linger in this part of the Pacific that a race of black marauders overthrew the empire whose capital was the water-city of Ponapé.

The inhabitants of Ponapé—the city is tenantless now, 'save to the crooning wind'—had reached a stage of civilisation which included the art of writing. And, strange to say, that art has in places been handed down from father to son from these far-off years. At the present time natives are found actually capable of writing that ancient script. Dr J. Macmillan Brown—who resigned his professorial chair in Canterbury College, New Zealand, to carry out ethnological and kindred researches in the Pacific—found, not long ago, on an island four hundred miles from Ponapé, a native chief who could write the ancient script. Dr Brown has obtained the complete alphabet, of fifty-one characters, and has been able to compare it with other ancient forms of writing. On Easter Island, far to the south and east of the Carolines, in the Pacific, there was a script once employed, and it remains visible to-day engraven on stone tablets. But the script discovered near Ponapé bears no resemblance to that of Easter Island. Nor does it resemble the scripts of Central America. Dr Brown, lecturing recently in New Zealand, described the Ponapé script as 'not rude, but conventional, and showing all the evidences of long usage and development. It is far ahead of Chinese hieroglyphs. . . . Here,' commented Dr Brown, 'is evidence of a cultured nation, of a degree of civilisation much higher than anything at present existing among the natives of the Pacific.'

Easter Island presents problems to the scientific inquirer seemingly more difficult of solution than those of Ponapé. Easter Island, or Rapanui, has an area of forty-six square miles, and it is set in the midst of a veritable waste of waters. Upon the island stand spacious stone dwellings and huge carved images erected upon broad platforms of massive, uncemented masonry. The monoliths clearly represent one person, the features being alike on every statue. These statues number five hundred; they range from fifty to seventy feet in height, and the majority weigh considerably over five hundred tons each. The quarry from which the great solid blocks were hewn is still visible—within the mouth of an extinct crater—some distance from where stands the long array of grim, gigantic statues. The monoliths must have been transported over the rim of the crater—a cyclopean task. Who hewed the blocks? How were they conveyed from the quarry in the crater? These are two of the questions to which scientists are now seeking to provide an answer. All the statues are half-length, their base cut level, so that they stand firmly upon the colossal platform of hewn stones. Just as Ponapé seems to have had connection in those far-off periods with Japan, so Easter Island would appear to have had some form of relations with America. In northern Peru are statues exactly similar to those on Easter Island, and in Central America are advanced examples of the same school of sculpture. The theory that a continent—of which Easter Island was part—once connected Australia, South America, and South Africa helps us on our way considerably towards the much-needed explanation of the mystery of Easter Island. But much there, and elsewhere in the Pacific, remains inexplicable as before.

THE SILENCE OF THE YEARS.

Do not be silent when I call to you,
Seeking companionship in the cold gloom
After the sunset fires, when falling dew
Weaves its pearl carpet on a muffled loom.
Let there be laughter, and light shining through
The ivied window of one magic room
In that fair palace which my glad soul knew
In royal youth. Oh, I shall call, to whom
If not to you, who hold the memories
Of all my life? On wings of gossamer
The rainbow-coloured days have swiftly flown;
But you hold stored the light and scent of these,
And lovelier yet that sacred dream of her
It is my coronal just to have known.

C. FARMAR.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

DARTMOOR FASHIONS.

By BEATRICE CHASE, Author of *The Heart of the Moor*, *Through a Dartmoor Window*, &c.

THE Rainbow-Maker has just told me that I look like a lop-eared rabbit. She has also severely demanded the attendance of a certain toque of mine, with its missing wing. She is the milliner, tailor, and dressmaker of the establishment, and has been greatly annoyed by the once-pair of wings in the toque. One got its largest feather broken in the wind the other day, since when she has clamoured unavailingly to mend it. She apparently suffers from the delusion that her remark about a lop-eared rabbit will reduce me to order. It has quite the contrary effect. I have seldom laughed so much in my life. I would not cease to look like a lop-eared rabbit for anything, and that toque will be mended over my dead body.

But the remark has, naturally, turned my thoughts to the fashions, and to the monotonous inquiries I receive as to how we manage to clothe ourselves prettily if we persist in living on the moor and never visit a large town. To which I reply that when you possess a resident Rainbow-Maker, the thing is simple and exciting. To begin with, my aim is to reverse the fashions on every point. I even have the heels of new boots altered and my hats specially made, rather than be remotely near the current fashions in anything. I object to looking just like every other woman—as if I had been machine-made and run in a mould. I prefer to look like a lop-eared rabbit.

Speaking of hats, I always wear a sailor or an Eton straw in summer. As it has been long extinct, I do not know the name by which it is remembered—or forgotten. At one epoch it became, I think, a 'boater.' Each spring I open the millinery season by writing to a London firm for a 'youth's white straw-boater, or Eton or sailor hat,' describing it, and saying it must be size seven and one-eighth inches in the head. As I never wear pads or frames in my hair, my head is the normal size. But such an order from a woman makes the shop-people very suspicious. They are sure among themselves that I am not a youth, and they think that I have made a mistake in the size for a woman, which according to them ought to be about nine and seven-eighths. They write an obsequious letter, acknowledging the order, and begging me to restate size, which is unusually small. I irritably restate, mentioning that, as said, it is a youth's which is required. This silences them, and the hat appears, after an interval of three weeks or so. At times I guiltily wonder if seven and one-eighth is small for a youth, and if it has been specially made for me!

Concerning dresses, my career has been uncommonly exciting for the past two years or so, because I am clothed entirely in cast-off garments of the Rainbow-Maker's. Each costume has what I call her 'hall-mark.' When you meet me in a skirt with a broad band of military braid round the hem and the sleeves with cuffs of the same braid, you will know it belongs to the Rainbow-Maker—that it has, in fact, belonged to her for so many years that no original stuff of it is left with which to lengthen it for me. In this case, military braid both lengthens the skirt or sleeves and conceals a joined hem. There is a difference of seven inches between our heights, arm-lengths in proportion.

No number of conventional costumes dully made for one every year in shops can compare with the excitement of home-dressmaking. The Rainbow-Maker not only makes everything, including tea-gowns and outdoor coats, but she does far more difficult things. As I say, she edits her costumes for me—a thing no dressmaker either could or would do. I possess now a certain brown serge costume; seeing which, people 'wonder how much a year Miss Beatrice to Venton spends on her clothes.' It began life twelve years ago as the Rainbow-Maker's winter costume in the form of a skirt and a Russian coat with long basques. After eight or nine years, during which it went through several transformations in shape, it was handed to me. There was then only enough left of it to make a skirt and a short Zouave coat. With much perseverance, we matched the colour sufficiently well, and made a waistcoat. I wore the whole thing with a set of crushed turquoise buttons and buckle. It was these, of course, which made it look expensive. Then the Zouave and the skirt and the waistcoat all turned different browns, and the Zouave, always a tight fit, shrank till I could hardly get into it; so its sleeves were extracted, and the rest was reverently buried. The sleeves were put into the waistcoat, thus making a complete dress, which was

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then sent to be dyed one shade darker. This brought it out all the same colour. I darned and patched the rents under the arms, the Rainbow-Maker put on a green velveteen collar, and, since Swiss belts are prehistoric, I had a green satin Swiss belt made of the same shade. I also sent a long white woollen coat which I had worn for two summers to be dyed the same green, and I now wear the complete costume once more. As the finishing touch, the Rainbow-Maker created a green velveteen toque (not velvet, mind), whose cuttings supplied the collar.

Another exciting costume of the Rainbow-Maker's was the illustrious tweed dress which matched the tweed dog. When it reached me, after being worn for several years by her, it was in the form of a short bolero coatee and a short skirt. The bolero sleeves were too short even for the 'hall-mark;' so we got little brown serge cuttings from the above brown dress, which was then young, and made a waistcoat and under-sleeves for the tweed. I wore it for eight years —till, in fact, even the Rainbow-Maker struck, and said she would burn it. With enormous diplomacy, I achieved a compromise, sent it to be dyed black, turned up the bottom yet again, put the 'hall-mark' on in black, and wore it for two years with a black-and-white shirt, crimson satin belt and stock, and gold-and-crimson braid edging the skirt and Zouave. I have it still, and always shall have it—for gardening. I am, in fact, usually wearing it, covered by a shabby blue linen gardening-coat, with a sailor hat over one eye, and galoshes large enough to fit the Giant Blunderbore below the very short skirt, when the most illustrious pilgrims arrive in sumptuous motor-cars, craving permission to snapshot me and the house.

I have got one dress of my very own that never was the Rainbow-Maker's. It was a very thick, very pretty black-and-gray-striped flannel, a remnant of eight yards, which a manufacturing firm bestowed on us for eight shillings. It began life as a morning-gown, with a cloak to throw over it lined with crimson Italian cloth. I wore it for two years. Then the Rainbow-Maker had one fell day with it all and her cutting-out scissors, and there emerged a smart whole costume of dress, with bodice, and short bolero, all to match. It did not need to have the 'hall-mark' anywhere. We lined the skirt with the cloak lining, got some crimson satin for the bolero lining, and I wore it with a crimson satin belt for five years. Last summer I had it dyed black, and put a handsome deep-cream ecru lace-collar on it. To my unutterable joy, one lady recognised it. I could have wept with delight. More than half the excitement of Dartmoor fashions is gone if your friends do not know the genealogy of each costume.

My white summer dress, however, has, I proudly hope, the most extraordinary history of all. I have worn it seven years so far. A certain kindly old bishop with a thrifty soul had presented to him an exquisite pair of real Jaeger sheets to take about with him when travelling, as a precaution against damp beds. Hearing that the Rainbow-Maker suffered from rheumatism, he packed them up, all by himself, and sent them to her. When they arrived, their softness, fineness, and lovely cream tint touched our feminine hearts almost to tears. It was unthinkable to waste them on a bed. The Rainbow-Maker set to work with paper patterns, and cut out from them a whole white dress for me and a skirt for herself. The material is like the finest, most beautiful cashmere, and, of course, washes indefinitely. We wrote to tell the bishop, and the thing was the joke of episcopal circles that summer. Another bishop wrote saying every one now knew my true character, since a bishop who knew me well had put me into a white sheet. Yet a third asked if he might send the candle, and complete the penitential outfit. Two or three years later, the joke was revived when I attended a large 'At home' in the dress, a national gathering at which many prelates were present, and went round to each one, calling their attention to the frock. The Rainbow-Maker's skirt was subsequently dyed black, and worn with a coat of black cashmere. As I say, the chief joy about our dresses is their histories, provided our friends recognise and love them in each new aspect.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XIV.—OF A TEXT, A LETTER, AND A SONG.

RAVENSLEE opened his eyes to find his small chamber full of a glory of sun which poured a flood of radiance across his narrow bed; it brought out the apoplectic roses on the wall-paper, and lent a new lustre to the dim and faded gold frame that contained a fly-blown card, whereon was the legend:

LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

And with his gaze upon this time-honoured text Ravenslee smiled, and, leaping out of bed, proceeded to wash and shave and dress, pausing often to glance glad-eyed from his open window upon the glory of the new day. And indeed it was a morning of all-pervading beauty, insomuch that even Mulligan's, its dingy brick and mortar mellowed by the sun, seemed less unlovely than its wont, and its many windows, catching a sunbeam here and there, winked and twinkled waggishly

So Ravenslee washed and shaved and dressed, glancing now and then from this transfigured Mulligan's to the fly-blown text upon the wall, and once he laughed, though not very loudly, to be sure; and once he hummed a song, and so fell to soft whistling, all of which was very strange in Geoffrey Ravenslee.

The sun, it is true, radiates life and joy. Before his beneficence gloom and depression flee away, and youth and health grow strong to achieve the impossible; even age and sickness, bathed in his splendour, may forget awhile their burdens and dream of other days. Truly sunshine is a thrice-blessed thing. And yet—as Ravenslee tied the neckerchief about his brawny throat, was it by reason of the sun alone that his gray eyes were so bright and joyous, and that he whistled so softly and merrily?

Having brushed his hair and settled his vivid-hued neckerchief to his liking, he turned, and, stooping over his humble bed, slipped a hand beneath the tumbled pillow and drew thence a letter; a somewhat crumpled missive this, that he had borne about with him all the preceding day, and read and re-read at intervals even as he proceeded to do now, as, standing in the radiant sunbeams, he unfolded a sheet of very ordinary note-paper, and slowly scanned these lines written in a bold, flowing hand:

'DEAR MR GEOFFREY,—I find I must be away from home all this week; will you please watch over my dear boy for me? Then I shall work with a glad heart. Am I wrong in asking this of you, I wonder? Anyway, I am, your grateful HERMIONE C.

'*P.S.*—I hear you are a pea-nut man. You!'

Truly the sun is a thrice-blessed thing—and yet—— Having read this over with the greatest attention, taking preposterous heed to every dot and comma, having carefully refolded it, slipped it into the envelope, and hidden it upon his person, he raised his eyes to the spotted text upon the wall.

'You're right,' quoth he, nodding; 'an altogether wise precept, and one I have had by heart ever since she blessed my sight. I must introduce you to her at the earliest—the very earliest—opportunity.'

Having said which, he fell to whistling softly again, and, opening the door, stepped out into the bright little sitting-room. Early though it was, Mrs Trapes was already astir in her kitchen; and since sunshine is indubitably a worker of wonders, Mrs Trapes was singing, rather harshly, to be sure, yet singing nevertheless, and this was her song:

Said the young Obadiah to the old Obadiah,
Obadiah, Obadiah, I am dry.
Said the old Obadiah to the young Obadiah,
Obadiah, Obadiah, so am I.

Said the young——

The song ended abruptly as, opening the door, she beheld her lodger.

'Lordy-lord, Mr Geoffrey!' she exclaimed a little reproachfully, 'whatever are you a-doin' of, up an' dressed, an' not half-past five yet?'

'Enjoying the morning, Mrs Trapes, and yearning for my breakfast.'

'Ah, that's just like a man. They're almighty good yearners till they get what they yearns for; then they yearns for somethin' else—immediate!'

'Well, but I suppose women yearn too, sometimes, don't they?'

'Not they. Women can only hope an' sigh an' languish an' break their 'earts in silence, poor dears!'

'What for?'

'Would a couple o' fresh eggs an' a lovely ham-rasher suit ye?' inquired Mrs Trapes.

'They will suit.'

'Then I'll go an' fry 'em.'

'And I'll come and look on, if I may,' said he, and followed her into her neat kitchen.

'An' how,' said Mrs Trapes, as she prepared to make the coffee—'how's the pea-nut trade, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Flourishing, thanks.'

'The idea of you a-sellin' pea-nuts!'

'Well, I've only been guilty of it four days so far, Mrs Trapes.'

'Anyway, you've disgusted Hermy.'

'Ah! so you told her, did you?'

'O' course I did.'

'And what did she say?'

'Laughed at first.'

'She has a beautiful laugh,' said Ravenslee musingly.

'An' then she got thoughtful.'

'She's loveliest when she's thoughtful, I think,' said Ravenslee.

'An' then she got mad at you, an' frowned.'

'She's very handsome when she frowns,' said Ravenslee.

'Oh, shucks!' said his landlady, slapping the ham-rasher into the pan.

'And she was very angry, was she?'

'I should say so,' snorted Mrs Trapes; 'stamped her foot an' got red in the face.'

'I love to see her flush,' said Ravenslee musingly again.

'Said she wondered at you, she did. Said you was a man without any pride or ambition; an' that's what I say too. Pea-nuts!'

'They're very wholesome,' he murmured.

'Sellin' pea-nuts ain't a man's job no more than grindin' a organ is.'

'There's money in pea-nuts.'

'Money!' said Mrs Trapes, wriggling her elbow-joints. 'How much did you make yesterday—come?'

'Fifty cents.'

'Fifty cents!' she almost screamed. 'Is that all?'

'No—pardon me. There were three pimply youths on Forty-second Street; they brought it up to seventy-five.'

'Only seventy-five cents! But you sold out your stock. Tony told me you did.'

'Oh yes, trade was very brisk yesterday.'

'And you sold everything for—seventy-five cents?'

'Not exactly, Mrs Trapes. You see, the majority of customers on my beat are very—er—small, and their pecuniary capabilities necessarily somewhat—shall we say restricted? Consequently I have adopted the—er—deferred payment system.'

'Land sakes!' said Mrs Trapes, staring, 'd'ye mean ter say'——

'That my method of business is strictly—credit.'

'Now, look-a-here, Mr Geoffrey, I'm talkin' serious, an' don't want none o' your jokes or jollyin'.'

'Solemn as an owl, Mrs Trapes.'

'Well, then, how d'you suppose you can keep a wife, an' children maybe, by sellin' pea-nuts that way or any way?'

'Oh, when I marry I shall probably turn my—attention to—er—other things, Mrs Trapes.'

'What things?'

'Well, to my wife, in the first place.'

'Oh, Mr Geoffrey, you make me tired!'

'Alas, Mrs Trapes! I frequently grow tired of myself.'

Mrs Trapes turned away to give her attention to the ham. 'Did ye see that b'y Arthur yesterday?' she inquired presently over her shoulder.

'Yes.'

'How's he like his noo job?'

'Well, I can't say that he seems—er—fired with a passion for it.'

'Office work, ain't it?'

'I believe it is.'

'Well, you mark my words, that b'y won't keep it a week.'

'Oh, I don't know,' said Ravenslee; 'he seemed quite content.'

'You took him to the theayter las' night, didn't you? Wastin' your good money, eh?'

'Not very much, Mrs Trapes,' said her lodger humbly.

Mrs Trapes sniffed. 'Anyway, it's a good thing you had him safe out o' the way, as it happens.'

'Why?'

'Because that loafer M'Ginnis was hangin' around for him all the evenin'. Even had the dratted imperence to come in here an' ask me where he was.'

'And what did you tell him?'

'Tell him!' she repeated. 'What did I not tell him?' Her voice was gentle, but what words could convey all the quivering ferocity of her elbows? 'Mr Geoffrey, I told Bud M'Ginnis just exactly what kind o' beast Bud M'Ginnis is. I told Bud M'Ginnis where Bud M'Ginnis come from an' where Bud M'Ginnis would go to. I told Bud M'Ginnis the character o' his mother an' father very plain an' p'inted.'

'And what did he say?'

'He say! Mr Geoffrey, I didn't give him a chance to utter a single word, o' course. An' when I'd said all there was to say I picked up my heaviest flat-iron as happened to be handy, an' ordered him out; an', Mr Geoffrey, Bud M'Ginnis—went.'

'Under the circumstances,' said Ravenslee, 'I'm not surprised that he did.'

'Ah! but he'll come back again, Mr Geoffrey. He'll find Arthur alone next time, an' Arthur'll go along wi' him, an' then—good-night! The b'y'll get drunk an' lose his job like he did last time.'

'Why, then, he mustn't find Arthur alone.'

'An' who's to stop him?'

'I.'

'Mr Geoffrey, you're big an' strong, but M'Ginnis is stronger—an' yet'—— Mrs Trapes ran a speculative eye over Ravenslee's lounging form. 'H'm!' said she musingly; 'but even if you did happen to lick him, what about th' gang?'

'Echo, Mrs Trapes, promptly answers, "what"?'

'Well, Mr Geoffrey, I can tell ye there's been more 'n one poor feller killed around here to my knowin'—yes, sir!'

'But the police?'

'Perlice!' snorted Mrs Trapes. 'M'Ginnis an' his father have a big pull wi' Tammany, an' Tammany is the perlice. Anyways, Mr Geoffrey, don't you go havin' no trouble wi' Bud M'Ginnis. Leave him to some one as is as much a brute-beast as he is.'

'But, then, what of Spike?'

'Oh, drat him! If Arthur ain't got the horse-sense to know who's his worst enemy, he ain't worth a clean man riskin' his life over; for it would be your life you'd risk, Mr Geoffrey—mark my words.'

'Mrs Trapes, your anxiety on my account flatters me; also I'm glad to know you think me a clean man. But all men must take risks—some for money, some for honour, and some for the pure love of it. Personally, I rather like a little risk, just a suspicion, if it's for something worth while.'

'Mr Geoffrey, what are you gettin' at?'

'Well, I would remind you that Spike has—a sister.'

'Ah!' said Mrs Trapes, and her lined face took on a sudden anxious expression.

'Therefore I've been contemplating—er—tackling Mr M'Ginnis—at a proper and auspicious time, of course.'

'An' what o' the gang?'

'Oh, drat the gang, Mrs Trapes.'

'But you don't mean as you'd — fight M'Ginnis?'

'Well—er—the thought has occurred to me, Mrs Trapes, though I'm quite undecided on the matter, and—er—I believe my breakfast is burning.'

'My land!' ejaculated Mrs Trapes, turning to snatch the pan from the stove, 'I'm afraid the fire's ketched it a bit, Mr Geoffrey.'

'No matter.'

'An' now there's the coffee b'ilin' over.'

'Let me help you,' said Ravenslee, rising.

'Anyway, your breakfast's ready, so come an' eat it while it's good an' hot.'

'On condition that you eat with me.'

'What! eat wi' you, Mr Geoffrey—in my best parlour—an' me in me workin' clo'es?'

'Ah, to be sure—not to be thought of, Mrs Trapes. Then we'll breakfast here in the kitchen.'

'Would ye mind?'

'Should love it.'

So down they sat together, and Ravenslee vowed the ham was all ham should be, and the eggs beyond praise. And when his hunger was somewhat appeased, Mrs Trapes leaned her bony elbows on the table and questioned him.

'You ain't ever spoke to Hermy, have you, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Very often lately.'

'I mean—you ain't opened your 'eart to her—matrimonially, have you?'

'No.'

'Why, then, I'll tell you what. There's been times when I've been afraid that for the sake o' that b'y she'd sacrifice herself to Bud M'Ginnis.'

'No, she would never do that, Mrs Trapes.'

'Oh, but she would.'

'But, you see, she couldn't.'

'An' why not?'

'Oh, well, because—er—I should kill him first.'

'Land sakes, Mr Geoffrey!' and Mrs Trapes actually blenched before the glare in his eyes that was so strangely at odds with his soft, lazy tones.

'And that ends it,' he nodded. 'Mrs Trapes, I've made up my mind.'

'What about?'

'Mr M'Ginnis. I'll begin to-day.'

'Begin what?'

'To prepare myself to bestow on him the thrashing of his life.' So saying, Ravenslee stretched lazily, and finally got up. 'Good-morning, Mrs Trapes!' said he.

'But where are ye goin'?' she demanded.

'To my pea-nuts,' he answered gravely. '"Man is born to labour," you know.'

'But it's early yet.'

'But I have much to do. And she laughed at me for being a pea-nut man, did she, Mrs Trapes? She frowned and flushed, and stamped her pretty foot at me, did she?'

'She did so, Mr Geoffrey.'

'I'm glad,' he answered; 'yes, I'm very glad she frowned and stamped her foot at me. By the way, I like that text in my bedroom.'

'Text?' said Mrs Trapes, staring.

'"Love one another,"' he nodded. 'It is a very—very beautiful sentiment—sometimes. Anyway, I'm glad she frowned and stamped at me, Mrs Trapes. You can tell her I said so if you happen to think of it when she comes home.' And Ravenslee smiled, and, turning away, was gone.

'Well,' said Mrs Trapes, staring at the closed door, 'of all the—well, well!' Then she sighed, shook her head, and fell to washing up the breakfast-things.

(*Continued on page 244.*)

THE MEXICAN PEON.

By C. W. L. Barber.

PRESIDENT WILSON has declared that his sympathies are with the peon class in Mexico. It was from a sincere, if mistaken, desire to help the peon that that high-minded, learned, and peace-loving gentleman placed himself before the world in the dubious light of a supporter of the brutal robber and murderer Pancho Villa, and involved his own country in a very embarrassing situation. As I happened to pass the greater part of three years in very intimate association with the peons of northern Mexico, it has occurred to me that a short account of this little understood class might be of interest at the present juncture.

For greater clearness I may state I was encamped near Lake Guzman, a body of water twelve miles long and five wide, situated in the state of Chihuahua. This lake is visited every winter by many thousands of wild duck, besides geese and swans, and it was in order to construct a duck-decoy similar to those found in Norfolk and Suffolk that I went there. There is a good market for fowl in the United States, and the venture would have been a profitable one had it not been for the revolutions, which wrecked everything, and eventually forced me to leave the country. My camp was near the north end of the lake, and nine miles from Guzman Station, the nearest railway point.

The first peon with whom I was intimately acquainted was Alejandro (pronounced Alehandro). He was also by far the best, and could

read and write, very rare accomplishments among peons of mature age. He was honest as the day, punctilious in the performance of any work he understood, kind-hearted, faithful, and very polite; but, like all other peons I have known, he was mentally a child. My first introduction to him took place under somewhat curious circumstances.

Having gone to Guzman Station in my boat to fetch some materials for the decoy, after dining with Señor G., owner of the ranch, and my landlord, I was strolling near the south end of the lake, accompanied by B., the decoyman I had brought out from England. Suddenly we were startled to see a large fire flare up across the lake, as near as we could judge in the exact situation of our camp. We hastened back to Señor G.'s house, fearing that the tent was on fire; but he soon reassured us.

It seems that, knowing I was in want of a man to help in the construction of the decoy, he had sent one to me that afternoon; but, as he had walked out while we were sailing to Guzman, we had missed seeing him. He had no doubt lit the fire to cook his supper. Señor G. assured us our things would be perfectly safe with Alejandro, whom he had known for years. Our fears thus allayed, we accepted Señor G.'s kind offer of a room for the night, and next morning, in high spirits, set sail with a fair wind for camp.

When we neared the decoy, however, a heart-breaking spectacle greeted our eyes. I had previously purchased two large wagon-loads of corn-stalks for the screens of the decoy, and had completed several of the screens already. As this material had to be brought twenty miles, the expense was considerable.

Imagine our dismay, therefore, when we saw a herd of about twenty cattle feeding on the screens and the pile of loose stalks. The screens were wrecked, and had to be reconstructed, and the greater part of the other stalks were so bitten and trampled as to be useless.

Turning from the depressing view of the decoy, we gave our attention to Alejandro, and, had we only been in a frame of mind to appreciate it, he was indeed a picturesque object of contemplation. He stood some six feet two, was rather thin and narrow in build, and every item of his attire appeared to have been expressly designed to accentuate his height. Clad in skintight pantaloons of a light-yellow colour, with a jacket to match fashioned after the style we associate with Eton, he was confined as to the waist by innumerable turns of a scarlet sash, whose two long ends fluttered gaily in the breeze. His tall, pointed sombrero reminded one of the spire of some lofty fane; while his long gray beard, which terminated in the neighbourhood of his sash at the same acute angle, might almost have been its reflection in some distant pool.

I inquired of Alejandro what he wanted, and he explained that Señor G. had told him that I wanted a man, and thought he (Alejandro) might suit me.

'But,' I said, 'if you wish to work for me, why did you not drive away the cattle which were destroying my property?'

'I did not know they were doing any harm,' he replied, 'or I would have driven them off in an instant.'

I could not believe this at the time, but an inspection of our camp soon convinced me that it was the literal truth. On our departure for Guzman Station we had left in rather a hurry, and, after the manner of campers, had neglected to wash and put away the breakfast-things. I now observed that not only had this been done, but that the beds had been neatly made, the whole place swept out and tidied up, and a great pile of firewood had been collected and heaped up near the tent. As a matter of cold fact, Alejandro, anxious to commend himself to his prospective patron, had spent several hours in putting the place to rights and collecting fuel; and then, happy in the consciousness of a duty well performed, he had sat down and calmly watched a bunch of cattle destroy the fruits of a couple of weeks' work and considerable expenditure of cash. It sounds incredible, but such is the Mexican peon.

I was so annoyed about the cattle that, notwithstanding Señor G.'s recommendation, I was disinclined to employ Alejandro; but the work he had done round the tent decided me to give him a trial. I had reason to rejoice that I did so. He made some ludicrous mistakes at first, and it was necessary to explain and demonstrate every new job to him with a minuteness which no English labourer would have required or American tolerated. An explanation once learned, however, he never forgot it, and performed all tasks exactly as instructed, and those of a periodical nature at precisely the same time each day, whether I was present or not. In addition, he never got intoxicated even when opportunity offered. In this he differed from most peons I have known. He became extremely attached to me, and—except for a short interval referred to later—worked for me till I was forced to leave the country.

Having to do considerable excavation, I employed from time to time numerous other peons, mostly of the wandering class. As most of these stayed but a week or so, and were a thievish, unreliable crew, I shall only refer to Teodoro, who stayed with me some months, and whose character exhibited many of the virtues and failings of the better class of peons. Like Alejandro, at whose gray beard he used to laugh, Teodoro was mentally a child. He was, however, a remarkably sturdy child. Less tall than Alejandro, he had the chest of a bulldog and the neck of a bull. Nothing delighted him more than to exhibit his strength. I remember one day, when old Alejandro was toiling up the hill from the lake with a large sack of flour on his

back, Teodoro came up behind him, and, before he knew what had happened, had him, sack and all, perched on his shoulder, and was running up the hill at a brisk pace. The alarm of Alejandro —who, not daring to loose his hold on the sack, coiled his legs around the body of his captor— was ludicrous to witness, and his dismay was increased when his beloved sombrero fell off into a mezquite-bush.

Although absolutely illiterate, Teodoro was rather quicker than Alejandro to comprehend in a rough way the nature of the work he was required to do; but he was not so particular about understanding all its details, and would often start work with great vigour and an incorrect idea of what was to be achieved. Neither was he so conscientious in observing detailed instructions, even when he understood them. He was, however, a very willing worker.

Some weeks after I engaged Teodoro, Alejandro received a letter regarding a cottage he owned at Colonia Dias which required his personal attention. As I was expecting some goods to arrive at Guzman Station, Alejandro, Teodoro, and myself proceeded thither by water, leaving the Englishman B. in charge of the two or three other peons then working for me. Having settled with Alejandro, I bade him farewell, he promising to return as soon as his affairs were arranged. Teodoro and myself had embarked my goods, and were just setting sail when we were arrested by the sight of Alejandro rushing toward us at full speed. In one hand he carried his tall, pointed sombrero, while the other grasped a parting gift in the shape of a bottle of *tequila*. It was a gift I would gladly have dispensed with just then, but one impossible to refuse. *Tequila*, I may state for the benefit of those who have never sampled it, is a liquor prepared from the cactus, resembling Scotch whisky in potency, but with a flavour all its own.

As soon as we were comfortably under way, Teodoro politely offered me the bottle, and on my declining with thanks, took a drink himself. This offer he repeated several times at short intervals; but, meeting with the same response, he abandoned the preliminary ceremony as useless. However, he continued to refresh himself from time to time. I had no idea how frequently these periods were recurring, until, the wind having shifted to dead ahead, it became necessary to row. Then it at once became evident that the modest amount of skill with the oar which Teodoro had so painfully acquired in the past weeks had deserted him entirely. Therefore, at my request, he sat in the stern, while I took both oars. As the boat was heavily loaded, this was fairly good exercise; and after some time, when we were within a couple of miles of camp, it proved too much for Teodoro's sense of the fitness of things. Declaring that he was unable to sit still any longer while his patron worked, he rose unsteadily to his feet. He was approaching with a view to taking one or both oars, when some unsteadiness on the part of the boat, his legs, or his head, or possibly the three combined, caused him to turn suddenly to the right and plunge into the lake. The water at that point was little over four feet in depth, but Teodoro did not know it. Unable to swim, he rolled over and over, loudly proclaiming that he was drowning. I leaned over and caught him by the wrist, drawing him to the boat. He promptly seized the gunwale and pulled it down with such vigour that the boat was half-filled with water in an instant, and I was barely able to reach the other side in time to prevent it from capsizing. What with his intoxicated condition and his total ignorance of aquatics, the half-filled state of the boat, and my own very limited command of the Spanish language, a very ticklish quarter of an hour ensued before he was safely on board.

As we were about a mile from the nearest land, and I had no mind to lose either the boat or its contents, I conducted him to the stern seat, and, showing him my revolver, informed him that he would be wise not to move during the remainder of the trip. Fortunately he was just sufficiently sobered to heed the warning, and we arrived safely in camp in due time. Teodoro complained bitterly of the cold on the way, but a mug of hot coffee made him feel better. I turned a deaf ear, however, to his appeals for a blanket from my bed to supplement his solitary *serape* while his clothes—in which he was accustomed to sleep—were drying. His last words ere finding oblivion from his woes in sleep were, '*No mas, no mas, no mas tequila por mi*' ('No more *tequila* for me').

For the next two weeks Teodoro devoted himself to work with increased vigour, and accomplished an almost incredible amount of excavation. The most notable change in his demeanour, however, was his deferential, not to say servile, attitude to myself. He was evidently afraid I might dismiss him, although I had not referred to his lapse in any way. At the end of that time, as I had business at Guzman Station, I took Teodoro with me. Shortly after we set sail he remarked, 'I do not think I have told your honour that I have an old mother in the city of Chihuahua?' As I shook my head he continued, 'Yes, she is very old and feeble; but I love her very much. She is also very poor. Would your honour be so kind as to let me have a few *pesos*, so that I can help my poor old mother a little?' Of course, I told him he could have all that was due to him, which was found to be twenty-five *pesos*, and he was most grateful.

Next morning I took a walk around. In a back-room, seated at a rough table, was Teodoro playing monte with three Chinamen. It was evident at the first glance that he had been drinking heavily, but I simply observed that it was time to return to camp.

Teodoro, however, was in a different mood from any I had before witnessed. He banged the table with his fist, saying, 'I am not for the camp. I will not work in the dirt any more. I am rich.'

I merely replied, 'Very well;' and, having to go to Señor G.'s office for some provisions, I set sail alone.

Before I left, Señor G. inquired where Teodoro was, and I informed him how I had found the peon employed.

At two o'clock next morning the loud barking of my dog aroused the sleeping camp. Picking up my revolver, I went outside. There was Teodoro, still under the influence of *tequila*. As soon as I recognised him I said, 'It is you, then, Teodoro. Come in and lie down, but keep quiet.' He did so, not saying a word. Next morning he was given some beans and coffee. After breakfast, as I was attending to various matters, Teodoro silently followed me like a lost puppy.

At last I said, 'Well, what do you want?'

'Work, if your honour pleases,' he replied.

'But,' I said, 'you do not want to work in the dirt! You are rich.'

With a doleful wail he exclaimed, '*No tengo uno centavo*' ('I have not got a cent').

As the incidents of the previous day had made it impossible for me to employ him further, Teodoro retraced his weary path to Guzman Station.

Peons include three distinct and sharply defined classes, living under very different conditions, and exhibiting characteristics often in vivid contrast.

Taking these in an ascending order, the first is the *peon de carcel*, or prison peon. There are some estates in Mexico, mostly in the more torrid parts of the country, where, chiefly owing to the unhealthy nature of the climate, it is impossible to obtain free labour. In such locations the proprietors make an arrangement with the nearest chief of police whereby a number of prisoners work out their terms on the estates. These compacts differ in their details in various localities, but are always mutually advantageous as between the chief of police and the proprietor. The poor prisoners would have a different tale to tell. There is no doubt that they are greatly misused. They are locked up at night, often in irons, overworked, and sometimes beaten severely. Many of them have originally been convicted for desperate crimes, and they do not hesitate to attack their guards in order to gain their freedom should an opportunity offer. It is from this class that the legend arises that the peon is a treacherous, bloodthirsty villain, always ready to stab one in the back. In numbers, however, this class is insignificant, not 1 per cent. of the peon population.

The next class is composed of the *hombres sin patron*—masterless men, or wandering peons. They are recruited from escaped *peones de carcel*, deserters from the army, restless young *peones de hacienda* who have run away from their debts, and wastrels and fugitives of all kinds from the cities. They wander in gangs over the country, stealing a few chickens here, and a pig or even a calf there, and at a pinch doing a few days' work. At times, when even this last resort fails, they undoubtedly suffer great hardships. Still, they seem to prefer their free, hand-to-mouth existence to any settled employment. It is but a step from a wandering peon to a brigand. Their numbers have been increased by the present disturbed state of the country; but in normal times they constitute about 8 per cent. of the peon population. It is from them that the peon has, in other lands, the reputation of being a thievish, idle fellow.

Lastly, we come to the *peon de hacienda*, the estate or farming peon. He is the real typical peon, and under the wise rule of Porfirio Dias happy was his lot. From being confounded with the two other classes, he suffers, however, under the curious misfortune of being at once commiserated for oppressions from which he is free, and blamed for propensities from which he is remarkably exempt. A family man for the most part, and attached to his home, the irregular life of the wandering peon has for him no attractions. Gentle, polite, and honest as the day, from his grateful heart he gives thanks to God with almost every word he utters. And well he may, for Providence has appointed a special representative here on earth for the benefit of the *peon de hacienda*. That fortunate man obeys—perhaps more strictly than any other on earth—the scriptural injunction to take no thought for the morrow. Yet he never wants! When the cruel rocks, having worn through the soles of his *zapatos*, begin to lacerate his feet, when the last bean has passed from the bag to the pot, or when the cutting winds of January bring to mind the numerous holes in his *saco*, then, and not till then, he repairs to the shop or store of his patron, with a well-justified faith that his requirements will be met, however the account may stand. For the patron, like Providence, 'knoweth that he hath need of these things,' and has made provision accordingly. All the stories one hears of landowners overworking their peons may be set down as falsifications, or at best as misapprehensions founded on the case of the prison peons. Apart from a certain sense of duty—of which more later—the force that compels the peon to work is the same economic one that coerces the rest of us, the only difference being that it does not operate nearly so harshly in his case as in ours. It is seldom, indeed, that his rations of beans, flour, or dried beef are in any way curtailed. If the peon has been taking many holidays of late, and the account against him is large, it is more probable that he may

have to do without *mescal* or *tequila*, and in an extreme case have his allowance of brown sugar cut down. The *peon de hacienda* is fairly industrious by nature, however, and needs few such reminders.

No one, however, could live long on a Mexican *hacienda* without observing that these obligations form only an insignificant part of the tie that binds patron and peon; there is a sense of responsibility on the one side, and of dependence and loyalty on the other, for which they utterly fail to account. No one, for instance, could listen to one of the lengthy conferences between patron and peon on the subject, say, of the selection of a suitable wife for the peon's son without being convinced that, different as their stations are, they regard themselves as in some sort members of one family. Nor is this feeling confined to times of peace. The peon, who must not be confounded with the riff-raff of the towns, takes small interest in politics, and had no part in the instigation of any of the revolutions which have vexed Mexico in recent years. What his attitude is in regard to them a single instance will sufficiently demonstrate.

Pasquale Orrosco was one of the first to unfurl his banner in support of Madero's revolt. The neighbouring landowners, together with Orrosco's large tenants and all their peons, at once flocked to his standard. He took the military command of the revolution, and soon placed Madero in the presidential chair. Not receiving the reward he expected, he started a revolution against Madero known as the red flag rebellion; and, still supported by his neighbours and ever loyal peons, he was in practical control of the states of Chihuahua and Sonora when Huerta's *coup d'état* cut the ground from under his feet. Not seeing his way to ally himself with the Dictator on the one hand or the vulgar cut-throat Villa on the other, he withdrew to the mountains along the Chihuahua-Sonora boundary, and has since maintained the nucleus of an army in an attitude of armed neutrality. When his hour strikes—and no one is watching the clock more closely—every neighbour and tenant will hold a commission, every peon will answer the roll.

Yes, reader, you are right. Not, as at the present time elsewhere, the torn fragments of a mummy for antiquaries to discuss; not as when, already moribund, its last spark of vitality was strangled by learned laws imposed by alien hands, but as in the period of its strength, as yet unfettered by theories which had nothing to do with its growth, with the peon for its ample base, the feudal system is a living force in Mexico to-day.

IN THE 'FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER III.

THE wiseacres were wrong when they said that the Prince would never reach Derby. In spite of bridges being broken down to impede his progress, the gallant young leader pressed on. On 1st December his brave followers forded the Mersey at Stockport, their baggage and artillery being carried across the stream a little lower down by means of a rude temporary wooden bridge

Poor old Mrs Skyring, an old friend of my father and an enthusiastic Jacobite lady, sold every article of value she possessed, and brought the money and laid it at the Prince's feet, exclaiming, '"Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace!"' A friend who told me about this said there were tears in the Prince's eyes as he took the old lady's hand, raised her from her knees, and kissed her cheek.

News reached our village that Charles was at Macclesfield, while Lord George Murray marched on Congleton. We heard of him again at Ashborne, where he stayed at the hall, and there was consternation in the whole county when Farmer Beeching brought the news that on 4th December the whole Scottish army had entered Derby. I at once rushed to the Manor to inform the Colonel. At the entrance to the drive I met Mary, who looked pale and worried. I told her my news.

'Michael dear, it is all very dreadful, but it does not seem to matter much. Nothing seems to matter now. You know Sir James has come to stay with us, and he has asked me to be his wife, and father wants me to marry him. What am I to do?' There were tears in my darling's eyes as she looked up beseechingly into mine.

'Oh Mary, my dear! my dear! this must never be. My mother used to say that no one was ever happy who married without love, and you love me, I know, dear, and not that old fossil.'

'He is very kind and good to me, Michael, but I cannot love him. But I cannot stay; they are waiting for me, and I want to have a long talk with you.'

'When can we meet?' I asked eagerly.

'Father and Sir James always spend a long time over their wine after dinner. We dine at six o'clock. I will slip away as soon as I can, and meet you by the old sundial in the garden at eight. Will you be there, Michael?'

'Indeed I will, my darling; but I am coming now to tell your father about the Prince.'

'He must not see us together, dear. I will go

through the garden. You will find him in the library. Good-bye, dear—till to-night.'

So I was forced to say farewell. The butler seemed disinclined to admit me, and said that he thought his master was out. I told him rather curtly to go and see whether he was not in the library; and presently the fellow, who had evidently been acting under orders, came and told me that the Colonel would see me. As I entered the room I saw the portly, red-faced figure of my elderly rival departing by another door.

'The Prince is at Derby, Colonel,' I said bluntly, as I liked not the manner of my reception.

'Good heavens, Michael! what shall I do?'

'Remain and face it out,' I said rather angrily. 'The Prince is a courtly gentleman, I am told. He is much beloved by those who know him, or he would never have reached Derby. His followers do not ravage and pillage the country, and, beyond taking a few of our horses in exchange for their shaggy Highland ponies, I do not expect they will do us much harm.'

'But I have Mary to consider,' said the Colonel.

'Well, I am going to Derby to-morrow'——

'You—going to Derby, into that nest of rebels!'

'Of course, sir; a poor farmer cannot be too particular, and he has his living to earn. They tell me that the Prince pays well for the provisions of his army, and I shall take in a sheep or two. I cannot afford to lose a good market.'

'Well, of all the rash things I ever heard of—well—I know you, Michael, as a perverse, strong-willed young man, and it is no use trying to persuade you to give up a foolish thing!'

'No, sir, you are quite right; I do not give up easily when I have made up my mind to do a thing.'

The Colonel looked me straight in the eyes, and seemed to understand that I was talking of something else more important than taking sheep to market, though the market was Derby and the rebels were there.

'Well, good luck to you, Michael; take care of yourself. Don't let the rascals carry you off.'

I could not help thinking that the Colonel would not grieve very much if they did.

'You need not be anxious about Mary, sir. I shall find out how the land lies to-morrow; and if the Prince should come south, I'll saddle my mare Kitty, and with Mary on that fast pony of hers, we would soon gallop to a place of safety where the Scots won't find us.'

When I told Martha that I was going to Derby on the morrow, she was (as she said) 'all of a flutter.'

'Don't you go, Master Mike; don't you go. They Scots will be eating you up as well as the sheep,' she said. 'But there, it's no use your old nurse a-talking; you be that obstinate that one might as well argufy with a stone wall.'

Jan, too, was a bit anxious about me; but I quieted their fears, and told him to catch the sheep for me, and to have the cart ready for me to start at dawn.

When eight o'clock struck in the church tower I was at our trysting-place by the old dial in the Manor House garden. It was a lovely moonlight night. The hoar-frost was on the ground, and the trees shone out in the moonlight like sparkling gems. I could just make out the motto on the face of the sundial, and read the word '*Spera*,' and took the pleasing unction to my soul; and beneath that were the words, '*Non numero horas sive serenas*,' and I wondered whether any serene hours would be my lot. I had not long to wait. There was a red glow in the windows of the dining-room, where, no doubt, my rival, Sir James, was discussing his prospects with the Colonel; and soon I saw a white figure flit through the garden-door of the house. It might have been a ghost; but it was no ghost who threw herself into my outstretched arms, and whispered loving words to me as I kissed my sweetheart.

And then I had to tell her that I was going to Derby on the morrow, and she was full of anxiety, and tried to persuade me not to go.

'I shall be so anxious all day,' she said. 'God willing, you will be back by this time to-morrow night. Will you come and meet me here again, so that I may see that you are safe?'

'God willing, I will be here,' I said very solemnly.

And then she told me how urgent her father was that she should accept the elderly, ardent Sir James's proposals, how persistent the latter was, and how she hated his red face and goggling eyes, and how she would rather marry a Turk or a Hottentot than Sir James Sandleford.

And I told her that rather than let her do such a hideous thing, I would carry her off and marry her with or without her father's consent, if she could endure to be a poor man's wife and live in a cottage—which my foolish Mary seemed to think would be a paradise, and I did not contradict her. I told her that if the Prince came south, I had arranged with her father to put her on her pony, saddle old Kitty, and ride with her to a place of safety; and many other foolish plans and projects we discussed.

'A miracle may yet happen to give you to me,' I said at last when the parting-time came.

'God grant it may! And may He keep you safe to-morrow, dear, and bring you back to me.'

(*Continued on page 250.*)

AUSTRALIA: ITS ABORIGINES AND NATURAL HISTORY.

IF one looks at the map of Australia, it is apparent that the tropical portions of the continent have not attracted settlement, except superficially; it is in the south-eastern corner that the bulk of the population is to be found. Australia may roughly be divided into two equal areas of, approximately, one million and a half square miles each—the one lying within the temperate, the other the tropical, zone. The three states which include these tropical territories are Queensland, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory, which was ceded by South Australia to the Federal Government of Australia in 1907. The development of tropical Australia by the importation and use of coloured labour, as in some other British colonies, received a shock on the coming of federation in 1900. 'White Australia,' the motto of the democracy, is a *sine qua non* with the Labour Party, now politically dominant; in fact, among the first Acts of federated Australia was one to deport the Kanakas, who from the beginning of the industry had cultivated and harvested sugar-cane in Queensland. So 'White Australia' sounded the death-knell of the policy of running tropical industries in the Commonwealth by coolie labour. The fact, by the way, that Queensland can produce two hundred thousand tons of sugar in a good year shows that white men are not unequal to the strain of working in the sugar-fields! Owing to the very imperfect exploitation and development of Australia's tropical regions, these important districts, as suitable for opening up for cultivation as similar areas of Ceylon and Java, are put in the shade by the temperate areas.

In the 'wet belt' of north Queensland, sixteen degrees to eighteen degrees south latitude, there is an average rainfall approaching two hundred inches a year. All the other conditions of the tropics are found in these districts, which only require the application of suitable labour to produce the fruits, cereals, &c. which the West Indies, Ceylon, and other tropical portions of the British Empire send us. Australia by the general public of Great Britain is recognised as the land of gold and wool; but it is not so well known that coffee, rice, and the mangosteen flourish at Cairns and other parts of north Queensland.

One of the coming cultivations along the north-east coast of Australia is coco-nuts, grown for copra, a valuable raw material for soap-making. A friend of the writer's, sick of town-life, secured the freehold of the best part of a beautiful islet in eighteen degrees south latitude, called Dunk Island. On this islet he and his wife, and casual aboriginal native retainers, have lived the simple life for sixteen years. Under the influence of his Majesty the Sun, and congenial surroundings, he has changed from a pale weakling of eight stones four pounds to a tough, brown man of ten stones odd. The 'Beach-comber' (his pen-name) has a tropical plantation, with its papaws and mangoes, plenty of fishing, including the turtle and the dugong, and a coco-nut avenue leading from the coral-reef to the bungalow. The coco-nut fruits in about eight years, and wherever it is skilfully grown, represents a very important and profitable business for the tropical coasts of Northern Australia.

At the last census taken in Australia of the aboriginal inhabitants of the Commonwealth, the Statistician reported that 'the number of aboriginal natives in Australia may be said to be not more than one hundred thousand.' Some twenty thousand were in the employ of whites or were living in contiguity to settlements, leaving eighty thousand aboriginals still in a savage state. But all figures relating to this fast-disappearing race are approximate and unreliable, for no enumeration of them has ever been seriously undertaken. In Victoria and other fairly densely populated states the aboriginals are practically negligible as a factor in the population. As a race-problem, the Australian natives are full of interest. Living representatives of the Stone Age, they are remarkable for their pureness of race, not having mixed with any other peoples, and all having a common ancestry; physical type, language, weapons, habits, being much the same in the Gulf of Carpentaria and in the south and west of the continent. The 'blacks,' as the natives are dubbed, are the same as they were three hundred years ago, when the navigators of Spain, Holland, and Portugal first visited 'New Holland,' save that the process of degeneracy, following upon the advent of the white man, has adversely affected them, as is always the case when the civilised and the savage are brought into contact. Before many years have passed we shall see the extinction of the Australian native; the doom of the race is certain. The life of the aboriginals of the Australian bush is a never-ceasing quest for food; nothing passes them that can be eaten. They dig up yams and other roots, fish for crayfish and mussels, grind seeds between stones, knock down marsupials and birds with boomerang or waddy. As the 'bush' and the creeks, the sources of these delicacies, become wheatfields and the sites of towns, the native disappears.

The Governments and agriculturists of the Australian states are arresting to some degree the process of extinction. Institutions have been established and maintained by the states where the blacks are housed and encouraged to work, the children receiving elementary education. This work is usually carried on at mission stations, and Australia spends about fifteen

thousand pounds a year on it. To meet the demands of the nomadic kind of life of the natives, some of the states distribute blankets annually to them on the approach of the cold season. Another attempt, mutually useful, to help the aborigines is the offer of employment on farms and stations. The aboriginal lads are very smart in handling horses, but the wandering instinct is so firmly implanted that reliance cannot be placed on them by employers for regularity of service. The Australian state Governments have instituted a rigorous system of protecting the blacks, who, unaided, would fall an easy prey to the allurements of alcohol and drugs. The latter they used to get from the Chinese in the form of opium or opium ashes. To supply these articles now to the aborigines is a penal offence. 'Protectors' are stationed in various country districts to look after the interests of the natives, who are rarely seen in towns. So few of the natives are left that it is necessary to visit remote places to get into contact with them in any numbers.

The advent of the white man in Australia was a terrible misfortune for the natives of that continent. Their social system, that had held together for thousands of years the tribes ranging from Cape Leeuwin to the Northern Territory, gradually became broken up. The operations of the settlers on the land either destroyed or interfered with the natives' food-supply. Before the white occupation of Australia came about the aborigines led healthy lives, the increase in the race being checked by the amount of food the different districts could supply. With the white man came the white man's diseases and destructive habits, which, as in other lands under similar circumstances, decimated the natives.

The customs and habits of the blacks of Australia are curious and interesting. They are born into 'classes,' which correspond all over the continent; these divisions are regarded by them as sacred. All things in nature are relegated by them to these classes, and are considered to be male and female. These divisions govern the marriages of the aborigines, and each class is represented by a totem. Many of the beliefs of these people are curious; for instance, the superstition that a black fellow's kidney fat will cause luck in fishing. Many a murder has resulted from this. Pointing a bone is a way of inducing evil influence. Nothing is more interesting in the department of ethnology than the 'corroboree' (war-dance) of the Australian natives; and when the last Australian native has gone the way of the last Tasmanian, that part of the British Empire under the Southern Cross will be the poorer for the disappearance of a picturesque race.

The writings of Darwin, Huxley, Wallace, and other scientists suggest that there once existed two huge northern and southern continents. Huxley proposed as titles, not infelicitously, 'Arctogea' and 'Notogea' (north and south lands) respectively. Australia, by its early isolation from the continental mass, preserved alive in its pristine purity much of the faunal and floral individuality which in other regions of the globe succumbed to the hardy northern races migrating southwards from Arctogea. Australia owes the survival of the interesting marsupial and other archaic types of animal life to this isolation; and she furnished living witnesses of this pre-existence of an extensive Antarctic continent, in which were incorporated Australasia, South Africa, and South America, in the forms of isolated members of animal and vegetable types. Take the remarkable fresh-water fish indigenous to the Queensland rivers, *Ceratodus Forsteri*, the 'lung-fish.' The only two other discovered representatives inhabit rivers of Brazil and tropical Africa. The natural history of Australia abounds in interesting and quaint forms. The larger marsupials are being killed off by the insistent settler, who, axe or gun in hand, deals out destruction to the animals of the plain and bush as well as to the bush itself. Australia should take a lesson from Germany, and establish on scientific lines a national forestry. Not so long ago the states (then colonies) of Australia gave a reward for every kangaroo scalp, acting in the interests of the pastoralists. The manner of the birth of the young kangaroo is peculiar. When the little one is born, 'the mother sits on the ground with her tail in front of her, and therefore the delicate little mite rests for a moment on the soft fur of her tail. The mother quickly opens her pouch with her forepaws, and, stooping down, lifts the little one with her lips into the pouch, and pushes its mouth well on to the hard, pointed tip of the nipple. She then holds it there, and forces the milk through the nipple into the little one, which hardly has the power of drawing for itself. The nipple then swells and forms a kind of bulb in the mouth of the young, which holds it on. If force is used to remove it, the outer part of the mouth gets ruptured, and a small drop of blood appears. When once off at that early stage, it cannot be replaced, as the nipple, being now soft and flaccid, cannot be inserted into the mouth of the young kangaroo, and so it dies.' This description is from the book of Mr W. H. D. Le Souëf, of Melbourne.

Another denizen of the bush in danger of extinction is the opossum, whose skin is so popular at the periodic London sales that the auctioneer's catalogue often includes hundreds of thousands of them. The bush will be robbed of much of its charm to the animal-lover when the pretty little 'possum succumbs to the nomadic gunner intent on making a good bag of skins. A creature that could well be spared—in fact, the inhabitants of parts of Queensland are crying out for Government help in exterminating it—is the flying-fox (*Pteropus conspicillatus*).

These animals are terrible pests to gardeners and fruit-growers; they sleep during the day, and spend the night feeding on fruit, honey, &c. The flying-fox is really a bat, living in large colonies, the presence of which is indicated by the disagreeable smell of the animals, which constantly fight among themselves and make night hideous by their squealing.

The Australian ants are numerous and varied, and seem by their aggressiveness and wide diffusion to claim the country for their own. Take the termites—popularly, white ants—which inhabit trees or the interior of posts. The termite will run up the inside of the pillars on which the houses (generally constructed of wood) are built; and were it not for the tin plates with which these pillars are capped (which stop the upward march of the insects), the termite would make a meal or short work of the Australians' dwelling-places. The Australian white ant constructs habitations when away from houses — huge mounds, six to twelve feet high, in the interior of which are chambers and galleries. The mounds have wide bases, and taper gradually towards the apex. At Cape York, north-east Queensland, there is a remarkable termite city —a plain for a mile or more covered with pointed pillars, like symmetrical pyramids, six or seven feet in height; these are thickly dotted over the plain, and form the habitations of termites.

One of the most remarkable examples of Australian zoology is the 'native bear,' or koala (*Phascolarctus cinereus*), which Saville-Kent, a well-known writer on Australian natural history, calls 'the most droll and bizarre of living animals.' The koala resembles the South American sloth, in general form, in the absence of external tail, and in its slow movements, though this analogy is but superficial.

The fish-supply of the Australian seas and rivers is marvellously varied. Of the economic fish, perhaps the Murray cod takes pride of place. This fish attains a weight of sixty or seventy pounds; it belongs to the perch family. The schnapper, a sea-bream, is a splendid fish, highly esteemed for sport and the table. A peculiarity of the adult male schnapper is a large bony knob on the forepart of the head. The fresh-water lung-fish of the Queensland rivers has been alluded to; it represents the only known surviving member of a genus common enough in the Triassic and Jurassic formations. A specimen of the Ceratodus was brought to London some years ago, and presented to the Zoological Society.

From fishes to the produce of the tropical fisheries—pearl-oysters, bêche-de-mer, or trepang, and so on—is an easy transition. Thursday Island (Queensland) and Broome (Western Australia) are the centres of the pearl and pearl-oyster fisheries. This industry is somewhat under a cloud just now, because it ministers to the taste for luxury. Much, savouring of romance, could be written about the pearl-fisheries and the dusky divers. Pearl-shell is being overfished, and consequently is getting small. Pearls like the world-famous 'Southern Cross,' found at Cossack in 1874, are few and far between. This remarkable group of pearls was valued at ten thousand pounds, and consisted of nine amalgamated pearls, two of which, disposed laterally, formed the arms. The pearls resembled marrow-fat peas; so the writer of these notes thought when he handled the cross in 1886. The manner in which the series of pearls fit into one another by reciprocal convex and concave surfaces leaves no room for scepticism as to this beautiful complex gem being of Nature's arrangement. The sea-cucumber is the trepang, or bêche-de-mer, of commerce. The creature, a huge sea-slug found in the crevasses of reefs and rocks along the Great Barrier Reef, goes, in the dried state, to China, for soup-making.

UNOFFICIAL NEWS.

IX.

THE fourth night out from New York, Rex and O'Brien were walking the boat-deck, when the wireless operator, with whom O'Brien often had a yarn, popped his head out of the office window.

'Here 's a case for you, doctor,' he said, giving the staff-surgeon a slip of paper, on which was written: 'Little Willie has appendicitis.' 'It 's a message I intercepted just now,' the wireless operator laughingly explained; 'a good deal of rot goes singing through space these days.'

'I 'm afraid you 'll have to get more definite information before I can be of any service,' O'Brien said.—'What do you think of it, Rex?' he asked.

Rex looked at it, and turned very pale. 'My God!' he exclaimed, 'this is awful.'

'Why, what 's up, Rex?' the staff-surgeon asked.

'Oh, nothing,' answered Rex, recovering himself, and leaning over the ship's side, with his hand pressed against his forehead; 'I 'm not feeling very well to-night.'

Neither was Berlin. This seemingly inane sentence was the Wilhelmstrasse way of telling Germany's merchant ships all over the world to seek neutral ports, because war was certain between Britain and the Fatherland.

The operator returned to his instrument, and readjusted his headpiece. 'Hello!' he exclaimed

a moment later. 'Why, here's something for you, Mr Rex,' he said, jotting down a long communication, which he finally gave to Rex.

'Excuse me, O'Brien,' Rex said, as he made for the companion-way.

'That last message for Mr Rex appeared to be as silly as the "Little Willie" one,' the operator remarked; 'the thing seems to be contagious.'

'I suppose it's in code, and has something to do with their confounded secret service,' muttered O'Brien.

'I fancy this'll mean another one from Mr Rex,' the operator continued; 'he seems to spend a lot of money these days communicating with the ocean-going yacht *Pandora*. Incidentally, they must be very anxious about him, because he wires them our course, speed, and position every day,' he concluded.

X.

'Remember, ladies and gentlemen,' the swarthy-faced auctioneer said impressively from his rostrum, 'if the least thing happens to delay the ship, in the way of a fog or otherwise, the holder of the "minimum field" wins. How much am I offered?' he asked briskly.

The Fastnet Light was expected to be sighted about midnight, and after dinner many men and women had come into the smoking-room for the last sweepstake of the trip. All the likely probables of the day's run had been taken up, except the minimum field, which provided for a run below any of the expectations.

'What am I offered?' repeated the auctioneer impatiently. 'Remember there's a dance on.'

Several offers were made.

'Bid twelve pounds, O'Brien,' advised Rex, who, not having dined that night, was regaling himself with some sandwiches and a pint of 'Pol Roger.'

'Why don't you make a stab at it yourself?' O'Brien retorted.

'Never mind about me,' answered Rex; 'take my advice and try your luck.'

O'Brien hesitated.

'Quick,' Rex urged; 'fortune favours the bold.'

The staff-surgeon took the plunge. The runs had hitherto been very high, and the saloon passengers were optimistic regarding to-morrow's. In the absence of higher bids, O'Brien's was accepted.

The crowd quickly dispersed. They were off to the ball.

XI.

The sky was rapidly clouding up, and the sultriness of the night was relieved by occasional intensive puffs of wind from the south-west. There was little vibration, however, for the *Accatania* had slowed down soon after dancing began in the palm-court. A lusty orchestra poured out a quick succession of one-steps and hesitation-waltzes, and the give of the deck, as the gigantic liner took the long Atlantic swell, was quite agreeable to the rompish crowd. Among other celebrities, the list of saloon passengers included a party of cinema artists, and gradually the young people stopped dancing in order to watch their frolics.

O'Brien seized the occasion to go up to the boat-deck for some tropical snapshots, in which his partner, a pretty girl from the Southern States, was interested. The staff-surgeon was in his cabin, sorting them out, when the reflection of a brilliant glare through his window attracted his attention. Going out on deck, he was in time to see the last of a red rocket illuminating the darkness about a cable's length away. Then a white one appeared. Again there was blackness. This was repeated two or three times. O'Brien had scarcely time to conjecture what it meant, when he heard the awful cry of 'Man overboard!'

The ship's emergency life-buoy was dropped, and its chemical torch burst forth into a lurid flame as soon as it touched the sea. The *Accatania* came to a grinding standstill, and the boatswain piped the sea-boat's crew away.

XII.

Down in the engine-room, where Jenkinson, the fourth-engineer, was keeping the first watch, the signal from the bridge to stop came as a relief. Something was wrong with the thrust-block bearings, which perform the all-essential function of receiving the thrust, or shock, of the propellers. About ten o'clock Jenkinson had noticed a tendency of this sensitive part of the turbine to develop an abnormal degree of friction heat. The captain was notified, and ordered the fourth-engineer to slow down. Notwithstanding this precaution, shortly after 11 P.M. the pyrometer registered the dangerously high temperature of two hundred and eight degrees. The *Accatania* was a quadruple screw steamship, with a separate turbine for each propelling-shaft, and under ordinary circumstances one or more propellers could be put out of action without embarrassing the others. In this case, however, the bearings of the whole four shafts were involved, and Jenkinson was on the point of advising the captain to stop altogether in order to investigate the cause of the mischief, when he received the peremptory signal referred to.

The chief-engineer was summoned, and he ordered Jenkinson and his assistants to open up the tank from which lubricating oil was forced into the bearings. They discovered the oil to be gritty, and when some of it was examined on a glass slide, particles of sand were isolated. This was the cause of the undue frictional heat, and after the contents of the tank were evacuated, the filters cleaned, and the bearings flushed with fresh oil, the captain was informed that he could

proceed again. The skipper then signalled the lifeboat to return.

'The oil-tank has unquestionably been tampered with,' the chief-engineer declared. 'Has any one been prowling about here, Jenkinson?' he asked the fourth-engineer.

Jenkinson suddenly remembered Rex. The latter had been very chummy with him during the trip. A few minutes before eight o'clock, when he was going on watch, Rex asked permission to accompany him. Jenkinson consented. Rex was keenly interested in the bearings. At one time the fourth-engineer was called away, and Rex had been left alone in this isolated part of the engine-room. He might easily have carried sufficient sand on his person to do the harm.

Jenkinson made a dash for the steel lift to take him up to the main-deck. He would see Rex at once, and find out what he meant by it.

XIII.

Needless to say, with rockets soaring and 'man overboard,' the dancing-party 'packed up,' although the orchestra continued to play in a fitful sort of way. Thousands of people craned their necks over the ship's side to see if they could penetrate the inky-black darkness. The sea broke against the *Accatania* with a sullen crash, but no rumbling sound followed the flashes of forked-lightning which appeared off toward the west, for thunder is seldom heard at sea. The breast of many a passenger aboard that brilliantly lighted steamship became filled with vague feelings of anxiety.

Drawcansir, surrounded by a coterie of life-belt adherents, was much in evidence. 'It's at a time like this, friends,' he said, 'that, wearing my life-belt, you may view, with a complacency you would otherwise lack, the possible vicissitudes of the sea. I would advise all who haven't them already on to repair to their cabins immediately and adjust them. You'll not be at all conspicuous, and you may rest assured that if you are precipitated into the angry elements, you'll become inflated with safety, so to speak.'

Several passengers beat a hasty retreat.

'Would any other ladies and gentlemen care to give their orders?' Drawcansir asked at this psychological moment.

'Yes; I have some orders to give,' Captain Bramble roared. He was passing, and overheard Drawcansir's remarks. 'If you don't cease talking this twaddle, exciting passengers over nothing, I'll put you in irons at once.'

Drawcansir endeavoured to expostulate.

'Quartermaster,' the captain called.

'Yes, sir,' said the quartermaster, coming up.

'Send for the ship's detective, and tell him to keep this man under surveillance.'

'Very good, sir,' the quartermaster rejoined.

Drawcansir slunk off in silence.

Meantime the sea-boat was being launched.

XIV.

Staff-Surgeon O'Brien slipped into the boat just as it was leaving the davits. 'I may be useful,' he said to the third-officer in charge. 'Besides, I've some stimulants with me in case they're necessary.'

The crew pulled in the direction of the flaming life-buoy, which had drifted some distance away. They had not gone far when the storm broke overhead with a dismal moan, with a few drops of rain, and an electrical display that shook up even O'Brien, accustomed as he was to the violent disturbances of the east. There was a prolonged flash of lightning, which illumined the heavens and seas up to the very horizon. The absence of thunder seemed to render more uncanny the sight which was unfolded to their eyes. Less than fifty yards away was a glistening hull of steel, on which stood several men in naval uniform. In the foreground they saw a dripping form, which was familiar to O'Brien in spite of the extraordinary bulging of the torso. The man turned round, and O'Brien recognised Rex's face.

'Why, it's the German bloke!' the third-officer exclaimed.

'Yes; and, so far as I can make out, he's wearing Drawcansir's inflatable belt,' said the staff-surgeon.

'What do you think we'd better do, doc.?' the officer asked, in some perplexity, when darkness obliterated this strange craft from view. 'I don't like the look of things.'

'Nor do I,' answered O'Brien; 'it's one of those long-distance submarines our people were so sceptical about.'

The staff-surgeon had not time to say more. The heavens glared again, and out of the dazzling light there emerged a slowly moving luminous oval, similar in shape to a colossal shell, which in its descent described a gentle curve, and left an ill-defined trail of glow behind it. Its speed increased, until, as it approached the surface of the sea, it had assumed a velocity fearful for the human eye to contemplate. In that vast arena of ocean, this 'drop shell' from the sky found only one target. The under-water boat, with its tanks of petrol and highly explosive torpedoes, was struck, and blew up with a blinding flash and a thunderous roar. Several of the boat's crew were injured by flying splinters, and there was an appalling hiss when the hot, fused metal sank. Nothing remained to show that the submarine or its recent occupants had ever existed, save some burning oil on the surface of the sea.

'Amen!' the third-officer murmured, as he ordered the boat's crew to pick up the life-buoy, with its funereal flambeau. 'Back to the ship,'

he said, in response to several recall whistles from the *Accatania*.

XV.

Fresh surprises awaited their return on board. Jenkinson told them of the engine-room trouble. The wireless operator was cursing the blighter who had cut his aerials. They searched Rex's cabin, but beyond a lot of military maps and personal effects there was nothing which threw any light on the subject.

'Do you think they intended torpedoing us, doc.?' the third-officer asked.

'I don't know, I'm sure,' said the staff-surgeon, looking over some of Rex's photographs.

'I do,' exclaimed Rex's valet, bursting in. He had evidently been listening outside. The valet was in his shirt-sleeves, and his face had a look of suffering on it. His right hand supported his left elbow.

'What do you know?' Jenkinson asked.

'They intended taking the *Accatania* into Hamburg,' the valet declared.

'How do you make that out?' inquired O'Brien.

'Because, when I asked Mr Rex this morning if I was to label his luggage "Fishguard," he says, "Certainly not. We're going on to Hamburg." "In this ship?" says I. "Why not," says he, "if the Kaiser says so?"'

'After all,' the staff-surgeon said reflectively, 'we were a helpless, unarmed ship, with thousands of human beings on board. By intimidating us with their torpedoes and deck-guns, they could have put a prize crew on board and steamed gaily into Hamburg with enough specie to constitute a good-sized indemnity. No doubt, too, the *Pandora* wasn't far off with more men and guns,' he concluded.

'That's not all. Look at this,' said the valet, sobbing, and rolling up the shirt-sleeve of his left arm. There was a curious metal band, with four clasp-locks on it, fastened above the elbow-joint. 'Rex was a cad,' he declared, his face twinging with pain. 'Behind that smiling face of his was the soul of a swine. He tortured me, sir,' he said, turning to O'Brien, 'whenever I displeased him. It all came about in this way,' the valet went on, blubbering. 'Several months ago he detected me in a theft, and made me sign a confession, before witnesses, which he held over my head ever since. I pushed him overboard,' he said defiantly.

'You pushed Rex overboard!' they exclaimed in unison.

'Yes. I couldn't resist the temptation,' the valet declared. 'I knew he was up to some dirty work, and followed him up to the boat-deck. He stood on the rail and made signals by means of a powerful electric torch, in the shelter of one of the lifeboats. Please cut this thing off,' he pleaded.

Jenkinson sent for one of his men to bring the necessary tools.

'It's more in your line, doc.,' he said.

The forearm was white as a result of the constricting band, which had been tightened as far as the fourth clasp.

XVI.

The following day, when the *Accatania* was steaming well up the Channel, the clanging of the engine-room bells at noon reminded the staff-surgeon of the sweepstake.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' the auctioneer announced solemnly, 'the minimum field has won. The day's run was only four hundred and ninety miles.—Mr MacFlecknoe,' he said, addressing the purser, who was standing by in the smoking-room, 'please hand over the one hundred and eighty pounds to the doctor.'

The staff-surgeon's fist came down on the table with a resounding crash. 'I don't want it,' the astonished people, who were very much in the dark regarding the real significance of the previous night's events, heard him shout; 'it's blood-money, and you may give it to the Seaman's Orphanage.'

THE END.

THE CRUCIBLE.

BEYOND the shadows where I stand
In an unknown and twilight land,
  Apart from joys and fears,
Gleams the rich crucible of life,
Filled with forgotten peace and strife
  And unforgotten tears.

Memory restores in fitful gleams
Young Love empanoplied in dreams,
  A flaming sword in hand;
Singing from unfrequented hills,
And far-off hidden reedy rills
  Enriching desert sand.

Through the magnificence of day
He takes his splendid, joyous way,
  Brilliant in half-veiled truth;
With promises of joys unguessed,
And radiating smiles and jest,
  To meet gay, careless youth.

Snatching at dreams, discarding truth,
Careless and strong, ungrudging youth,
  Who only asks to give,
Seizes those phantom, vain delights
With which Love cruelly requites
  The price at which we live.

But still ineffable, divine,
Memory retains a fragrance fine,
  Saved from the burnt-out flames;
And guards unseen from curious eyes
Those hidden, sacred mysteries,
  Baptised by mystic names;

And in tranquillity unstirred
By useless speech or careless word,
  Turns water into wine;
Teaching that triumph of the soul,
The endless struggle for the goal,
  Is won through love divine.

BEATRICE ALLHUSEN.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

WELLS BY THE WAY.

By G. ROBERTSON-GLASGOW.

NO list of 'the hundred best books' will ever express any one's real opinion of literature; so much must be conceded to convention and the classics that one stands gazing hopelessly at the hundreds of 'best books' which would have to be omitted! Opinion is even divided about what *is* best. You cannot compare Dickens and Thackeray—a perfect bookshelf requires both; you want *Tristram Shandy*, but you cannot do without *Middlemarch;* you cling to *Queed*, but it is unthinkable to exclude Kipling. In fact, you give it up in despair, and just try to think what books you would take to a desert island with you if you were allowed three only, and had the world to choose from.

Without claiming any great literary talent, or assuming a very critical attitude, we find it interesting to look back and remember some of the books which have made the deepest impression on our minds, and which, for widely different reasons, we have remembered and responded to. Of course, various minds have various leanings, and the person who can really enjoy *Sherlock Holmes* will not, as a rule, settle down for a happy week with Mr de Morgan. Occasionally one meets people to whom reading has seemed to present no attraction at all; but I have known cases where the restriction was due not so much to natural taste as to limited means, or to a limited outlook; and when once these bonds were loosened the reader seemed to spring with a bound into the world-wide heritage of books. I intimately know one of these born readers who started life with three books, torn and tattered by admiring fingers of all sorts and all ages—the Bible first, the *Persecuted Family* (a gloomy tale of the Covenanters), and a poem called *The Ghost*—but who now revels unrestrainedly in Marie Corelli, Mrs Barclay, and the *Visits of Elizabeth;* nothing is too strong for her, and even eighty-four loaded years and precarious sight cannot daunt her.

Even now, amidst the treasures of reprints, I turn instinctively to second-hand shops and the strong and luxurious bindings of my youth. Every book I like I want to buy and keep, and one could never really wish to fill one's shelves with the best of sevenpenny editions, or the clearest of clear type. It is a joy even to handle a good binding—a thing not to be treated roughly or flung on its face, but to be opened carefully, cut with precision, and employed to line our walls with perpetual beauty.

My first distinct impression is of Mrs Sewell's ballads—*Mother's Last Words* especially, whose title, to an irreverent family, suggests a very different meaning. I loved the angel with the 'shining feet,' and the little bit about St Paul's. Later on I appreciated and enjoyed the more simply domestic *Stories in Verse*, with their highly moral tone. Some children love a moral, and for them it can never be too crudely introduced. Heaven and hell are very near to us in our infancy, and there is something tangible about a place which, as a little boy once said to me, with tears, 'you can be turned into, with gnashings of teeth.' I suppose the system of rewards and punishments suggests justice and fair-play. Mrs Greene, author of those delightful stories *Gilbert's Shadow* and *Cushions and Corners*, told me once that if she could get a whipping into a book it always sold another edition; and I am sure it is true.

How one name recalls another! And how they punctuate our childish years like milestones! *Struwwelpeter*, *The Swiss Family Robinson*, Miss Sewell's *Black Beauty*—the most perfect animal story ever written, and written, as we used to be impressively told, by an invalid lady who had never ridden a horse! We pass on down the years with more or less lagging feet, but the milestones remain to mark the way.

I hope that my children and my grandchildren enjoy the 'Susy' books as I did, and the 'Katie' series, and the 'Leilas'—those charming contributions to the joy of life, not quite so serious as *The Fairchild Family*, but not quite so exciting either, when you had skipped the prayers and hymns at the end of the chapters! There was a sort of awe about the crimes the family committed, and a terror about the punishments that amounted to tragedy: the murderer hanging in chains against the evening sky after the little boys had quarrelled; the immersion in the pig's tub after the orgy on cider; Maria burnt to death because she was vain; Emily threatened with hell because she stole one damson out of the jam, and only to be spared by 'the infinite mercy of God;' but we did think it greedy of Mr Crosbie to bring his own venison, and rude of the children to comment on it afterwards.

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Years afterwards I discovered another little book by Mrs Sherwood on an Indian bookstall, which was even more heavily weighted with morals, because it was a mere pamphlet, and there was not so much scope for human nature. It was called *The Ayah and the Lady*, and consisted of ten chapters, in each of which the ayah broke one commandment, and the lady pointed out to her in terse, and sometimes very objectionable, language both her sin and its punishment. This course was simplified by the ayah being 'a heathen' and one of several wives, which at once, and naturally, disposed of two commandments. *Little Henry* was never attractive—the way he hopped on one leg when he was being rude to his bearer was so objectionable!

On Sundays we read 'Sunday books'—fearful horrors, which would never have come to our ears if they had been put into a newspaper, but which were 'religious,' and dreadfully true. One was called, I remember, *The House on the Bridge*, too dreadful to think of now; and one *The Lily of Tiflis*. Most of the books of which I speak are still a joy to little children. No one has ever put Mrs Prentiss and her *Susy* out of favour, and the lucky children who are brought up on Mrs Sewell's ballads and *Struwwelpeter* thumb and wear them out just as we did, but the Sunday horrors have died a natural death.

The modern child still enjoys as much as her predecessors the good old-fashioned fairy stories, but what has become of those written in the Victorian era? Who reads *Patty and her Pitcher* in these days, or *Giant Hands*, or *The Boy who Became a Butterfly?* Only the grandmothers, I regret to say, not the grandchildren, who have to be content with stories about golliwogs and teddy bears. For myself, I always liked Hans Christian Andersen better than the Grimm brothers, and *Old Deccan Days* almost as well as either. Stories of people are, to some minds, more interesting than stories about animals, and *The Brave Tin Soldier* and *The Little Mermaid* are characters one does not forget. One thing I have learnt by experience, and can also recall of myself, and that is that little children very seldom understand humour, and more rarely enjoy it. They do not want a story to be funny, and if they are taken in they resent it. Humour is a late development, and the love of sentiment and tragedy, and even of horrors, precedes it. Perhaps it is only when we have felt the realities of life that we can appreciate its redeeming funniness, and be really grateful for a Jacobs or a Birmingham. In early life we prefer our humour in tabloid form, as anecdotes or short stories; and I remember a very beloved companion of my youth which was called *One Hundred and One London Jests*. Doesn't it suggest depths of depravity? And one wonders what the quips can have been like. I imagine them in the shape of 'teasers,' as a contemporary paper calls its lighter moments.

In the 'seventies and 'eighties girls did not, as a rule, read the novels of the day unless they were chaperoned through the pages by a faithful and industrious censor. In reading aloud whole chapters were often ruthlessly omitted in a manner that would horrify and infuriate the young people of to-day, and at which we probably grumbled a good deal amongst ourselves. I distinctly remember a good deal of skipping in Kingsley and in Ouida, which is understandable, and also in Bulwer Lytton, which seems more wonderful. We were fed on Dickens—perhaps a little 'fed up,' as boys and girls would express it now. There was always a library especially for the young. Of course, the girls read all the boys' books; but I fancy the boys did not return the compliment. Very many of the books were American; it was the day of *Little Women* and *The Gayworthys* and *Rutledge*, all very interesting and intensely domestic, with a spice of love-making thrown in; and that they still survive, and in a great measure hold their own, proves that they supplied a real need. Even now I cannot walk in the narrow streets of Vevey without remembering Amy's meeting with Laurence when she was driving her white ponies with the blue ribbon reins!

I shall never forget the joy that Miss Yonge has given me. Her books replaced, at first, the Sunday reading of an earlier date. Why we were allowed to read on Sundays novels denied to us on weekdays I cannot guess, and we certainly never drew attention to the anomaly; but for a series of years I asked nothing better of the gods than a copy of the *Daisy Chain*, and the power to mould myself into the likeness of Ethel May, a prayer which the gods did not see fit to answer. I have left off reading Miss Yonge to a younger generation, because they laugh so much, and enjoy the wrong things so tremendously—the way that the men burst into tears, or sob dryly, at a moment's notice; the fact that the reward offered to virtue is always to become a missionary; and that, as Mr Darwin found out, the feverish excitement of the book centres on whether Harry is to be confirmed or not. The sentiment surrounding death, and the greater sentiment surrounding very early (but not improvident) marriages and enormous families—all these are the obvious things, and I never thought them the least funny until I read them out to modern, unsentimental ears. But beyond and above all that is the really wonderful character drawing, the insight and sympathy which, in spite of their rather old-fashioned setting, make them still more of living companions than books.

I do not remember a first Scott. I believe we were read to sleep with him in our cradles, just as we read him to our children. At least that is the only way in which I can account for his being there without any conscious effort. Henry Kingsley was adorable, but he had a

beginning, though never an end, and Charles Ravenshoe still sits sometimes in our sympathetic company watching the area, and the blind man's dog, and the raven cunningly pecking at the undefended heel! Charles was more of a classic, and not quite such a friend; but he counted, even if there was a faint suspicion of powder in the jam. But *Austin Elliott* and *Mademoiselle Mathilde*, and the others—how we love them still, and how we keep the thumbed volumes amongst our treasures! In the leisurely manner of those days, when books were more expensive and time was cheaper, I copied out pages of quotations, and knew them by heart; and I still have the chapter about the battle of Aliwal, with the refrain, 'Still the death-ride sweeps on,' in a commonplace book of many years ago, mixed up with Trench's Crimean poems and long extracts from Mrs Barrett Browning.

But by that time I had fallen on the great writers, and a vista of entrancing delight had opened out to me—*Esmond* and *Vanity Fair*, *Pickwick* and *Middlemarch*; but *Esmond facile princeps*—books that you could read over and over again, and keep under your pillow, reading just one page more, and then another, until you were late for breakfast; and to be late for breakfast was not then, as now, a light offence, and was not lightly punished. Never mind; it was worth it, and the grown-ups understood, even whilst they blamed. There was the first Stevenson—I had acted with him in the Greek plays in Edinburgh, and it was a little awe-inspiring to recognise the genius in his writings—and Hardy, and Galt, and such a host of others. *Old Kensington* too, that treasure of our youth, that is never dull and never out of date, and that makes the Kensington of to-day so doubly dear. The church where Dolly dreamed of the inner life still stands securely and peacefully in the rush of the traffic, but Lady Sarah's house in Church Street is there no longer.

All the novels by one writer are never of the same value. Some can literally only produce one book, of which it is said we are all capable; the rest are plagiarisms from themselves; and one can pick and choose even amongst the writings of the great. Of course, there were 'serious' books as well; indeed, for every volume of fiction we were supposed to order two which we described as 'dry.' The first Carlyle that I read was an event, and was a distinct milestone in the intellectual life. I think it was *Sartor Resartus*. It was like a bugle-call, and it gave out no uncertain sound. After that came the *French Revolution*, full of new ideas, touched in with a picturesque pen. The style is not simple, and so not, perhaps, of the highest genius; or perhaps as one gets older things that are arrived at more easily are more appreciated; but it was certainly an awakening.

I never cared much for historical novels, which as a rule are neither novels nor history; but real history and real biography are entrancing reading, in whatever form they appear, either as the great classics of all time, or the little histories within history, the ever-fascinating accounts of Arctic exploration, the American War of Independence, that old mutiny of the *Bounty*. It is only difficult to know where to stop; and I recall, with so many of the names, the hot and happy Indian days, when, in the pauses of a strenuous life, we had leisure to enjoy our library. History ought to be entirely true, but never dull, and it is delightful to make a blend with fiction, and read *The Seats of the Mighty*, say, with Parkman, or Mrs Steel with the historic records of the Mutiny. There is something unique about Trollope, something unforgettable in that wonderful series which begins with the *Warden* and ends with the *Last Chronicle of Barset*. It was one of the happy accidents of life that I travelled once to America, in prehistoric days, on the *Abyssinia*, on which he wrote *Orley Farm*; but in those days I did not know my luck! The books are alive with humanity, and quick with humour. It is life itself, and not merely a love-story. Everything is of interest, and finds its place in the woven pattern—Mr Hardy and Eleanor, the Stanhopes and Mrs Proudie, Framley Parsonage and the parson.

Character drawing was, perhaps, the attraction of the books of the Victorian era, the long, peaceful, leisurely description of the joys and sorrows of a county. Some of them are more sentimental (not Trollope), or at least more outspokenly so, than modern novels; but the girl of to-day is not coquettish, which may or may not be an improvement, and would very often scorn to be considered attractive; and, with the change of outlook has come a change of method. Novels are more condensed, and are often mere dialogues, into which you plunge, dazed and breathless, trusting to Providence and time to find out who is who! To many modern writers there seems to be only one commandment, and that one, like the promises and pie-crusts of our childhood, only made to be broken, and the result is so often unutterable dullness, a boredom that approaches to tears. Men and women know that the love interest is not the only—very often not the supreme—interest in life. The great authors of an older generation realised this, and their stories represent life as a whole, and not only a limited section of it. To say, as has been said, that Victorian books were written for old ladies of both sexes, and for children, seems absurd and uncritical; even those who appreciate the modern novel to the full may perhaps be allowed a fleeting sigh to the passing of the Victorian tradition, the old-fashioned, discursive novel, with its dignified, cultivated standard, and its illusive gift of style.

The books of those days—the best books—were often written by women; the books that

one reads now are men's. Women wrote more then of the things that they understood; now they trespass on men's province, and when one compares a man's best work on his own subjects with a woman's—well, there is no comparison! No woman could have written *Vanity Fair;* but then no man could have written the *Daisy Chain.*

Whether people read more or less than they used to do is a difficult point to determine. Education has penetrated to other circles, and has widened out indefinitely; but, on the other hand, motors and games, and the outdoor life, limit the hours for reading, and encourage the snippy-snappy newspaper style, which can be swallowed whole, and need not be digested. There is very little reading aloud, and it is becoming a lost art, like the art of plain needlework which encouraged it. But, after all, each generation must have its own ideals, and we do not read books merely because they are good or bad, well written or the reverse, but only because there is something in them that attracts us personally, or appeals to our needs.

So I have come to the end of my essay, and must leave the rest in despair! There they lie blazing on every bookstall, hiding in every library, those modern novels, of which I meant to mention so many, but I have only blazed the trail! There is a glamour in their very names: *Youth, Chance, Fortitude, Queed, Somehow Good,* and a thousand others that I cannot touch; there is not time or space in a world of word-limits, and a life where one still tries to find time to read; and others have doubtless found out for themselves a hundred better books of which I have never even heard.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XV.—WHICH INTRODUCES JOE AND THE OLD UN.

THE clocks were striking nine as, according to his custom of late, Geoffrey Ravenslee trundled his barrow blithely along Thirty-eighth Street, halting now and then at the shrill, imperious summons of some small customer, or by reason of the congestion of early traffic, to swear whole-heartedly and be sworn at by some indignant Jehu. At length he came to Eleventh Avenue, and to a certain quarter where the whistle of a pea-nut barrow was seldom heard, and pea-nuts were a luxury.

And here, in a dismal small street hard by the river, behold Ravenslee halt his gaily painted push-cart, whereat a shrill clamour arises that swells upon the air, a joyous babel; and forth from small and dismal homes, from narrow courts and the purlieus adjacent, his customers appear. They race, they gambol, they run and toddle, for these customers are very small and tender and grimy, but each small face is alight with joyous welcome, and they hail him with rapturous acclaim; even the few tired-looking mothers, peeping from windows or glancing from doorways, smile and nod, and forget awhile their weariness in the children's delight, as Ravenslee, the battered hat cocked at a knowing angle, proceeds to 'business.' Shrill voices supplicate him; little feet patter close around him; small hands, eagerly outstretched, appeal to him. Anon rise shrieks and infantile crowings of delight as each small hand is drawn back grasping a plump paper bag—shrieks and crowings that languish and die away, one by one, since no human child may shriek properly and chew pea-nuts at one and the same time. And in a while, his stock greatly diminished, Ravenslee trundles off, and leaves behind him women who smile still, and small boys and girls who munch in a rapturous silence.

On he went, his oven whistling soft and shrill, his long legs striding between the shafts, until, reaching a certain bleak corner, he halted again, though, to be sure, there were few people hereabouts, and no children; but upon the opposite corner was a saloon, with a large annexe and many outbuildings behind backing upon the river, and Ravenslee, lounging on the handles of his barrow, examined this unlovely building keen-eyed beneath his hat-brim, for above the swing-doors appeared the words:

O'ROURKE'S SALOON.

He was in the act of lighting his pipe when the doors of the saloon were swung open and three men came out, in one of whom he recognised the tall, powerful figure and broad shoulders of Bud M'Ginnis. His companions were remarkable, but in very opposite ways, the one being slender and youthful, and very smartly dressed, with a face which, despite its seeming youth, was strangely haggard and of an unhealthy pallor; while the other was plethoric, red-faced, and middle-aged, a man hoarse of voice and roughly clad, and Ravenslee noticed that this fellow lacked the upper half of one ear.

'Saturday night, mind!' said M'Ginnis, loud and authoritative.

'But say, Bud,' demanded the smartly dressed youth, 'what's comin' to us on that last deal?'

'Nix; that's what you get, Soapy!'

The youth's pale cheek grew livid. 'So you've got the deck stacked against us—eh, Bud?' said he.

'I got a close mouth, Soapy. I guess you don't want me t'open it very wide, now or any other old time. Saturday night, mind!' and, nodding, M'Ginnis turned away. The youth looked after him with venomous eyes, and his

right hand made a sinister movement towards his hip pocket.

'Aw, quit it. Are ye crazy?' grunted his companion. 'Bud 's got us cinched.'

'Got us—hell!' snarled the youth. 'Bud 's askin' for it, an' some day he 's goin' t' get it—good.'

Towards afternoon Ravenslee was trundling light-heartedly eastward, his barrow emptied to the last pea-nut. Having reached Fifth Avenue, he paused to mop his perspiring brow, when a long, low automobile, powerfully engined, that was creeping along behind, pulled up with a sudden jerk, and its driver, whose immense shoulders were clad in a very smart livery, pushed up the peak of his smart cap to run his fingers through his close-cropped hair, while his mild blue eyes grew very wide and round. 'Crikey!' said he at last. 'Is that you, sir, or ain't it?'

'How much?' demanded Ravenslee gruffly.

'Crumbs!' said the chauffeur; 'sir, if you—ain't you, all I say is—I ain't me.'

'Aw, what 's bitin' ye, bo?' growled Ravenslee.

'Well, if this ain't the rummest go, I 'm a perisher!'

'Say now, crank up de machine an' beat it while de goin 's good. How 's that, Joe?'

'Lord, Mr Ravenslee, so you are my guv'nor, an', blow me tight, shovin' a barrer! I knowed it was you, sir; leastways, I knowed your legs an' the set o' them shoulders, but—with a barrer! Excuse me, sir, but the idea o' you pushin' a perishin' pea-nut barrer so gay an' 'appy-'earted—well, all I can say is love-a-duck!'

'Well, now, cut along Joe, and get ready. I mean to put in some real hard work with you this afternoon.'

'Right-o, sir,' nodded Joe eagerly. 'Lord, but we 've missed you terrible—the Old Un an' me.'

'Glad of it, Joe! Tell Patterson to have my bath ready when we 've finished. Off with you; drive in the Fifth Avenue entrance.'

Joe nodded, and the big car turned and crept silently away; while Ravenslee, trundling onward, turned off to the left, and so into a very large, exceedingly neat place, where stood five or six automobiles of various patterns, in one of which, a luxurious limousine, an old, old man snored blissfully. At the rumble of the barrow, however, this ancient being choked upon a snore, coughed, swore plaintively, and finally sat up. Perceiving Ravenslee, he blinked, rubbed his eyes, and, stepping from the car very nimbly despite his years, faced the intruder with a ferocious scowl.

He was, indeed, a very ancient man, though very nattily dressed, from spotless collar to shiny patent-leather shoes; a small, dandified, bright-eyed man, whose broken nose and battered features bore eloquent testimony to long and hard usage.

''Ook it!' he croaked, with square bony jaw fiercely out-thrust; 'we don't want no pea-nuts 'ere, d' j' 'ear? 'Op off, 'ook it, before I break every blessed bone in yer bloomin' body.'

'What, Old Un! don't you know me either?'

'Lumme!' exclaimed the little old man, blinking beneath hoary brows. 'Ho, lor' lumme, it 's 'im! Blimy, it 's the guv'nor! 'Ow do, guv?' and shooting immaculate cuffs over bony wrists, he extended a claw-like hand.

'How are you, Old Un?'

'Well, sir, what with the rheumatix an' a stiff j'int or two, an' a touch o' lumbager, not to mention all my other ailments, I ain't quite s' spry as I was.'

'But you look very well.'

'That 's where your heyes deceives you, guv. A great sufferer I be, though patient under haffliction; ho yus, except for a swear now an' then, which do do me a power o' good—yus. If I was to tell you all the woes as my poor old carkiss is hair to, you could write a book on 'em—a big un. I got everything the matter wi' me, I 'ave, from a thick ear an' broke nose as I took in Brummagem sixty an' five years ago, to a hactive liver.'

'A what?' inquired Ravenslee.

'A hactive liver. Lord, guv, my liver gets that hactive lately as I can't set still. Joe knows; ax Joe! All as I ain't got o' human woes is toothache, not 'avin' no teeth to ache, ye see, an' them s' rotten as it 'ud make yer 'eart bleed. An' then I get took short o' breath; look at me now, dang it!'

'Why, then, sit down, Old Un,' said Ravenslee, drawing up a somewhat worn arm-chair. 'Joe and I are going at it hard and fast this afternoon, and I want you to time the rounds.' And he proceeded to remove his garments.

'Oh, j'y!' cried the Old Un, hugging himself in bony arms. 'Oh, j'yful words! Ah, but you peels like a good un, sir,' he croaked, viewing white flesh and bulging muscle with knowing old eyes; 'good an' long in the arm an' wide slope o' shoulder. You might ha' done well in the ring if you 'd been blessed wi' poverty, an' I 'd 'ad the 'andlin' o' ye; a world's unbeat champion, like Joe. A good fighter were I, an' a wonnerful trainer. Ho yus, I might ha' made a top-notcher o' ye if you 'adn't been cursed wi' money.'

'I suppose,' said Ravenslee thoughtfully—'I suppose Joe was one of the best all-round fighting men that ever climbed into a ring?'

'Ah, that 'e were. Joe were better 'n the best; only don't let 'im 'ear me say so, 'e 'd be that puffed up—lord! But nobody could beat Joe—black, yaller, or white; they all tried danged 'ard, but Joe were a world-beater. Ye see, I trained Joe, an' to-day 'e 's as good as ever 'e was. Ye see, Joe 's allus lived clean, sir; consequent Joe 's sound wind an' limb. Joe could go back an' beat all these fancy bruisers an' stringy

young champs to-day, if 'e only would; but don't let 'im 'ear me say so.'

'You 're fond of Joe, Old Un?'

'An' why for not, sir, s'long as 'e don't know it? Didn't 'e look arter pore old me when 'e 'ad money; an' when 'e lost everything didn't 'e look arter me still? An' now 'e 's your shuvver don't he keep a roof over me pore old 'ead like a son? Don't he give me the run o' your garridge, an' let me watch 'im spar wi' you an' your gentleman friends? Ain't 'e the best an' truest-'earted man as ever drawed breath? Ah, a king o' men is Joe, in the ring an' out, sir; only never let 'im 'ear me say so, 'e 'd be that proud. Lord! there 'd be no livin' wi' 'im. 'Sh! 'ere 'e be, sir.'

Joe had laid by his chauffeur's garb, and looked bigger and grimmer in flannels and sweater.

'Ho, you, Joe,' cried the old man, scowling; 'did ye bring me that 'bacca?'

'S'posin' I didn't?' demanded Joe.

'Then dang ye—twice!'

'An' s'posin' I did?'

'Then give it 'ere!'

'An' that 's his gratitood, sir,' growled Joe, shaking his head, and giving the packet into the old man's clutching fingers. 'A unnat'ral old bag-o'-bones, that 's what 'e is, sir.'

'Bones!' croaked the Old Un viciously; 'bag-o'-bones, am I? Yah, look at ye'self—pork, that 's what you are; all run to pork an' blubber an' fat, Joe, me pore lad.'

'Fat!' growled Joe. 'Ye know I ain't fat; ye know I 'm as good a man as ever I was. Look at that, you old sarpent!' and he smote himself with mighty fist a blow to fell an ox. 'Fat, am I?'

'As—lard!' nodded the old man, filling half an inch of blackened clay pipe with trembling fingers; 'as a 'og!'

'Now, by crumbs!' began Joe fiercely.

'You 're flabby an' soft, me pore lad,' grinned the old man. 'Flabby as a babby, an' soft as a woman, an' fat as a'——

But hereupon Joe reached out very suddenly, and, picking up the old man, arm-chair and all, shook him to and fro until he croaked for mercy.

'Lorgorramighty!' he panted, as Joe set him down again.

'Fat, am I?' demanded Joe, scowling.

'Fat as a 'og—fat as forty bloomin' 'ogs!' cried the old man vindictively; 'an', what 's more, your wind 's all gone. You couldn't go five rounds wi' a good un.'

'Couldn't I?'

'No!' shrieked the Old Un; 'you 'd be 'angin' on an' blowin' like a grampus!'

'Should I?'

'Ah—like a grampus!'

'Right-o!' nodded Joe, turning away; 'no jam for *your* tea to-night.'

'Eh, what—what! would ye rob a pore old man of 'is jam, Joe—a pore, afflicted old cove as is dependent on ye 'and an' fut, Joe—a pore old gaffer as you 've just shook up to that degree as 'is pore old liver is a-bobbin' about in 'is innards like a jelly? Joe, ye couldn't be so 'eartless!'

'Ah, but I can!' nodded Joe. 'An' if ye give me any more lip it 'll be no sugar in yer tea.'

'No sugar!' wailed the Old Un; then clenching a trembling old fist, he shook it in Joe's scowling face. 'Then dang ye—three times!' he cried. 'What 's the old song say?

> Dang the man with three times three
> Who in 'is 'eathen rage
> Can 'arm a 'armless man like me,
> Whose 'ead is bowed wi' age!

An' there 's for ye. Now listen again:

> Some men is this an' some is that,
> But 'ere 's a truth I know:
> A fightin' cove who 's run to fat
> Is bound t' puff an' blow!

An' there 's for ye again!' saying which, the Old Un nodded ferociously and proceeded to light his fragmentary pipe. During this colloquy Ravenslee had laid by his shabby clothes, and now appeared clad and shod for the ring.

'Sir,' said Joe, taking a set of gloves from a locker, 'if you are ready to box a round or so'——

'Why, no,' answered Ravenslee, 'I don't want to box to-day, Joe.'

'Eh!' said Joe, staring. 'Not?'

'I want to fight, Joe.'

'To—fight, sir?' repeated Joe.

'Fight?' cried the Old Un rapturously. 'Oh, music—sweet music t' me old ears! Fight? Oh, j'yful words! What 's the old song say?

> 'Appy is the fist as goes
> To black a eye or punch a nose!

Get the mufflers on, Joe; get 'em on, an' don't stand starin' like a fool.'

'But, sir,' said Joe, his mild eyes kindling, 'd' ye mean as you want—the real thing?'

'To-day,' said Ravenslee, 'instead of boxing a round or two with Joe Madden, my chauffeur and mechanic, I want to see how long I can stand up to Joe Madden, undefeated champion of the world.'

Joe's lean cheek flushed, and he looked Ravenslee over with eyes of yearning; noted the thin flanks and slender legs that showed speed, the breadth of shoulder and long arms that spoke strength, and the deep, arched chest that showed endurance. Joe looked and sighed and shook his head. 'Sir,' said he, 'I honour an' respect you to that degree as it would be a joy to fight such a man as you, and a rare privilege t' knock you down; but, sir, if I was to knock ye down'——

'You 'd earn a five-dollar bill.'

'Five dollars—for knockin' you down, sir?'

'Every time!' nodded Ravenslee.

'But, lord, sir'——

'Shut up, Joe; shut up!' snarled the Old Un, hopping out of the arm-chair. 'Don't gape like a perishin' fish! Come on upstairs an' knock the guv'nor down like 'e tells ye; an' 'arves on the money, mind. It was me as taught ye all ye know or ever will; so 'arves on the money, Joe, 'arves on the money. Come on, Joe, d'j' 'ear?'

'Crumbs!' said Joe.

'Look at 'im, guv—look at 'im!' shrieked the old man, dancing to and fro in his impatience. ''Ere 's a chance for 'im to earn a pore old cove a bit o' 'bacca money, an', what 's better still, t' show a pore old fightin' man a bit o' real sport, an' there 'e stands, starin' like a perishin' pork pig! Blimy, guv, get behind an' 'elp me to shove 'im upstairs!'

'But, crikey, sir!' said Joe, 'five dollars every time I'——

'Yus, yus, you bloomin' hadjective, two dollars fifty for each of us! 'Urry up; oh, 'urry up afore 'e changes 'is mind an' begins to 'edge.'

Thus presently Joe follows his guv'nor and the Old Un up a flight of stairs and into a large chamber fitted as a gymnasium, where are four roped and padded posts socketed into the floor; close by is a high-backed arm-chair, in which the Old Un seats himself with an air of heavy portent.

(Continued on page 259.)

OBEAH IN THE WEST INDIES.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF NEGRO WITCHCRAFT.

By Richard Thirsk.

THE West Indian witch-doctor is a delightful fellow in some respects, particularly when you do not come under his 'power.' There are few things that he cannot do, or at least pretend to be able to do, for he combines in his person the office of priest, physician, and scientist. Some daring ruffians add a still more romantic touch, and lay claim to having personal contact with the Evil One himself. Such fellows are feared because of the influence they are credited with exercising over the powers of darkness.

For instance, if you have an enemy—and who that lives under a warm sun has not?—the Obeahman will put him out of the way for you, provided you pay him his price. This varies according to your financial position and the status of the man to be killed. It is treated as a purely commercial transaction, and may be followed by unlimited blackmail levies after the charm has succeeded. Still, your enemy has disappeared. There is always that consolation when you pay the Obeahman to keep silent.

Happily this necromancer is not as a rule in a bloodthirsty mood. He has many different ways of earning his livelihood, and his appeal is as unlimited as his 'power,' embracing all classes of black society. If a tradesman is sufficiently cute to enter into a contract with an Obeahman, he will bring customers to his shop, make him prosperous, and prevent him from incurring bad debts. On the other hand—which seems unfair—he will compel unwilling shopkeepers to give long credit to patrons who have a reputation for getting into the black list. No doubt there are many people who would like to possess this astonishing charm. Well, it is to be had for a few pence! An old woman who rounded on her benefactor because he placed a spell upon her daughter, causing the girl to fall in love with an undesirable young man, testified in court that the Obeahman had given her a charm consisting of dried leaves. The possessor of this simple philtre could command unlimited credit. Better still, nobody could compel her to pay debts previously owing!

Then, again, if a nigger is arraigned before a magistrate for his misdeeds, all he need do is to leave his case in the hands of the nearest Obeahman; he will guarantee to see him safely through, bringing him out of court without a stain on his character. He will confuse the adversary's tongue so that he cannot speak properly, and he will influence the magistrate to pass judgment in favour of his client.

Not infrequently it happens that both contending parties engage Obeahmen. In a recent lawsuit that arose over the alleged stealing of goats, powder was sprinkled on the floor of the court-room with intent to influence the decision of the judge in favour of the defendant. Full of dismay, the plaintiff hastened to consult a rival practitioner, who supplied a still more 'powerful' compound, instructing his client that it was to be introduced during the luncheon interval. This was done accordingly. On his return to the court-house the judge was nearly choked. He found his bench and the jury-box saturated with some vile-smelling mixture that made the atmosphere poisonous. The cross-spell certainly was 'powerful,' and the witch-doctor made a great hit. He succeeded in his object for that day at least, compelling the court to postpone the hearing until the place was scrubbed clean and the court-room well aired.

To such a wonder-worker the discovery of hidden treasure is the simplest thing in the world, provided his dupes follow his instructions to the letter. The employés on a sugar estate

were told by a Vaudoux man or witch-doctor that wealth untold lay buried beneath their feet. All they had to do to obtain it for themselves was to kill a valuable horse belonging to their master, and to mix its blood with a charm the necromancer had for sale. This would cause them to be led to the exact spot. The thing seemed simple enough, and appealed to the native imagination. Arguing that the promised treasure would enable them to make their master a present of several horses in place of the one sacrificed, they bought the charm and bled the poor animal to death. The philtre was religiously mixed with the blood, and the search began. Alas for the sequel! No treasure was found, and the Obeahman had disappeared just when he was most wanted to counsel and guide. Enraged by the outrage, the master sought what reparation he could find, and, needless to add, the perpetrators ended by seeking fresh situations.

Goat's blood is much used for Obeah purposes, the blood of a 'goat without horns' being preferred. This is the witch-doctor's euphemistic allusion to the blood of a child, which has the reputation of being 'powerful.' At the trial of some negroes who were hanged for child-murder, it came out that an Obeahman had told the prisoners to sprinkle the doors of a bank with the blood of a 'goat without horns.' This, made effective by appropriate incantations, which secret they had to pay for, would cause the doors of the bank to fly open, giving them free access to the wealth concealed in the safes. They paid dearly for the experiment, their attempt to become rich quickly proving a short cut to the grave, for at the trial which followed they were found guilty of child-murder, and condemned to death.

Blood is also one of the component parts of love-charms. When a love-sick Julia is pining for some hard-hearted Romeo who does not respond, she hands over her earnings to a magician, who gives her in return some philtre, to which she must add a few drops of her own blood. Occasion must be found to mix this with food eaten by the desired one without his knowing it. All things being propitious, Romeo will then be compelled to wed Julia. Should he refuse to do so, he is totally unworthy of her and of her love. This strange belief is not confined entirely to the negro. Some time ago a girl was taken to a London hospital supposed to be suffering from the effects of poisoning. She had been given port-wine to drink by a man who pestered her to marry him. On discovering that he had surreptitiously put blood into it, she became hysterical and actually showed symptoms of poisoning. Blood was found in a sample of the wine sent for analysis, and the love-sick swain admitted having bled himself to command her love.

Other instances might be given of the analogy between certain Obeah beliefs and some Western superstitions. Here is an example. Just as our peasants nail a horseshoe to the door for luck, so the people of the West Indies hang on their walls a letter purporting to have been written by Jesus Christ. For long the original Hebrew document lay hidden beneath a great stone, being finally transmitted from the Holy City by a converted Jew, who also translated it. This remarkable document, possessing the virtue of guarding houses from evil and misfortune, is sold for the small sum of fivepence by 'Syrian' pedlars said to hail from Mesopotamia. An old woman, resolved to make profit out of the sale of this charm, had a number printed at her own expense. Ultimately the authorities were put on her track, and, suspecting her of practising the black art, had Lucy Cut-card arrested. In her defence she said that her home had been first pillaged, then burned down, and in order to protect her new abode she was obliged to obtain some copies of the printed charm. Misfortune had befallen her because she had omitted to provide herself with this safeguard, and she was making amends by having an abundance on hand!

General surprise is expressed when a witch-doctor is sentenced under the Obeah Act of 1904, passed with the intention of putting an end to the practices. Simple-minded spectators have been heard to mutter in the crowded court, 'Ah, you see what he do when he come out!' The fact that he has not the 'power' to work harm on the non-believing authorities might be supposed to place the impostor in a position of ridicule; but he is a cunning schemer, who knows his public, and has inculcated in them the belief that he can protect everybody save himself.

However, it is on record that a prosecuted Obeahman did succeed in getting even with his prosecutors—at least in popular imagination. He was a wily character, who combined with his witchcraft the equally hazardous occupation of smuggling. For having the misfortune to be caught landing contraband cargo he was fined fifty pounds. A few weeks after the fine was paid he obtained permission from the Governor to sail from one island to another on board the same Revenue cutter that had caught him in the act of smuggling. During the voyage a terrific storm arose, in which the vessel lost her mast and was nearly wrecked. Thus the magician's reputation was made. According to the credulous, he had placed Obeah on the cutter for interfering with him in his smuggling. 'The Governor might have known better than let him sail on her!' people declared. Still, why he should risk his own life to be revenged on the authorities is a question which never occurred to native logicians. Fortunately for the innocent passengers, a Bishop was down in the cabin praying for their safety. But for this lucky coincidence they would assuredly have gone down under such a 'powerful' Obeah!

This incident created such a stir that for a long time after it was difficult to get men to man the Revenue cutter. It was freely whispered that the vessel would be lost at sea, and, what was equally as bad, that the members of the crew would break out in sores and die. The captain was reputed to take periodical baths in lizards' blood as a timely precaution.

Obeah is really a phase of ju-ju, the primitive belief and customs of the fetichistic tribes of West Africa. It was introduced into the West Indies by the slaves pressed into the service of the plantations during the flourishing days of the sugar industry. While it has undergone changes and modifications through coming into contact with civilisation and Christianity, it still reminds us of the doings of witches in Great Britain and the New England States during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its exponents are picturesque ruffians, bearded and unkempt, enjoying the romance of practising an illegal profession under the eye of the law. They take their risks lightly. Hard work is the only thing they shirk, rum the one thing they love. Clad in the greasy rags that once did service as European clothes, they come down from their hiding-places when the coast is clear to see how the world wags and to seek fresh dupes. Most of them live in seclusion. This affords them greater safety, and at the same time lends them the added glamour of beings apart, people not only superior to their neighbours, but altogether different.

The stock-in-trade of the Obeahmen is as bizarre as their inventive minds. In their magic bags they carry about with them ground bones of the dead, needles and black thread rubbed with tallow, a looking-glass, cards, powder, quicksilver, and an evil-smelling gum reputed to be of the Devil. By ringing the changes on these mixtures they work their wonders and impose upon their victims. Curing diseases of the mind and of the body is merely a side issue with them. Protecting fruit-gardens and chicken-runs are their speciality. One thing they have in common—that is, the mercenary habit. They sell their 'power' to the highest bidder. Consequently, as the nigger's wealth, so his health and prosperity. All that the Obeahmen stipulate is that payment must be made according to the magnitude of the miracle to be wrought. They are accredited with having knowledge of secret African bush poisons. But this is an exaggeration. When they have recourse to this desperate extreme they are content to use arsenic, rat-poison, or finely powdered glass.

At the incantations the Obeahman twists and contorts himself, makes faces, and mutters unholy things in a monotonous sing-song. While he is thus communing with the Devil a 'cenci' cock is a very necessary part of his equipment. This is a weird species of the barn-door rooster, with its feathers standing out at right angles from its body. As a stimulus in the more fiery passages, liberal potations of rum must be supplied to the wonder-worker. This is to propitiate the evil spirits which bring illness and misfortune. The Obeahman is regarded as having the means to make these occult powers do his bidding. Though they are invisible to ordinary mortals, they are nevertheless capable of doing mental and bodily harm. They can assume an endless variety of forms and guises, carrying children off to the mountains out of wanton mischief, where they leave them to perish.

Occasionally these jumbies are caught and securely bottled with a safe cork, or it may be that they are bound to the seashore by a loop or knotted twigs. Pedestrians must be careful to avoid spirit-traps. They must not, under pain of dire consequences, molest the evil ones in their hopeless task of trying to bail the sea dry. Until this is accomplished they cannot be freed—which is a poetic way of saying that they are prevented from working mischief for evermore. Yet the fear of them still remains. Hence people conceal their real names, giving themselves what they call 'play names,' such as Lucy Cut-card referred to above. The real name is considered part and parcel of the individual, and the more high-sounding it is the more useful it is likely to prove. Shakespeare is honoured among the older negroes in Hamlets, Macbeths, Romeos, and Othellos. There are those who bear the unenviable prefixes Abnormal, Abdominal, and Ananias; while one boy was christened Waverley, and another Guy Mannering! Teresas, Jebuseeahs, and Dianas are as common as little nigger girls playing in tattered skirts. Even Queen Elizabeths are plentiful. Not infrequently these prefixes are changed. When a child is ailing for a lengthy period, the mother concludes that the name is not suitable. Another name is given, thereby changing the personality of the child. Should it ultimately improve in health, the mother unhesitatingly ascribes the change to this cause.

It not infrequently happens that negroes and mulattoes believe that Obeah has been 'put on' them in spite of precautions. It may have been placed secretly in their path, touching the bare foot, and thus causing swelling; or, as a woman averred, it may have been effected by placing eggs in her husband's grave immediately under the soil. Such unfortunates pine away from sheer fright; sometimes they go out of their mind. Their only safety is to have recourse to a rival practitioner for a more 'powerful' Obeah to counteract the evil. This is contained in a bag about an inch square slung round the neck of the bearer like a scapula. A bullock or its equivalent is the price paid. From time to time more Obeahs are necessary, requiring further payments until the victim is bereft of his earnings, and probably of his house and home. At this stage they usually apply for

relief to European doctors, who are credited with having obtained knowledge of their profession from the Obeahmen, since the native mind associates drugs with occult powers rather than with science. A medical man attended an old woman dwelling in a remote district. She suffered from rheumatism, for which he gave her a bottle of rum in which was dissolved powdered resin, with instructions to rub it into the affected parts. In the process of rubbing the spirit naturally evaporated, leaving the patient's hand sticky with the resin. Believing this to be the actual disease coming out of her body in this peculiar manner, the good woman spread the fame of her benefactor. Sufferers came to him from all quarters, pestering him for 'cures;' while one old man magnanimously offered him a cow for his rheumatism cure.

Much as these quaint superstitions may amuse us, they are merely survivals of customs and beliefs in vogue among our own ancestors. Obeah in some of its forms has been practised for at least ten thousand years. Therefore it is not surprising that at times of illness, misfortune, or strong emotion the old ideas and beliefs should be a source of comfort to the superstitious.

IN THE 'FORTY-FIVE.

CHAPTER IV

THE day of my adventure dawned. I dressed by candle-light, and Martha (good soul!) tried to be cheerful, though she thought I was going to my doom. The sun had not yet risen when I sallied forth, driving Kitty in the cart, with three sheep under the net behind for the Prince's army. You may imagine that my thoughts were not very pleasant as I drove along, save that Mary's spirit seemed to go with me, and I actually sang 'Drink to me only' as Kitty trotted along the well-known, oft-traversed road.

Never did Derby streets seem so strange. Some ragged Highlanders, looking very haggard, weary, and unkempt, stopped me on entering the town, and asked me my business; and I had much ado to make them understand that I had come to sell them my sheep. They wore their kilts, and their boots were worn out; and I saw some of the poor fellows stop passengers on the road, and whip off their shoes and put them on their own feet. Anxious faces peered out of the windows of the houses. Crowds of clansmen were gathered in groups in the market-place, and I heard them talking in a strange language that I could not understand. They all seemed anxious and perturbed, and shouted and gesticulated, and were evidently arguing and disputing. I drove into the yard of the Bull Inn, and old Josh, the ostler, came running to take my mare.

'These be strange times, Master Fairborne. Whatever be the world coming to?' he said.

Before I could answer him, a fine stalwart Scot, whom I took to be a chieftain, came along, and asked me if I had brought the sheep to sell; and I informed him that such was my intention. So he asked me how much I wanted, and I named a good high figure; and he said he would buy them for his Highness's army, and then and there he paid down the money in English notes, and ordered some men to take the sheep. Then, looking steadily for a few minutes at the horse and cart, he told me that I was not to leave the town before seeing him again. What did he mean by that? I wondered. Well, I was in no hurry to drive back, and thought I should like to see the sights and hear the news.

Josh had taken out the mare and was leading her into the stable, and I asked him what was going on.

In a whisper he answered, 'There 's a mighty stir going on. Some on 'em be for marching on London, and t' others want to go back to bonny Scotland. You can hear them argufying in the Court-house now, and yon brave lad they call the Prince wants to go on, and them chiefs won't let him. Leastwise, that 's what I hear.'

'And where are the brave "Blues," Josh?' I asked.

'The "Blues"! They be a lot of tarnation cowards. When they heard the Prince was coming, they marched off straight to Nottingham. Marched! Why, they ran like frightened sheep. It made me laugh to see 'em.'

'And have they done much harm to the town, these long-legged Highlanders?' I asked.

'Can't say as they have, master. They 've behaved like reasonable Christians. They proclaimed the new king in yonder market-place, and seized about three thousand pounds from the Excise folks; and people 's afraid of these kilts, and will be glad to see the backs of them.'

Just then I heard a strange sound in the market-place. It was a sort of a whirl and a squirl of a pig, and now sounded like the whistling of a wintry wind through the pine-forest, a noise I can never forget.

'Them be the bagpipes, master,' explained Josh; and a strange sort of music it was, such as I had never heard before. I rushed out of the inn-yard to see the players; and there I saw in the market-place two of them, with their weird bags and whistles, marching up and down and strutting as proud as peacocks. I went down Full Street, and there I saw the house that

belonged to the Earl of Exeter, where the Prince had taken up his quarters. There was a crowd coming out of All Saints' Church, where one Coppock, whom the Prince had made Bishop of Carlisle, had been preaching. There were very few Derby people about, for they had evidently resolved to remain in safety in their houses. Fires were blazing in the open spaces, and joints of meat were being cooked, the Scots standing by with hungry, eager faces.

I paused by the Court-house, and could hear distinctly the angry voices of the chieftains disputing and contending. I heard afterwards that the Prince had told them that he would rather be twenty feet underground than go back to Scotland and desert his English followers who were waiting to join his standard. I wandered up and down the streets. No one seemed to take much notice of me, or attempted to molest or attack me. I went back to the 'Bull,' and dined at the farmers' ordinary. There were very few farmers present; but their places were filled with Scotsmen, who did not allow conversation to interfere with the serious business of eating and drinking good ale. The chief who had so closely examined the mare was there, and had bowed to me very politely when I entered the room. When I had finished my dinner and smoked a pipe of good tobacco, I thought I would return home before the short winter day closed. So I went into the yard and told Josh to harness Kitty. He looked at me in a surly sort of way, and began to whistle.

I was just asking Josh what he meant by such extraordinary manners, when the chief strolled up, and said in his Scottish way of talking, 'I think I told you that you could not go without speaking to me first. His Highness will probably want your horse, and you can either sell it to me for the Prince or march with us.'

I was flabbergasted. Sell Kitty! If it had been any other horse I would not have minded; but to part with Kitty! No, I could not do it. So I told the old chief to his face that the mare was not for sale, that she was a favourite horse of mine, and that where she went, there would I go also.

'Vera weel; you ken the conditions,' he said; 'you gang with us.' There were half-a-dozen brawny sons of Scotland in the yard hanging about, and I knew it was no good resisting this outrageous demand. 'You will bide here the night,' said the chief; and I thought of Mary waiting for me at the sundial, and cursed my rashness in venturing to come to Derby when the rebels were there.

I wandered about the streets with anger in my heart. Should I go home, and leave Kitty to her fate? I could not think of doing that. Presently I called on Lawyer Little, who had been my father's old friend, and I told him my predicament.

'You must go home, my lad,' he said. 'I never heard of such a thing. Why, I hear the Duke, with a large army, is not very far away, and if you are caught with this gang of rebels, you 'll be hanged for a certainty. You 'll lose the mare, but that is better than losing your neck.' And that was all the comfort he could give me.

I went back to the inn, and strolled into the stable. Kitty whinnied when she heard my footstep. I patted her neck, and gave her another feed. No; I would not part with Kitty for all the Prince's gold, if he had any.

Well, there was nothing to be done but to wait events. Presently the rumour ran round the town that the Prince was going back to Scotland. Josh told me, and said it was a good job, too. I told the landlady of the 'Bull' that I should want a bed for the night, and strolled into the market-place. There I saw a great bustle. The men were rushing about as if they were mad, and there was a look of joy in their faces. A baker was standing before the door of his shop trying to keep a dozen hefty Scots back, but they pushed him aside and helped themselves to his loaves.

Shortly afterwards there was a stir at the entrance to the Court-house, and I saw some of the chieftains emerging with flushed and angry faces, and behind them walked a young man. He was the Prince himself, so handsome, so bonny; and there was a strange look of abject misery in his eyes, and a sort of dreamy expression, as if he hardly knew where he was or what he was doing. My heart was grieved for him, and as I looked at him and thought of the failure of his enterprise, his disappointment, though I am no Jacobite, I felt a tear trickling down my cheek. If his chiefs had let him, he would have marched on, to conquer or to die.

CHAPTER V.

JOSH roused me at an early hour, long before it was light, and said that the captain wanted me. I arose and dressed, and went down to the yard. There I found Kitty harnessed and already in the shafts. The captain seemed to be in a mighty hurry. He told me that I had better get 'bite and sup' before we started, as Heaven only knew when we should get another chance of a meal. So I foraged in the kitchen, and found some bits of cold bacon and a glass of milk; then said I was ready to start. The chief sat by my side, and I drove into the market-place, which was already crowded with clansmen forming into their ranks. He directed me to the house in Full Street where the Prince lodged, and behind us marched a guard of about twenty Scots. The captain knocked on the door, and presently some of the men went into the house and brought out a large hide-covered box, which they placed in the cart. I was then told to

drive on slowly, the guard marching, some in front and some in the rear. Kitty looked as surprised as I felt at these unwonted proceedings. The bagpipes were sounding in the streets of Derby as we passed along, and every one seemed delighted at the idea of returning home to Scotland. 'Whatever will become of me?' I thought, as I drove along beside the taciturn chief.

That drive was a nightmare. I will not describe it. We went on all day, just stopping now and then to rest the men and the mare, and to eat a chance meal. We seemed to be alone amongst the hills. Perhaps the clans were marching another way. The men appeared to be grumbling amongst themselves as the darkness began to fall, and presently one of them came to the chief, and talked in the strange Gaelic tongue. The men looked scared. We were passing through a dense wood, through which the road ran, and suddenly I heard the report of a gun. The captain ordered me to stop, and he clambered down from the cart and began to reconnoitre, standing on the bank by the roadside. Again another shot rang out, and this time a bullet had found its billet. The chief flung up his arms and fell back, wounded or dead. The men rushed up the bank, fired their muskets wildly into the wood, and then fled for their lives, leaving me sitting in the cart, with Kitty plunging about and rearing, startled by the firing. Presently I succeeded in calming her down, and tried to take stock of the situation.

First I examined the captain's body, and found that he was actually dead. Then I tried to discover my location. We had been travelling in a north-westerly direction from Derby along the Stockport road, and had probably covered about twenty miles. My home must be in a south-easterly course; but how distant it was I could not tell. However, the sooner I got there the better. So I turned the mare round, and resolved to strike southward as soon as I could find a road. I had not gone far before an inviting road promised to lead me in the right direction.

I was only just in time. I had scarcely travelled half a mile along it when I heard the strains of those blessed bagpipes. It was a narrow escape. If I had been found near the body of the slain chieftain, it would have been difficult to explain the situation to the clansmen, who knew no language but Gaelic, and their vengeance might have fallen on me. So I galloped the mare as hard as she would go, in order to get away as far as possible from the scene of the attack. Who fired that shot—a stray keeper, perhaps, or an outlaw—I never knew.

Kitty was getting tired, so I rested her presently beneath the shadow of a tree, and gave her a feed of corn which the dead chief had thoughtfully placed in the cart. And as I smoked my pipe I noticed again the strange trunk in the cart, that I had almost forgotten in my excitement, and wondered what it contained. However, I resolved to restrain my curiosity till I reached home, if ever I got there. The scene was wonderfully peaceful. The moon shone upon the road and woodland glade, and I saw the Great Bear shining in the northern sky, and by it traced the position of the Pole-star, so that I might steer my way by its aid. A brook by the roadside presently afforded the mare a drink, and I discovered that I was ravenously hungry. As I was examining the trunk, I found something tied up in a cloth, which proved to be the remains of a ham and a bottle of whisky. So, while Kitty munched her corn, I fed like a king, and we started off again, mutually pleased.

We had travelled scarcely four miles when the moon shone on a swinging signboard that seemed familiar. Surely it was the 'Fox and Geese'! Yes; I saw there reynard and his prey, and blessed them. This lonely inn was little more than ten miles from my home. I had often ridden to the meet of the harriers here, and could return blindfolded. In another couple of hours I should be at home. Kitty, too, pricked up her ears and trotted along merrily.

. . . . . .

I gave my accustomed whistle as I entered the gate of Lone-Lane Farm; and though it was midnight, Martha was there at the door waiting for me.

'I'd given you up, Master Mike,' she said. 'Thank God, you 've come! The Colonel 's been here twice, and I was all of a tremble, as he said them Scots fellows had taken you prisoner, and we should never see you again alive.'

'Well, here I am, Martha, alive and kicking. Help me with the mare, and I'll tell you all about it.'

'You 've brought your luggage with you, I see. What 's in this big trunk?'

'That remains to be seen,' I said; and I tried to move the thing, but it was as heavy as lead. However, I backed the cart to the kitchen door, and then, pushing and dragging, we managed to get the trunk into the room. So, when the mare was fed, I sat down to supper. After telling Martha the events of the day, I proceeded to try to open the great trunk. It had a strong padlock; but, with the help of the kitchen poker, I managed to break it open and raise the lid.

Could I believe my eyes? It was crammed full of money—guinea-pieces, sovereigns, silver, and notes. It was the treasure-chest of the Prince's army! I will not try to describe our transport of delight. Martha wept and danced around it. She fingered the gold and toyed with it like a miser. I was staggered at the sight of such wealth. What should I do with it? Could it be mine? I could scarcely return it to the Prince; and why should I give it to the Government? It was mine by right of capture. It was taken from an enemy. Why should I not keep it? I needed it sorely enough.

'Well, Martha, what shall we do with all this gear?'

'Do with it! Keep it, Master Mike. God has sent it to you. It is yours;' and I think she was right.

And so wealth came to Lone-Lane Farm, and revived the fortunes of the Fairbornes.

I need not tell you the rest of the story. Of course, Mary was taken into my confidence, and gradually the neighbours knew that I had come into riches. They said a mysterious uncle had died abroad and left me all his wealth. Some said I had struck a gold-mine on Sinfin Moor. I consulted my old lawyer friend at Derby as to what I should do with my find. He was overjoyed at my luck, and invested the money gradually for me in the Bank of England, besides buying some land and houses. I was glad to be able to re-roof the old house and re-stock the farm. And the Colonel—he was flabbergasted! There was no more talk of keeping me away from my beloved Mary. Sir James vanished from our ken, and was no more heard of; and when the marriage-bells were rung and all the villagers crowded into the church to see our wedding, and the Colonel gave the bride away, there was no one more pleased except myself.

All this took place many years ago. Mary and I and our children live at the Manor now, except when my parliamentary duties oblige me to be in London. Martha still lives at the farm with her nephew and his wife, who manage the estate for me; and Kitty leads an honoured life in her old age, and is the pet of the family, as she may well be, for to her I really owe all my luck and fortune.

THE END.

THE FOREIGN LEGION.

By the late Captain VERE SHORTT.

MOST people in this country know that France, in addition to her conscript army, maintains a force of foreign troops or mercenaries—if, indeed, men can be called mercenaries who give their military services for the sum of rather less than one penny per diem. *La Légion Étrangère*, or, as it is called in Britain, the Foreign Legion of the French army, a permanent part of the 19th French Army Corps, is a lineal descendant of the famous Irish brigade of Louis the Fourteenth.

First of all I wish to disabuse my readers' minds of the idea that there is anything romantic or, to coin a word, 'Ouidaesque' about the Foreign Legion, because nothing could be farther from the truth. The Foreign Legion is much like any other body of professional soldiers, with the difference that the men are drawn from all nations. Roughly speaking, the composition of the Legion is as follows: About 25 per cent. were Germans—mostly deserters from the frontier garrisons; about 25 per cent. are Frenchmen, some of whom have entered the corps from pure love of adventure and soldiering, some because they were out of work and starving, and some because they were in trouble of some sort; and about 50 per cent. of other nations—Spaniards, Italians, Turks, Belgians, and a few English. Of course, many of these men were of good social position, but certainly not the great majority. The Legion asks no questions, and a man can call himself what he likes. I have known men forget to answer to their names, so new were they; but if it has done nothing else, it has given an opportunity to thousands of men who were 'down and out' in their own country to recover at least their self-respect, and in hundreds of cases has opened a new and honourable career for them.

The Foreign Legion consists of two regiments of about four thousand men each. Each regiment is divided into four battalions of about one thousand men each, which are again divided into four companies. The system is the 'double company' one, as in most Continental armies. The officers consist of the colonel commanding a regiment, with a lieutenant-colonel under him, commandant (*chef de bataillon*), captain, lieutenant, and sous-lieutenant. Then there is another rank which is quite unknown in the British army—that of adjutant or company sergeant-major. The adjutant wears exactly the same uniform as a sous-lieutenant, with the exception of a thin red silk cord braided into the gold lace on his cap. Each company is divided into four sections or *pelotons*, and is commanded by a captain (always a mounted officer), three subalterns, and an adjutant. The non-commissioned officers are sergeant-major, *sergent-fourrier* or quartermaster-sergeant, sergeant, and corporal, all of whom have much the same position and duties as in the British army, with the exception that they have the *right to punish*. For instance, a sergeant can, and very often does, give a man three days' *consigne*, or confinement to precincts of barracks, without giving any reason, but simply stating in his report: 'Gave the legionary A. B. three days' *consigne*.' If the sergeant states the *motif*, or reason, for the punishment, the case goes on to the captain of the company, who will probably increase the punishment to fourteen days' *salle de police*, or guard-room, and send the case on to the commandant, who will alter it to twenty-eight days' prison, and send it on to the general commanding the division, who will refer the case to a court-martial, which may sentence the man to years of imprisonment or to service

in a penal battalion. Thus it will be seen that the right to punish is a very real and terrible power to give to a man in a subordinate position. Personally speaking, I think this system is wrong; but on this question I am quite aware that I have the majority of French officers against me.

A word as to these same punishments—I mean the ordinary regimental ones—may not be out of place. People in Britain and elsewhere have been shocked and horrified by lurid stories of punishments inflicted on soldiers in the Foreign Legion. Now, whether there is or is not a substratum of truth in these stories as applied to men in the disciplinary battalions I should not like to say. I have heard stories of men in these regiments being put *en crapaudine*—that is, tied wrist to ankle backwards, which is a form of torture, and very severe torture; or being immured in 'silos' or grain-pits; but I have never heard of these punishments being inflicted on men of the Foreign Legion except in one case. That was an Italian legionary who struck a non-commissioned officer while on active service. By all the laws of the French army there is only one punishment for an offence of this kind—death; but by some extraordinary chance—I think it was owing to the extreme provocation received—the man got off with six hours' *crapaudine*, of which he did three, and those three hours were sufficient to lay him up for six weeks.

All stories of men being kept *en crapaudine* for days may be dismissed as inventions. No man could live through the punishment. The ordinary punishments inflicted are *consigne*, or confinement to barracks, with extra fatigue duty, *salle de police*, or guard-room, and prison. In extreme cases incorrigibles are sent to the disciplinary battalions, or *biribi*, as they are called in the French army. The discipline in the Foreign Legion is strict, as it must be in such a force, but neither brutal nor unjust.

A man can join the Foreign Legion anywhere in France, and at almost any age, provided that he is physically sound. On joining he is given a ticket for Marseilles, where he proceeds without any supervision whatever. If possible, men are sent in parties; but if there are not enough recruits to form one, they are often sent singly or in pairs. Arrived at Marseilles, the men are usually kept at Fort St Jean until there are enough to form a small party, when they are forwarded by steamer to Oran under the charge of a non-commissioned officer. From Oran, if drafted to the first regiment, they are sent to Sidi-bel-Abbès; and if to the second, to Saida. It is rather funny to see a batch of recruits arrive. Most of them have sold their civilian clothes at Marseilles, and consequently turn up in a most extraordinary mixture of garments. I have seen a man arrive in a dress-coat, or, rather, half a dress-coat (he had had an argument with a friend about the ownership of a packet of cigarettes), a pair of blue dungaree trousers, no boots (he had lost them at cards in the train), and an overcoat! Poor fellow! he was an excellent soldier, and got quick promotion; he was a sergeant in two years, and got brained by an Arab mace in the fight at Ain Sefra.

On joining the Legion a man gives in his civil clothes, which are destroyed, and receives his kit, which consists of a *capote*, or long blue-gray collarless overcoat, one blue double-breasted tunic, two pairs of red trousers, three shirts, three pairs of white trousers for fatigue and summer wear, and a *képi;* also belts, rifle, bayonet, &c., and two pairs of boots. These are probably the best, as they are certainly the most expensive, boots used by any army in the world. The contract price is about twenty-three francs (19s. 2d.) a pair. This is absolutely necessary, as for the marching the Legion has to do cheap boots would be useless. No socks are worn; in place of these the men use *chaussettes Russes*, or Russian socks—so called, I believe, because they are neither Russian nor socks, but squares of greased linen folded over the feet. I have used them myself many times, and can testify that they are excellent things to march in. The uniform is precisely the same as that of the French line, with the exception that on the collar and tunic, instead of the usual regimental number, the Legion carry a grenade; that the epaulets are green with a red fringe instead of all red; and that every soldier in the Foreign Legion wears a blue woollen sash folded many times round his waist *over* his tunic, to act as a cholera-belt. According to regulations, this sash is worn on all occasions, even on fatigue duty. With the officers it is replaced by a sort of waistcoat of the same cloth as the tunic. The officers' trousers are worn very full over the hips and tight round the ankles, as is the invariable rule in the army of Africa. In fact, some of the younger officers look extremely grotesque, as they go to inordinate lengths in fullness of trousers and size of *képi*. The latter, for some obscure reason, is supposed to increase in smartness in direct proportion to its size.

The Legion exists primarily for two purposes: to fight and to march. When neither of these is to be done the men are put to road-making. Quite 80 per cent. of the roads in Algeria and almost all the barracks have been built by the Legion; but the ability to march is the Legion's great pride. The ordinary day's march is forty kilometres, or nearly thirty miles. This is done in all sorts of temperatures, from normal to one hundred degrees Fahrenheit in the shade, each man carrying a pack of over sixty pounds weight. There is none of the smartness of a British regiment's march about the Legion. The men keep their section, and that is about all that can be said. Sometimes one sees a strong man at the end of a day's march carrying two or even three rifles. The men are marching anyhow, and would, I fancy, to a British officer

seem to be utterly out of hand. This would be a mistake. The officers do not care *how* the men march, but march they must, and be fighting fit at the end of that march. There is no such thing as falling out. To do so (on the Sahara stations at least) is to invite a cruel death at the hands of the Arabs. The system of march, as laid down in the regulations, is one hour's march, five minutes' rest, and this is strictly adhered to.

Some years ago there was a case of a major who took his battalion for one of these marches. For some reason or other the men's marching was not up to his standard; so when they returned to quarters he ordered the officers to fall out, and then kept the men doubling round the parade-ground until about twenty dropped from sheer exhaustion, the others being almost in like case. I am glad to be able to state that as the upshot of this affair he was put on half-pay.

There is a sort of unwritten law in the Legion that a retreat—if such a regrettable necessity should occur—shall be carried out at the slowest walk possible. I once asked the reason of this, and was told that three-quarters of the men had run *once*, either from their creditors or their wives, and that once was quite enough for any man to run! Certainly the legionary is not an adept at retreat. Eleven times in eleven great battles have whole companies of the Legion refused to obey the order to retreat, and died to the last man where they stood. How many other troops, conscript or professional, can point to the same record?

The great difference between the Foreign Legion and the rest of the French army is the strength of the *esprit de corps* in the former. In the national army of France *esprit de corps* is repressed as much as possible, and *esprit d'armée* is sedulously fostered. When an officer in the French army is promoted he is always transferred to another regiment, generally as far away as possible from his old one. A man cannot get up much enthusiasm for a regiment in which he knows that at most he will pass only a few years, and which he looks forward to leaving, as it means superior rank and increased pay. In the Legion an officer knows that, almost always, once a *légionnaire*, always a *légionnaire*, and so he develops a very strong *esprit de corps;* and the same holds good of the rank and file. This shows itself in the superior *chic*, or smartness, of the legionary to the linesman. The French *piou-piou*, or infantry soldier, is one of the most slovenly-looking soldiers in the world, while the legionary is just the reverse. A man of the Legion will spend a couple of hours ironing a crease in his white trousers with the edge of a tin cup before going into town!

The life in the Foreign Legion, when not varied by spells of hard work, marching, or fighting, is apt to be monotonous to a terrible degree; therefore it is not surprising that many of the men drink, and drink hard. This may seem surprising when one considers their pay—a little less than one penny per day; but it must be remembered that many of the men are in receipt of money from home, and that in any case liquor in Algeria is ridiculously cheap. For a penny nearly a quart of fiery Algerian wine can be got, for sevenpence a pint of absinthe, and for fivepence a pint of *bapedi*, or fig spirit. Cigarettes can be procured at about a penny for twenty. Also, there is a very old custom in the Legion which forbids a man to '*faire Suisse*' ('do a Swiss'), which means to drink alone, under any circumstances. If a man has only a penny, and thinks he would like some wine, he has to look for some one else to share it with him; and, human nature being what it is, he generally picks on some one who has another penny to buy more wine when the first supply is finished. In this way a man will often drink more than he had any intention of doing.

One idea which people in Britain seem to have is that the *cantinière*, or lady canteen-keeper, is a trim damsel in a neat uniform, who exercises a refined and elevating influence on the brutal and licentious soldiery by whom she is surrounded. I regret to say that this idea is a delusion. All the canteen-keepers with whom I have been brought in contact have been ample ladies of mature years and forbidding presence. Some of them had moustaches, and without exception they all possessed a vocabulary calculated to paralyse an ordinary man, and even to cause the boldest legionary to turn pale, or, rather, blush. This is not an easy feat.

Now, this cheapness of drink, and especially of absinthe, leads to a disease which I believe is peculiar to the French army in Africa. This disease is known as *le cafard*. The *cafard* is a small beetle which spends its time pushing balls of dirt about, and men who suffer from *cafard* say they feel as if they had one in their head. I think myself it may be described as an aggravated case of 'blue hump' bred of dullness and disgust of life. In any case, it is fearfully common in the Legion. It may lead to anything from a mad freak without any seeming motive to an equally motiveless homicide. If a man sits on his cot, looking straight in front of him and speaking to no one, that man requires watching. He may come out of his *cafard*, or quite possibly he may seize his bayonet and stab the nearest man, run amuck, and eventually have to be shot down like a mad dog.

Another result of the hard work and monotony is desertion, or, as it is called in the Legion, going *en pompe*. Men very seldom get away. In the settled parts of Algeria there is a standing reward of twenty-five francs for each deserting legionary brought in, and on the Saharan stations capture by Arabs means torture and death. On these stations photos of the bodies of legionaries who have been captured by the Arabs are hung in the barrack-rooms to discourage intending

deserters. This does not render the Arabs popular with the Legion, and accounts for the merciless nature of the small fights which constantly take place in the south of Algeria.

The Foreign Legion, as at present constituted, was raised in 1831, and since that date has taken an honourable part in every war which France has fought. It has been commanded in turn by some of the most celebrated soldiers of France, among others Marshal M'Mahon and Generals Canrobert, Bazaine, and De Négrier. Its losses have been enormous. Two thousand men of the Legion were lent to Spain in the Carlist war for a consideration of eight hundred thousand francs (which was never paid), and of these five hundred returned to Algeria starving and in rags. It will never be known how many of the Legion have left their bones in the swamps of Indo-China and Madagascar, but they must number many thousands.

Probably every known profession and trade is represented in the Foreign Legion. The officers' mess and other buildings at Sidi-bel-Abbès were designed, built, and decorated by legionaries. At that time one company alone yielded seven men who were qualified architects. There is a legend in the Legion to the effect that in the Mexican war the authorities wished to hold a High Mass in the Cathedral in Mexico City. The local clergy refused to have anything to do with this scheme, and the French authorities were in despair. At last a man was found in the Legion who announced that he had been an archbishop, and was one still unless he had been unfrocked! Inquiries were made, the man's story was proved to be true, and he conducted Mass, going back to his duty afterwards.

The term of enlistment for the Legion is five years, and at the end of his service the legionary receives a suit of plain clothes, a ticket for any town in France he wishes, and a franc a day for subsistence. On arrival at his destination he usually finds himself penniless in an already overstocked labour market, and as often as not goes straight to the nearest recruiting office and re-enlists in the Legion.

The Foreign Legion, contrary to general belief, is *not* a regiment of criminals, but a body of men in the main good, honest soldiers, who are worked very hard for miserable pay. The shooting of the Legion is the best in the French army, and it does not stand to reason that desperate criminals would be trusted with ball cartridge for musketry or any other purpose. The motto on the Legion's colours is, '*Honneur, Valeur, Discipline*' ('Honour, Bravery, Discipline'), and it may be confidently stated, without fear of contradiction, that in its eighty-five years of existence the Legion has lived up to its motto.

In connection with the recent expansion of the Foreign Legion, the Paris newspapers stated that in the early days of the war eight thousand Italians, inspired by the example of Ricciotti Garibaldi, joined this force. The Swiss, like the Americans, numbered four thousand five hundred, and the Russians nearly four thousand, besides Poles, Alsace-Lorrainers, Czechs, Armenians, and Syrians.

Much interest was aroused by the announcement made at the beginning of last September that the King had approved of the reinstatement of John Ford Elkington in the rank of lieutenant-colonel, with his previous seniority, in consequence of his gallant conduct while serving in the ranks of the Foreign Legion of the French army. Colonel Elkington, on 14th September 1914, had been cashiered by sentence of a general court-martial after thirty years' service in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He at once joined the Foreign Legion under his own name. 'It was hard work,' he said to a correspondent, 'and we were nearly always in the thick of it. I had to take things as they came, and three weeks after I had enlisted I was at the front. It was not new to me, and I did not need training. Many of the men of the Legion wore medals—medals of all the wars for the last twenty years. I could not wear mine, even if I had wanted to; I was cashiered, and had no right to them any longer.' A friend sent him a copy of Rudyard Kipling's poem, *If*, which he carried in his pack on many a long march through France. He read it in bivouac and in the trenches, and he said, 'It pulled me through the bad times.' A clever American surgeon named Wheeler also became a helpful friend, and when they went into action both fell together. Colonel Elkington spent ten months in hospital at Grenoble, where a damaged leg was operated on eight times, and eventually saved. The Croix de Guerre was afterwards conferred upon him for bravery at the front.

THE INCOMMUNICABLE.

When morning broke in a silver smoke,
And the garden glitter'd and sung,
In the heart of Eve a longing awoke
She never might teach her tongue.
On a later morn, when her child was born,
It rose with a voice to speak,
Yet fell in a kiss and a tear forlorn
On the cooing baby's cheek.

Now in each heart it dreams apart,
A longing dear and dumb;
It wakes and aches, and the tears will start,
But never the words will come.
Most dim, most dear, most far-and-near,
It calls and peeps and flies,
But or ere its haunting face grows clear
The heart is old and dies.

A dew, a fire, a rich desire,
It sighs by sunset waves,
It flashes ere looks of love retire,
It melts by weedy graves.
Yet whenever its soul doth quite unroll
For a word and a touch to say,
The earth will blossom from pole to pole,
And the stars will shine by day.

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

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SEVENTH SERIES

COAL-TAR, DYES, AND EXPLOSIVES.

By E. FEARON.

TO most people coal-tar is a black, messy substance, to which they generally give as wide a berth as possible; but to the chemist it is one of the most wonderful substances known. From it he extracts products as far apart in their properties as the poles: benzol to drive your motor, saccharine to sweeten your coffee, phenacetin to cure your headache, dyes to colour your clothes, and numerous other things in everyday use throughout the world. The pioneer work in the discovery of coal-tar products was nearly all done by English chemists, who, by the way, can give their German rivals a good start and a beating; but, owing to our fearful and wonderful patent laws and Germany's unscrupulous method of filching ideas from all and sundry, the commercial exploitation of their discoveries was taken up in Germany, and in 1914 the dye industry there had grown into one of their most powerful organisations. There is little doubt that it is owing to Germany's vast dye manufactures, and our lack of them, that the war has dragged on all this long time; for immediately war was declared all their colour-works turned from the peaceful occupation of making dyes to the manufacture of explosives.

To the uninitiated it may seem strange, but it is nevertheless true, that the materials used in dyeing—benzol, toluol, carbolic acid, sulphuric acid, nitric acid—are also the raw materials from which high-explosives are made. Can we doubt that Germany took this into account when she laid her plans? Look at the facts as they are known. Thousands of men were employed in the dye industries (one company alone had ten thousand men so engaged), about 75 per cent. of their collieries had coke-oven plants installed—compared with some 25 per cent. in this country—and a sum of over two millions sterling had been set aside for the production of synthetic ammonia, which would be converted into nitric acid. They realised that, to a very great extent, this would be a war of high-explosives, and were prepared to supply unlimited quantities. We, on the other hand, were unable, till quite recently, to turn out anything like enough; and it is only owing to the energies of Lord Moulton and the High-Explosives Committee of the Ministry of Munitions, helped by a body of scientific men, that we are now in a position not only to supply our own needs, but to render assistance in this direction to our Allies.

It is, indeed, a striking testimony to the ability of the British nation to get out of a tight place that we are at last beating Germany at her own game. In the Boer war our experts pinned their faith to shrapnel, and for the first few months of the present conflict they still clung to their faith in it; but with the deep trenches and dug-outs employed by the enemy it was found that shrapnel was practically useless. Something that would explode with the greatest possible violence had to be used, and had to be manufactured in enormous quantities if adequate results were to ensue. Tri-nitro-toluene was the best for this purpose; but where were the supplies of toluol and the factories for converting it into T.N.T.?

Toluol is a colourless liquid that can be distilled from coal-tar or extracted, by suitable means, direct from coke-ovens and towns' gas. The Ministry of Munitions set to work, and in a comparatively short time every plant in the kingdom that dealt with the carbonisation of coal and every tar distillery was turning out toluol; works were established to manufacture the T.N.T., and since the beginning of the great advance we have seen the result of these efforts, as have the Germans!

Turning to the question of explosives generally, apart from warfare, it is not exaggerating to say that much of the progress in road-making, mining, railways, and lately in America and Canada even in agriculture, is due to command of the energy stored up in these terrible engines of death. Although gunpowder was invented by the Arabs in the thirteenth century, and introduced into Christendom about 1270, the industrial use of explosive powder was neglected for centuries. Till about 1860 ordinary gunpowder was the only source of 'compressed energy' that man had at his disposal for killing either his fellow-men or the various beasts and birds he hunted, or for mining and tunnelling. For any of these purposes a mixture of charcoal, saltpetre, and sulphur, made in different grades of fineness, had to suffice; but of late years scientific research has resulted in the discovery of infinitely more powerful agents in dynamite, gelignite, cordite, melinite, and of course T.N.T.

In all these newer explosives nitric acid is used

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for the purpose of nitration, as it has been found that nitrogen compounds explode more quickly, and therefore exert more pressure, than any other bodies that are available. All sorts of materials have been experimented with to produce these explosives; but there are several governing factors that have to be kept in mind in actual practice. They must be safe to handle, and not be liable to spontaneous combustion; they must not unduly corrode the rifling of the guns in which they are to be used; and for mining, &c., they must not produce poisonous fumes when fired.

One of the earliest of the high-explosives was nitro-glycerine, which was introduced in 1847 by an Italian named Sobrero; but so many accidents occurred when it was used in blasting, due to its very unstable nature, that its use for this purpose was prohibited in many countries, including Great Britain. It is a liquid made by treating glycerine with nitric acid, and so unstable as to explode with the slightest shock. It was, however, so much more powerful than gunpowder that chemists at once set themselves to solve the problem of making it safe to handle, and a Swedish scientist, Alfred Nobel, was the first to do so satisfactorily. This he did by mixing the nitro-glycerine with a kind of porous earth, and so forming a substance somewhat resembling sawdust in appearance, which he called dynamite. By this means it was rendered so safe that it revolutionised the science of blasting, as it is not at all easily exploded except by fulminate of mercury, which, on explosion, exerts a pressure of half a million pounds to the square inch. Although dynamite was a great advance on gunpowder, it was not powerful enough for modern purposes, and Nobel continued his search for a more active base for his nitro-glycerine compounds than the earth used in dynamite, and by a lucky accident hit on collodion, which is prepared by dissolving gun-cotton in ether. The new explosive was known as blasting-gelatine, and was half as powerful again as dynamite, which it has, to a great extent, superseded.

With regard to the explosives employed in warfare, these are of various kinds, depending upon the use to which they are to be put. The charge to be used as a propellant in guns is quite different from the bursting-charge of shells, mines, &c. It was found that blasting-gelatine could not be used in guns, as the charge, on being fired, simply shattered the steel body instead of driving out the shell, so rapid and violent was the explosion. Now blasting-gelatine is made by adding about 8 per cent. of gun-cotton to warm nitro-glycerine; but Nobel found, to his surprise, that if equal proportions of the two were used the mixture was suitable for firearms!

The cordite used in the British army and navy is almost identical with Nobel's mixture, but is made by combining the gun-cotton and nitro-glycerine at a low temperature by means of an acid, the resulting semi-fluid material being passed through holes in a plate, so that it forms strings or cords of varying sizes, according to the diameter of the holes; hence its name.

Various substances are employed for the bursting-charge of shells, &c., one of these being the picric acid compound known as lyddite in England, melinite in France, and *shimose* in Japan. Picric acid is, indirectly, a derivative of coal-tar, being made by adding one part of carbolic acid to eight parts of fuming nitric acid, and for some years it was largely used as a yellow dye; but an explosion in a Manchester dyework drew attention to its dangerous properties, and since then it has been reserved for explosive purposes, being melted and combined with gun-cotton dissolved in alcohol or acetone to form lyddite.

Some of the most powerful blasting substances used in mining and quarrying now contain a proportion of picric acid, the poisonous fumes being either absorbed by the addition of another ingredient, or oxidised by complete combustion. With proper precautions there is little danger with modern explosives, as they are all tested by Government inspectors.

Dynamite is not often used for mining, &c., nowadays; but a new field of usefulness has been found for it in America and other countries, where it is employed in clearing land for tillage, and even as an alternative to ploughing. Where the ground has been exhausted by repeated crops being grown without manure, it has been found that deep ploughing by dynamite brings to the surface a rich subsoil which yields splendid crops. The reason of the increased fertility is not fully known, but it is possible that some of the minute organisms inimical to the bacteria that are beneficial to the plant-life are killed by the dynamite.

How curiously intermingled, then, are life and death in this complex existence of ours; and how strange it is that a substance that not so long ago was looked upon as a 'waste product' has now become the basis of so many diverse things such as those enumerated!

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XV.—*continued.*

BUT now, when Joe would have ducked under the ropes, the Old Un stayed him with an imperious gesture, and, clambering into the ring, advanced to the centre and bowed gravely as if to a countless multitude. 'Gentlemen,' he piped in his shrill old voice, 'I take pleasure to introduce Joe Madden, undefeated 'eavy-weight champion o' the world, an' the guv, both members o' this club, an' both trained by me, Jack Bowser, once light-weight champion o' England and hall the Americas. Gentlemen, it will be a fight to a finish—Markis o' Queensberry rules. Gentlemen, I thank ye.' Having said which, the Old Un bowed again and gravely stepped from the ring, and, ensconcing himself in the arm-chair, drew out a large and highly ornate watch, while Ravenslee and Joe vaulted over the ropes.

And now behold them facing each other, the brown-skinned fighting man wise in ring-craft and champion of a hundred fights, and the white-fleshed athlete, each alike clear and bright of eye, light-poised of foot, quivering for swift action, while the Old Un looks heedfully from one to the other, watch in one bony hand, the other upraised. 'Get ready!' he croaked. 'Go!'

Comes immediately a quick, light tread of rubber-soled feet and the flash of white arms as they circle about and about, feinting, watchful and wary. Twice Ravenslee's fist shoots out and twice is blocked by Joe's open glove, and once he ducks a vicious swing and lands a half-arm jolt and makes Joe grin and stagger; whereat the Old Un, standing upon his chair, hugs himself in an ecstasy, and, forgetful of such small matters as five-dollar bills, urges, prays, beseeches, and implores the guv to 'wallop the blighter on the p'int, to stab 'im on the mark, an' to jolt 'im in the kidney-pit.' 'Go it, guv!' he shrieked; 'go it! In an' out again; that 's it. Gorramighty, I never see sich speed! Oh, keep at 'im, guv—make 'im cover up—sock it into 'im, guv! Ho, lumme, what footwork! You 're as quick as light-weights. Oh 'appy, 'appy day! Go to it, both on ye!'

And 'to it' they went, with jabs and jolts, hooks and swings, with cunning feints and lightning counters, until the place echoed and re-echoed to the swift tramp of feet and dull thudding of blows; while the Old Un, hugging himself in long, bony arms, chuckled and choked and rocked himself to and fro in an ecstasy. Moreover, when Joe, uttering a grunt, reeled back against the ropes, the Old Un must needs shriek and dance and crow with delight, until, bethinking him of his duty, he checked his excitement, seated himself in the arm-chair again, and announced, 'Time! End o' round one.'

And now it is to be noticed that as they sit to take their two minutes' rest, neither Ravenslee nor Joe, for all their exertions, seems unduly distressed in his breathing.

'Sir,' says Joe, looking his pupil over, 'you 're uncommon quick on your pins. Never knowed a quicker; did you, Old Un?'

'No, me lad, never in all me days.'

'An' you 've surely got a punch, sir.—Ain't 'e, Old Un?'

'Like a perishin' trip-hammer!' nodded the Old Un.

'Likewise, sir, you 've a wonderful judgment o' distance; but, sir, you need experience.'

'That 's what I 'm after, Joe.'

'And you take too many chances; you ain't larned caution yet.'

'That you must teach me, Joe.'

'Which I surely will, sir. In the next round, subject to no objection, I propose to knock ye down, sir.'

'Which means two dollars fifty for each on us, Joe, mind that,' added the Old Un.

'So fight more cautious, sir, do,' pleaded Joe, 'and—look out.'

'I will,' nodded Ravenslee.

'Time!' croaked the Old Un. 'Round two! And, guv, look out for yer p'int, cover yer mark, an' keep a heye on yer kidney-pit!'

Once again they faced each other, but this time it was Joe who circled quick and cat-like, massive shoulders bowed, knees bent, craggy chin grim and firm-set, but blue eyes serene and mild as ever. A moment's silent sparring, a quick tread of feet, and Joe feints Ravenslee into an opening, swings for his chin, misses by an inch, and, ducking a vicious counter, drives home a smashing body-blow, and, staggering weakly, Ravenslee goes down full-length.

'Shook ye up a bit, sir?' inquired Joe, running up with hands outstretched. 'Take a rest, now do, sir.'

'No, no,' answered Ravenslee, springing to his feet; 'the Old Un hasn't called "Time" yet.'

'Not me,' piped the old man; 'not bloomin' likely! Go to it, both on ye. Mind, that 's two-fifty for me, Joe!'

What need is there to tell the numerous feints, the lightning shifts, the different tricks of in-fighting, and all the cunning strategy and ring-craft that Joe brought to bear and carefully explained between rounds? Suffice it that at the end of a certain fierce 'mix up,' as Ravenslee sat outstretched and panting, the white flesh of arms and broad chest discovered many livid marks and patches that told their tale; also, one

elbow was grazed and bleeding, and one knee showed signs of recent contact with the floor.

'Joe,' said he when his wind was somewhat recovered, 'that makes it thirty dollars I owe you, I think?'

'Why, sir,' said Joe, who also showed some slight signs of wear, but whose breathing was soft and regular—'why, sir, you couldn't call that last one a real knock-down.'

'You 'm a liar, Joe—a liar!' cried the Old Un. —'Blimy, guv, Joe 's a-tellin' you crackers, s' help me! Your 'ands touched the floor, didn't they?'

'And my knees too,' nodded Ravenslee, 'also my elbow—no, that was last time or the time before.'

'Well, then, tell this lyin' Joe-lad o' mine as 'e surely did knock ye down.—Lord, Joe!' cried the Old Un, waxing pathetic, ''ow can ye go takin' money from a pore old cove like I be? Joe, I blushes for ye—an' Time, Time there, both on ye!'

'But we don't want any more, do us, sir?' inquired Joe.

'Why, yes, I think I can go another round or so.'

'There y' are, Joe; the guv 's surely a game cove. So get at it, me lad, an' try an' knock it up to fifty dollars. 'Arves, Joe, mind.'

'But, sir,' began Joe, eyeing the livid blotches on Ravenslee's white skin, 'don't ye think'——

'Time—oh, time, time!' shrieked the Old Un. Whereupon Ravenslee sprang to the centre of the ring, and once again the air resounded with tramp of feet and pant of breath. Twice Ravenslee staggers beneath Joe's mighty left; but watchful ever, and having learned much, Ravenslee keeps away, biding his time—ducks a swing, side-steps a drive, and, blocking a vicious hook, smacks home his long left to Joe's ribs, rocks him with a swinging upper-cut, drives in a lightning left and right, and Joe goes down with a crash.

Even while the Old Un stared in wide-eyed, gaping amaze, Joe was on his feet again, serene and calm as ever, only his great chest laboured somewhat; but Ravenslee shook his head. 'I guess that 'll be about enough, Joe,' said he.

'Guv,' cried the Old Un, seizing Ravenslee's right hand, boxing-glove and all, and shaking it to and fro, 'you 're a credit to us; you do us bloomin' proud—strike me pink ye do. 'Ere 's Joe 'ammered you an' 'ammered you—look at your bloomin' chest—lumme! 'Ere 's Joe been knockin' ye down an' knockin' ye down, an' you comin' up smilin' for more an' gettin' it—'ere 's Joe been a-poundin' o' ye all over the ring, yet you can finish strong an' speedy enough to put Joe down—blimy, guv, you 're a wonder, an' no error!'

'I don't think Joe fought his hardest, Old Un.'

'If 'e didn't,' cried the old man, 'I 'll punch 'im on the nose so 'e won't never smell nothink no more.'

'Sir,' said Joe, 'in the first round p'r'aps I did go a bit easy-like, but arter that I came at you as 'ard an' 'eavy as I could. I 'it you where an' 'ow I could, barrin' your face.'

'I hope I shall soon be good enough for you to go for my face as well, Joe.'

'But, sir—if I give you a black eye?'

'How will, say, ten dollars do?'

'Ten dollars! For blackin' your eye, sir?'

'Lumme, Joe!' cried the Old Un, 'get back into the ring and black 'em both.'

'Shut up,' said Joe, scowling down into the Old Un's eager face, 'you 'eartless old blood-sucker, you!'

'Bloodsucker!' screamed the old man. 'W'ot! me? I 'll punch you on the ear'ole, Joe, so 's you never 'ear nothin no more.'

'Are you on, Joe?' asked Ravenslee, while the Old Un, swearing softly, unlaced his gloves.

'But, crumbs, sir—axin' your pardon, things 'll come a bit expensive, won't they? Y' see'——

'So much the better, ye blighted perisher!' snarled the Old Un; 'an' don't forget as the guv owes you thirty dollars a'ready—an' 'arves, mind.'

'Stow it, you old bag o' wickedness.'

'Bag o''—— The Old Un let fall the boxing-gloves, and, turning on Joe, reached up and shook a feeble old fist under the champion's massive chin. 'Look at this, me lad—look at this!' he croaked; 'some day I shall ketch you sich a perishin' punch as 'll double ye up till kingdom come, me lad, and—lord, the guv 's countin' out our money!'

'Thirty of 'em, Joe,' said Ravenslee, holding out a wad of bills.

'Why, sir,' said Joe, backing away, 'axin' yer pardon, but I 'd rayther not—you give me such uncommon good wages, sir, an' a bonus every race we run, win or lose—so, sir, I—I 'd rayther not.'

'Not?' cried the Old Un. 'Not take money as is 'arf mine! Oh, kick 'im, somebody—kick 'im! Pound 'im for a pigeon-'earted perishin' pork pig.'

'That 'll be no sugar in your tea to-night, old viciousness.—But, sir, I 'd rayther not.'

'Don't 'eed 'im, guv—don't 'eed the flappin' flounder. If 'e won't obleege ye in a little matter like thirty dollars, I will—I 'll always obleege you.'

'That 's enough from you, old tombstones.'

'Tombstones!' hissed the Old Un, scowling darkly and squaring his fists. 'All right, me lad. 'Ere 's where I ketch ye one as 'll flatten ye out till the day o' doom.'

But hereupon Joe caught him above the elbows, and, lifting him in mighty hands that yet were gentle, seated the snarling old fellow in the arm-chair.

'Old Un,' said he, shaking his finger, 'if ye give me any more o' it—off t' bed I take ye without any tea at all.'

The Old Un, cowering beneath that portentous finger, swore plaintively and promptly subsided.

'And now,' said Ravenslee, thrusting the money into Joe's reluctant hand, 'when I make a bargain I generally keep it. I wish all my money had been spent to such good purpose.'

'What about me?' whined the old man humbly. 'Don't I get none, Joe-lad?'

'Not a cent, you old rasper!'

'Blimy, guv, you won't forget a old cove as 'u'd shed 'is best blood for ye?'

'The guv'nor don't want yer blood, old skin-an'-bones.—An' now, come on, sir.'

'Stay a minute, Joe; the Old Un generally keeps time for us when we spar rounds.'

'That I do, guv,' cried the old man, 'an' give ye advice worth its weight in solid gold. You owe me a lot, s' 'elp me!'

'About how much?'

'Well, guv, I ain't got me ledger-book 'andy, but, roughly speakin', I should say about five or six 'undred dollars. But seein' you 's you an' I 'm me—a old man true-'earted as never crossed nobody—let 's say—fifteen dollars.'

'Why, you old—thievin'—vagabone!' gasped Joe as Ravenslee gravely handed over the money.

'Vagabone yourself,' said the Old Un, counting the bills over in trembling fingers. 'The guv wants a bath—take 'im away—'ook it, d' j' 'ear?'

'Has Patterson got everything ready, Joe?' inquired Ravenslee, taking up his clothes.

'No, sir,' mumbled Joe; 'but I 'll have yer bath ready in a jiffy, sir.'

'But where 's Patterson?'

'Well, 'e—'e 's out, sir.'

'And the footmen?'

'They 're out, sir.'

'Oh! And the housekeeper—er—what 's her name—Mrs Smythe?'

'Gone to call on her relations, sir.'

'Ah! And the maids?'

'Mrs Smythe give 'em leave of habsence, sir. Ye see, sir,' said Joe apologetically, 'you 're 'ere so seldom, sir.'

'My servants are not exactly—er—worked to death, Joe?'

'No, sir.'

'Manage to look after themselves quite well?'

'Yes, sir.'

'It seems I need some one to look after them—and me.'

'Yes, sir.'

'A woman, Joe—one I can trust and honour and—er—what d' ye think?'

'I think—er—yes, sir.'

'Well, what do you suggest?'

'Marry her, sir.'

'Joe, that 's a great idea! Shake hands! I surely will marry her—at once—if she 'll have me.'

'She 'll have you, sir.'

'Do you really think she will, Joe?'

'I 'm dead certain, sir.'

'Joe, shake again. I 'll speak to her when she comes home. To-morrow 's Saturday, isn't it?'

'As ever was, sir.'

'Then, Joe, wish me luck. I 'll ask her—to-morrow.'

(*Continued on page 277.*)

HISTORIC SCRAPS OF PAPER.

THE WAR'S STORY TOLD IN STAMPS.

By Douglas B. Armstrong.

HISTORY is ofttimes recorded in unconsidered trifles—in letters, coins, pictures, relics, fashions, and household gods. The events of our own times are writ large upon the postage-stamps of nations.

As emblems of the State, stamps are particularly prone to reflect the trend of political developments. The imperishable story of the Great War is itself inscribed in no uncertain manner upon the postal issues of the belligerents. Within the pages of the stamp-collector's album are preserved souvenirs of almost every outstanding incident of the hostilities, forming a veritable cyclopædia of the war in miniature. 'Despise not small things,' says the sage, and in after-years these paper mementoes of the tented field will possess, beyond doubt, a deep historical interest all their own.

The first dishonoured act of war, the violation of Belgian neutrality, is commemorated for all time in a set of the contemporary German postage-stamps, portraying the menacing mail-clad figure of 'Germania,' bearing in heavy black Gothic characters of sinister portent the legend 'Belgien,' and beneath it a new value in Flemish currency, denoting their use under the Imperial governor-generalship. They were introduced very shortly after the occupation of Brussels, as if in malignant prophecy of the ultimate subjection of the whole of that hapless country, and many millions of specimens have been distributed in neutral and enemy countries as an earnest of frightfulness. It may be that some day they will constitute the last remaining relics of an infamous wrong.

The importation of these or other enemy issues of postage-stamps into Great Britain is prohibited under the Home Office regulations governing trading with the enemy, whilst similar restrictions have been imposed by the French and other

allied Governments. Copies contained in letters from abroad and detected by the watchful eye of the Censor are known defaced with a heavy diagonal bar of ink, in which condition they were ultimately delivered to the addressee. In retaliation for the British boycott, the German Governor of Belgium has imposed a heavy fine, accompanied by other pains and penalties, upon Belgian stamp dealers and collectors having in their possession any war-stamps of the Allies.

A plain type-set label of unprepossessing appearance, value ten centimes, and issued under the ægis of the Valenciennes Chamber of Commerce, marks the penetration of the Hun forces into northern France in their ill-starred dash for Paris, following the retreat from Mons. Acting on instructions from headquarters, the French Government officials had retired from the famous lace-making city; and when the German troops entered into possession on 29th August 1914, the postal service, in common with other State organisations, was conspicuous by its absence. As a temporary measure, the local municipal body was authorised to establish a provisional postal service along the line of tramway serving the neighbouring communes, and it was in connection with this service that this crudely printed local stamp was created. Its currency lasted for only eight weeks, when the service was taken over by the Imperial German Postal Administration, and controlled from Berlin.

Belgium's final sacrifice in the first phase of the Great War is recalled by some Red Cross postage-stamps, issued at the instigation of the courageous and charitable Queen Elizabeth during the perilous times of the siege of Antwerp. One of the designs commemorates a notable deed of heroism in the War of Independence of 1830—the death of Count Frederic de Merode in defending the flag—and is taken from the national memorial unveiled at Berchem in the same year. The other bears a familiar portrait vignette of King Albert himself, the Geneva Cross being in each instance incorporated in the design. Both series were printed lithographically in the city when the German heavy artillery was still pounding at the surrounding forts, and were sold for twice their nominal face-values, half of the proceeds going to the Belgian Red Cross.

On the withdrawal of the Belgian Government to Ostend, and subsequently to France, two days after their début the remainders of these stamps were destroyed, together with the stones from which they were printed, to prevent their falling into the enemy's hands.

Following the seizure of the former German colony of Samoa, the 'Pearl of the Pacific,' by an expedition from New Zealand on the same day that the Germans entered Valenciennes, the German colonial postage-stamps, bearing a representation of the Imperial yacht *Hohenzollern*, found in the island post-office, were temporarily withdrawn from circulation, only, however, to be reissued a few days later overprinted with the Royal cipher 'G.R.I.' and a new value in British currency.

The resources of the local printing establishment (office of the *Samoanische Zeitung*) being somewhat limited, not more than ten stamps could be overprinted at one time, and this, combined with the fact that the compositor was a Chinese-Samoan half-caste, whose knowledge of English was of the slightest, led to the creation of some curious errors and varieties so dear to the heart of the philatelist. Several stamps received double impressions of the overprint, and not a few were surcharged upside-down; whilst the first batch of shilling stamps had the value quaintly rendered as '1 Shillings.' This error, by the way, is one of the great rarities amongst the stamps of the Great War. Sets of these occupation stamps were presented to the naval officers of the Australasian squadron and to various officials, and others were eagerly bought up as souvenirs by the rank and file of the expedition. Subsequently ordinary New Zealand postage-stamps, overprinted with the single word 'Samoa,' were brought into use under the British administration.

Nemesis in the shape of the armed forces of Great Britain, France, and Japan, operating in unison, was at the same time overtaking the German colonial possessions in other parts of the world. Togoland, the oldest German colony on the West Coast of Africa, surrendered to a Franco-British expedition, after some sharp fighting, on 26th August 1914, and has since been administered under the joint control of Great Britain and France. For the first few weeks of the allied occupation no trace of ex-German colonial stamps could be found, so that those of the adjacent British colony of the Gold Coast had to be temporarily employed. Eventually, however, a regular *cache* of treasure trove, in the form not only of stamps, but of bullion to the value of thirty thousand pounds, was unearthed at Kamina, the site of the powerful wireless station linking the German colonies throughout the world with Berlin. Sealed in strong metal cases, they had been sunk in some disused wells, whence they were recovered by certain native sheikhs and handed over to the British authorities. The stamps, divided between the British and French administrations, were reissued provisionally, with the imprint 'Togo Anglo-French Occupation' in English and French respectively. The work of overprinting the British series was carried out by the monks of the Catholic Mission at Lome, the capital of Togo; but the French were forced to send their supply down to Porto Novo, Dahomey, to be surcharged, since no printing-press was available in the region under their control. For a brief period all stamps of whatever denomination were used to prepay the ordinary penny postage rate; but this soon proved impracticable, and they were afterwards

sold for their equivalent face-values in English or French money.

Another small find of German Togo stamps made by the French at Sansanne Mangu, in the northern part of the colony, in January 1915 was similarly treated; but by May of that year all of the provisional stamps had been exhausted, largely due to the enormous demand for them by stamp-collectors in all parts of the world, and those of the Gold Coast bearing a like overprint have since been in circulation.

Quite Gilbertian in character was the manner of finding the first small supply of German New Guinea postage-stamps by the officials of the Australian Expeditionary Force charged with the occupation of Kaiser Wilhelm's Land and its island dependencies in the north-west Pacific. The bulk of the stock had been destroyed by the German colonial authorities, but a number of complete sheets were at length brought to light hidden away amongst some shirts in the wardrobe of the ex-postmaster of the colony. With the aid of a small hand printing-press these were hurriedly converted into British stamps of the realm by the addition of the magic initials 'G.R.I.' and a new value in pence and shillings struck on them at the mission schoolroom at Rabual, which served as an emergency printing-office. So great was the demand for these historical stamps by the troops and officials of the Commonwealth forces that it was found necessary to restrict the sale to ten shillings' worth to each applicant. Complimentary sets in honour of the event were forwarded for the acceptance of his Majesty the King, certain high officials of the Australian Government, and the principal museums in the Commonwealth. A further supply of ex-German colonial postage-stamps brought down from Nauru, in the Marshall Islands, was overprinted and issued in a similar manner at Rabual in December 1914. The stamps in use in New Britain, as the newly acquired territory is designated, since the exhaustion of these provisional issues are those of the current Australian types surcharged 'N.W. Pacific Islands.' All of these occupation stamp issues contain errors and varieties, more or less pronounced, and are much sought after by philatelists. Prices ranging from a few shillings to twenty or thirty pounds, according to their relative scarcity, are readily obtained in the stamp-market. It is, however, for their historical and philatelic interest that they are chiefly esteemed, quite apart from any question of intrinsic value.

The advent of the Indian Army Corps upon the battlefields of France and Flanders was denoted by a special series of postage-stamps supplied to the field post-offices attached to the various divisions for use upon the correspondence of our gallant native troops. The necessity for this procedure arose from the fact that these stamps were sold not only by the Indian military post-offices in Europe, but also by those serving with the expeditions in Egypt, East Africa, and the Persian Gulf. The local currency units differing in each instance in their relation to the rupee, the absence of any distinguishing mark might have led to the stamps being purchased in wholesale quantities where the exchange rate was lowest, and re-exported to India at a considerable profit. To avoid this contingency, therefore, the contemporary postal issues of British India, with portrait of the King-Emperor, as issued to the military post-offices in the field, were imprinted on the face, with the initials 'I.E.F.,' signifying 'Indian Expeditionary Force,' and in such form they afford a lasting memorial to the valiant part played by our Indian army in the great war of the nations.

As a prelude to Turkey's entry into the war on the side of the Central Powers, the Sublime Porte, at the dictation of the Wilhelmstrasse, declared the abolition of the foreign capitulations under which various rights and privileges had been enjoyed by European residents in the Ottoman Empire under the 'most favoured nation clause' of certain treaties. Prominent amongst these treaty concessions was the right of the European Concert to maintain their own post-offices in Constantinople and elsewhere in Turkey for the benefit of their countrymen sojourning in the Near East. Seizing the long-hoped-for opportunity afforded by the European imbroglio, the Turkish Government was at long last able to carry out its cherished object of securing the suppression of the foreign postal agencies, an event which took place on 1st October 1914, and was duly celebrated by the application of a special overprint in native characters denoting 'Capitulations Abrogated 1333' upon the current stamps of the Ottoman post.

Following the actual declaration of war between Turkey and the Allies, supplies of the beautiful pictorial postage-stamp series of the previous year, the work of a London firm, who hold the plates, were cut off, so that by October 1915 the local stocks had all been used up. Recourse was had, therefore, to a large hoard of obsolete stamps of different kinds lying in the Treasury vaults, for which vain endeavours had been made to find a purchaser, and these were pressed into the service and reissued imprinted on the face with the device of the Star and Crescent of Islam above the date of the Mohammedan year.

Japan's part in the world war is perpetuated by a military franchise stamp in the form of the regular three-sen inland postage-label of the Imperial Japanese Posts, overprinted with two syllabic characters signifying 'war service,' two of which are supplied gratis every month to men of the Japanese army and navy on active service.

Philatelic souvenirs of the temporary Japanese occupation of the Marshall Islands also exist in specimens of the former German colonial postage-stamps of the group impressed in red ink with the name-seals of various Japanese officers. None of these, however, appear to have been employed postally, and their interest is that of curios pure and simple.

At a time when the German commerce raiders in the Atlantic were still at large a remarkable and unique precaution was adopted by the Government of British Honduras to safeguard a consignment of the colonial postage-stamps then on order from the printers in London. Under special instructions from the Crown Agents, this one printing was made upon special paper that had first been covered with a faint moire ground, so that the stamps included therein might be readily distinguished from any that had previously been issued, and in the event of their falling into the hands of the enemy, could at once be declared invalid in the colony. Fortunately the rounding up of the *Dresden* and *Karlsruhe* by the British navy rendered this procedure unnecessary, but the stamps remain as a mute tribute to the power and efficiency of 'Britain's sure shield.'

Two sets of stamps were issued during the course of 1915 from the tiny post-office of St Andresse, Havre, where the exiled Belgian Government has found sanctuary beneath the tricolour of La Belle France. The first, a Red Cross charity issue bearing the likeness of King Albert, was placed on sale at the New Year; whilst the second, whose designs include vignettes of historic buildings and monuments in stricken Belgium, is a striking indictment of the vandalism which masquerades under the name of *Kultur*. The Cloth Hall of Ypres, devastated Dinant, and the once noble University of Louvain, all bear testimony to the wanton spirit of sacrilege that has reduced their architectural glories to a mass of smoking ruins.

Of a more inspiriting nature, however, is the scene presented on the five-francs value—King Albert presenting colours to his gallant troops at Furnes during the present war. It was originally proposed that these handsome stamps should be withheld from issue until the Belgian Post-Office was once more established on its native soil; but they were eventually released to help to provide funds for the prosecution of the war of Belgian liberty, typified by the various designs.

German postage-stamps overprinted 'Russische Polen' in Gothic characters, as well as those of Bosnia and Herzegovina inscribed '*Feld Post*,' carry the mind back to the eventful spring of 1915, when, owing to the temporary failure of the munitions-supply, the Russian army was forced to fall back before the combined Austro-German advance, and Poland and Galicia were overrun by the enemy's forces. Both the German and Austrian issues appeared in May 1915, and are of a purely military character, not being available for use on private correspondence.

An American war correspondent relates how, in the early days of the war, the Galician conscripts serving with the Austrian army, when they were led to positions against the Russians, were encouraged by fictitious stories of the re-establishment of the Polish monarchy, in support of which they were shown some bogus stamps adorned with the effigy of King Sobieski III.

One of the minor phases of the Great War, the subjugation of the erstwhile German African possession of the Cameroons, in which both British and French troops were engaged for many weary months, is commemorated in the stamp album by two series of stamps, overprinted in the one case 'C.E.F.,' signifying 'Cameroons Expeditionary Force,' on the former German colonial types, and 'Corps Expéditionnaire Franco-Anglais Cameroun' on those of Gaboon in the other. When the British troops first occupied Duala, the capital, no trace of any postage-stamps could be found, and for a time all letters emanating from this region bore the superscription, 'No stamps available.' At length, however, a large consignment of stamps addressed to the chief postmaster of the Cameroons on the eve of war was brought to light on board the West African liner *Professor Wœrmann*, lying in the harbour of Freetown, Sierra Leone, where she had been brought as a prize by a British cruiser. They were duly converted into a provisional issue for use under the British administration of the Cameroons at the Government printing-office at Freetown, being finally issued at Duala sometime in July 1915. The French series was not issued until four or five months later, when the last of the German garrisons in the locality had been reduced.

Austro-German intrigues in southern Persia led to the temporary occupation, with the consent of the Persian Government, of the important trading port of Bushire by Indian troops on 8th August 1916. During the occupation the postal service was maintained by Indian officials, the stock of Persian stamps found in the local post-office being utilised with the addition of the words 'Bushire under British Occupation,' applied by means of an antiquated hand printing-press which was transferred from the British Residency to the post-office for the purpose. After a currency of only about six weeks these stamps ceased to be valid, when the administration of the town and district was once more restored to Persia. The British occupation stamps are in consequence of considerable scarcity, quite apart from their political interest.

The entry of Italy into the Great War on the side of the Allies was followed by the issue of some special Red Cross postage-stamps, after the French model, but of distinctive and appropriate design. A wreath of laurel encircles the banner of Italy as shown on the ten centesimi + five centesimi grayish blue, whilst the fifteen centesimi + five centesimi is emblazoned with the heraldic arms of Savoy, a Geneva Cross within a small circle being in each instance incorporated in the designs of the stamps, both of which are inscribed '*Croce Rossa.*' With the addition of the name of the issuing office in black overprint, these two charity stamps have also been circulated in the Italian colonies of Libya, Eritrea, Somaliland, the Italian islands in the Ægean Sea, and the postal agencies in Albania, and have already contributed a substantial amount to the funds of the Italian Red Cross.

As a contribution towards the additional revenue required to meet the expenses of military operations, the Italian inland postal rate was raised on 1st January 1916 from fifteen to twenty centesimi per half-ounce, when the current fifteen-centesimi postage-stamps were duly surcharged with the higher figure until such time as a permanent twenty-centesimi stamp could be prepared by the Government bank-note factory at Turin.

For some days after the German occupation of the ancient Polish capital on its evacuation by the Russian army in the autumn of 1915, the regular postal service was restricted to military requirements, and with the approval of the army authorities the local delivery of letters within the city precincts was undertaken by the Burgomasters' Committee of Warsaw. Special stamps were prepared in connection with this town post, crudely lithographed, and representing respectively an allegory of the Vistula (a dragon, with a woman's body, brandishing a sword) and the city arms of Warsaw—the Polish eagle with a crown suspended above its head. The suppression of the local service at the end of a week precluded the issue of stamps of a more ambitious nature depicting the celebrated Sobieski Monument and the Poniatowski Bridge after its destruction by the Russians.

Stamps of the German Empire, overprinted with the inscription, '*Postgebiet ob Ost*' (Postal District of the Eastern Command), are employed by the military post-offices in the districts of Vilna, Kovno, Suwalki, and Kurland in Lithuania under the German occupation.

Grim relics of the tragedy of the great Serbian retreat across the snow-clad mountains of Albania exist in the form of an abortive series of national postage-stamps, which was on the point of being issued at the time of the Austro-German invasion. Just as the streets of Nish are said to have been decked with flags to welcome the allied relief force which never came, these stamps were destined to be issued in honour of the same unfulfilled event. A set of five values had been prepared typifying the part played by Serbia in the Great War through the medium of a picture reproduced from the Parisian journal *L'Illustration*, depicting the veteran King Peter I., surrounded by his staff, directing the operations of his indomitable army. Part of the stock would appear to have been conveyed to Prizend, and there placed on sale during the temporary establishment of the seat of Government in that town; but the bulk is believed to have fallen into the hands of the invaders. A few sets were preserved by survivors of the great retreat, and constitute souvenirs of undoubted historical interest.

The single word 'Serbien' superimposed on the contemporary postage-stamps of Germany and Austria (Bosnian military post-offices) denotes their use under the Hun administration of that ill-starred country.

Although the idea has frequently been broached, H.M. Postmaster-General has not so far deemed it expedient to create separate stamps for the purpose of collecting the enhanced rates of postage necessitated by the war; nor would there appear to be any immediate prospect of such an innovation in this country. War-tax stamps of a distinctive character have, however, to be affixed to letters posted in Canada, New Zealand, Fiji, the British West Indies, &c., and Roumania, the last-named bearing the imprint, '*Timbru de Ajutor.*' Apropos of the Roumanian war-tax stamps, introduced in anticipation of the early participation of that country in the world-wide hostilities, the following picturesque story is recounted. When the use of these war-tax stamps was first bruited, a competition for an appropriate design was held amongst the leading Roumanian artists and designers, and the first prize was awarded to M. Leca, an eminent sculptor. His design represented a Roumanian soldier saluting two women who stood in a valley surrounded by high hills, over which the sun was rising. On the eve of their issue, however, a formal protest against the use of this design was entered by the Austro-Hungarian Minister at Bucharest, on the ground that it contained a palpable allusion to the Austrian provinces of Transylvania and Bukovina, as symbolised by the two women, the mountains being the Carpathians, and the rising sun intended to typify the coming of Roumania. To avoid diplomatic complications at that juncture, the stamps were accordingly suppressed, and those of the ordinary current postage type, overprinted as above described, substituted. It is rumoured, however, that specimens of the forbidden issue were printed and distributed *sub rosâ*, and that some were, in an unaccountable manner, found to be affixed to the private correspondence of the Emperor Francis Joseph himself.

To each and every one of the foregoing stamps,

as well as to countless other varieties of which space precludes detailed mention, there is attached an historical or romantic interest, imparting to them a special significance as mementoes of the world's most terrible war. The end, alas! is not yet, and ere war's red tide has ceased to flow they will doubtless be supplemented by other and no less historic 'scraps of paper.'

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL.

By B. Paul Neuman.

I.

WHEN Walter Hague married Isabel Watts, there were divergent opinions, even in their own family circles, as to the wisdom of the step. Walter's father was of the optimists.

'Wallie 's always had his head screwed on the right way,' said the old gentleman, who himself bore the reputation of being a bit of a screw. 'He isn't like the young fools who are in such a hurry to marry that they have to get the furniture on the hire system. He 's waited, and now he 's got something worth waiting for.

'I hope so,' said his wife, a good deal less confidently. 'But Isabel isn't an easy girl to know. There 's a something in her manner'——

'There 's a something in her pocket,' old Mr Hague interrupted, 'and that 's a great deal more important. Three hundred a year, if it 's a penny. Wallie knows what he 's about.'

'Belle 's old enough to look after herself,' remarked her mother, a widow, well-to-do, and enamoured of an easy life. 'If it had been me, I 'd have thought twice about it. She likes to have her own way, and, unless I am very much mistaken, Walter 's another of the same kind.'

'Oh, well,' declared Lalie, the youngest of the family, 'they 'll have to fight it out like other married people. I suppose almost every drawing-room 's been a battlefield in its time.'

'And a good many dining-rooms Temples of Peace,' said Mrs Watts, with a comfortable chuckle.

'His name 's a good omen, at any rate,' Lalie remarked.

The marriage turned out quite a success; so both sides of the family agreed. Walter was a partner in his father's thriving paper manufactory, and had already something more than the nest-egg of a substantial fortune. The happy pair found a new non-basement villa at Brondesbury, and furnished it at Maple's. Everything about it was smart and bright and shiny, and they did their best to look as smart and bright and shiny themselves. Time passed, and there was no need of a pram. Husband and wife were quite content.

'Children are such a worry and anxiety,' said Isabel.

'And a thundering expense,' added Walter.

II.

Successful to outward seeming, the marriage, like all human relationships, had its little flaws and drawbacks. As Mrs Watts had foreseen, both husband and wife, fond of their own way, were resolute in trying to get it. Hence, as time went on and they grew familiar with each other's strength and weakness, their differences tended to assume the character of campaigns rather than battles. But they always conducted hostilities with the punctilio of a high civilisation, and quarrelled in such dulcet tones that even their servants thought they were on the best of terms. This, at any rate, was the case till they fell out over the house on the hill.

By that time they had been married six years. Old Mr Hague had died, and Walter's prudence and energy had been rewarded by a steady growth of the business. The lease of their house had only one more quarter to run, and Isabel had set her heart on moving farther into the country. Walter, however, was quite satisfied with Brondesbury. He dreaded the fuss and discomfort of a move, and he felt sure that Isabel had in view a larger and more expensive establishment.

'Rouse will renew on a three years' agreement at the same rent,' he said, 'and I 'm sure we can't do better. It 's so handy for business, and the air suits us both.'

'There are plenty of other places just as handy,' she replied, 'and I 'm certain you oughtn't to be living on clay. It 's bad for both of us. You 've had quite a lot of rheumatism lately, and I 'm getting dreadfully sensitive to cold.'

He laughed. 'The poor old governor lived on gravel, but he was a martyr to rheumatism. It 's in the blood, not in the soil. And as for you, my dear, you look splendid.'

'This is summer,'she answered. 'It 's in the winter that I feel it. Dr Rogers says I should be another woman in the country.'

'But I don't want another woman,' he protested.

'Please don't be coarse, Walter,' she said severely.

'My dear girl, it was your own expression, or your doctor's. Old Rogers would say anything to please a good patient.'

Her voice grew colder and harder. 'Dr Rogers is superior to any mercenary considerations, and he understands my constitution perfectly.'

He thought he saw his chance. 'I didn't

mean anything against him. He 's quite a good sort, and if he understands you so well, it would be a thousand pities to move out of his beat.'

'I 'm not suggesting that we should. There 's a house I 've seen at Wembley '——

'But that 's clay, surely?' he interrupted.

'Yes; but the house is on a hill, and that makes all the difference; Dr Rogers says so. The moisture drains away so much better. And we should be easily within reach of him. It 's a most delightful house. There 's a full-sized billiard-room, and you know you 've always said that was one thing you *would* like; and then the garden—well, it 's the sort of garden that 's really worth working in. They say Wembley 's famous for roses, and, after seeing that garden, I can quite believe it.'

Now this was rather clever, for billiards and gardening were Walter's two outstanding hobbies.

'What 's the rent?' he asked.

'It 's only for sale,' she answered. 'They 're asking two thousand three hundred pounds, but *you 'd* get them down to two thousand easily.'

The compliment pleased him more than the price. He shook his head. 'That 's prohibitive,' he said. 'I believe I could buy this house for twelve hundred, and I 'm certainly not going to anything like two thousand.'

To his surprise, she took his refusal quite good-humouredly.

'Very well. But you must see my house on the hill. Some day, perhaps, we may be able to afford a little comfort, and then you 'll know the kind of house I like.'

'Oh yes, I 'll go over there on Saturday, if you like,' he answered, and the firing ceased.

III.

The house on the hill certainly had its good points—Walter freely acknowledged them. It was evidently well built and well planned. The rooms were large, and almost all of them had a pleasant outlook. The garden, too, was tempting, and the roses surpassed his expectations. The billiard-room, on the other hand, fell a little below them. It was really a big breakfast-room, rather low and dark, and it looked as if it would barely take a full-sized table. The house was a good step from the station, and the situation was somewhat exposed for the winter.

'Still,' he admitted, 'I don't wonder it has taken your fancy, and if it had been anywhere near my price, I don't know that I 'd have stood out. Do you know who the landlord is?'

'Yes,' answered Isabel. 'It 's a Mr Kittridge. I saw his advertisement in the *Telegraph*, and answered it. I heard from him yesterday. He says that his only child is very delicate, and they 've been ordered to live on the south coast for the present. I feel sure, from the way he writes, that he 's open to an offer.'

'You can't very well offer a man half of what he asks.'

'I believe he 'd take two thousand pounds,' she said.

'I dare say he would,' returned her husband dryly.

On their way back not another word was said about the house; nor was the subject referred to during the evening or on Sunday. But Isabel was so demonstratively amiable that Walter said to himself, 'She hasn't given it up.'

On Monday morning he bought a *Telegraph* at the station, and, as he expected, found Mr Kittridge's advertisement. The address was Abney House, Moorgate Street, and he made up his mind to call there at once and investigate for himself. But just as he reached the door with Mr Kittridge's name on it, to his astonishment it opened to let out a man whom he knew very well indeed.

'Hallo, Richards!' he exclaimed; 'what are *you* doing here?'

The light on the landing was subdued, and Richards was short-sighted.

'Who 's that?' he asked. 'Why, Hague, are you on the same errand?'

'I can't say till I know yours. Is it about an advertisement?'

'Yes. House at Wembley. Are you after it too?'

'I only wanted to ask a question or two, and you can answer them. We 'll go on together, shall we? Have you taken it?'

'No,' answered Richards, as they stepped out into Moorgate Street. 'He opens his mouth a bit too wide.'

'Over two thousand pounds, is it?'

'Well, I believe he 'd take two thousand on the nail; but that 's too much. I offered seventeen hundred and fifty, and I might have gone to eighteen hundred. The wife 's desperately keen on it. It 's a nice little place, though not quite such a palace as he seems to think it. Are you going to have a shot?'

'I should have offered less than you did. Anyway, I 'm not going to interfere while you 're negotiating.'

'Oh, you needn't bother about that. I 'm definitely out of it.'

'And it 's no good my going into it; I can see that. It 's the wife with me too. I 'd much rather stop where we are.'

Walter meant what he said. The garden had tempted him, and he knew that Isabel could be very unpleasant when she was thwarted in anything upon which she had really set her heart. If this Kittridge would have taken anything like fifteen hundred pounds, he might have considered it. As it was, he would settle at once with Rouse, and Isabel must make the best of it.

IV.

Just about the time when Walter was making up his mind, Isabel made up hers. At breakfast they had talked most amicably on half-a-dozen indifferent topics, and Wembley had not been once mentioned. Then Walter had gone to Moorgate Street, and Isabel set out for Ealing, where Mrs Watts and Lalie lived.

There she grew eloquent over the perfections of the house on the hill. 'It's absolutely ideal,' she declared. 'The moment I saw it I knew it was exactly what I'd been waiting for all these years; and Dr Rogers says Wembley would suit us both admirably.'

'Poor old Rogers!' exclaimed Lalie. 'He'd say the same of Lisson Grove if he thought it would please you.'

'Don't be so ridiculous,' said Isabel sharply. 'That's just how Walter talks. Dr Rogers is most careful. He knows that I'm different from most people—that I always wish to hear the exact truth.'

'You must be very courageous, my dear,' said Mrs Watts with a smile. 'I don't mind admitting that sometimes I like a little water with my truth.'

'What does Walter think of this house?' asked Lalie.

'Oh, you know what Walter is. Of course he likes it—no one could help doing that; but he wants to get it for next to nothing, and if he can't, he won't play. He's really just like a sulky child when he can't make a bargain on his own terms.'

'Walter's a very good man of business,' said Mrs Watts.

'He is, and he isn't,' answered Isabel. 'He makes money like a wise man, and spends—or won't spend—it like a fool. He could easily afford to buy this place, where he'd be comfortable for the rest of his life, and he talks of renewing the lease of our horrid, stuffy little house in Brondesbury. I've no patience with such nonsense.'

'Still, my dear, he pays the piper, so I suppose he thinks he ought to have a say about the tune.'

'And what about me?' demanded Isabel, with rising temper. 'It affects me ten times more than it does him. He's out all day, while I have to be cooped up in that damp, unwholesome bandbox of a house. Another three years, and we shall both of us be chronic invalids.'

'Your looks haven't begun to pity you yet,' Lalie put in.

'Oh, of course, you're always on his side, against me, both of you; but, thank goodness, I can take my own part.'

'I'm sure you can, and quite right, too,' said her mother; 'but the strongest of us has to give way sometimes.'

'Why not try to find another house nearer to his figure?' suggested Lalie.

'No!' declared Isabel explosively. 'I'm tired of always playing second fiddle. Oh yes, you may laugh, but for once I mean to have my own way—in his interest as well as my own.'

'I bet you a decent pair of gloves—twelve-button—that you don't go to Wembley,' said Lalie.

'Done!' snapped her sister.

V.

A plan, simple but daring, for getting her own way had already occurred to Isabel; and as she left her mother's house, she determined to try it at once. She would show her mother and Lalie, as well as Walter, that she was no silly patient Grisel. He wasn't the only person with a head for business. She would beat him at his own game.

As soon as she had finished lunch, she put on her bravest attire and took the train to Moorgate Street. She found Abney House and Mr Kittridge without any difficulty. He was a middle-aged man, spectacled, well groomed, and pleasant-spoken. A chemical analyst the brass plate on his outer door proclaimed him.

'I've called with reference to this advertisement,' she said, producing it.

'Oh yes,' he answered. 'Well, I'm in treaty with two or three parties, but nothing's absolutely settled.'

'Now, Mr Kittridge'—she put on her most fascinating smile—'you can see that I'm not a business woman. I'm going to be perfectly frank with you, and I hope you'll be the same with me. What's the very lowest price you'll take for the house?'

Mr Kittridge took up a letter-book. 'Here it is,' he said. 'I gave him till noon to-day. This is what I said: "I will take two thousand one hundred and fifty pounds, and let one thousand pounds remain on mortgage at 4½ per cent."'

Isabel looked down, pursed her lips, and wrinkled her forehead, as if she were trying to make up her mind on a very knotty point. She was pleasantly conscious of the fact that the analyst's eyes were fixed upon her. Suddenly she looked up, this time with a smile of the confidential and appealing kind.

'Mr Kittridge,' she began, 'I'm going to trust you with a secret. My husband has seen the house, and he likes it immensely, but he is one of the ultra-prudent, and he has persuaded himself that he ought not to go beyond one thousand five hundred pounds. If he doesn't buy your house, he will renew the lease of our present house, the position of which doesn't suit him at all, and I'm very much afraid that another three years there will ruin his health. As a matter of fact, he could afford quite well to buy your house. Now I have a little money of my own,

and sooner than see him a chronic invalid, I would only too gladly spend some of it. At the same time, I know quite well that if he were aware of my little ruse, he'd have nothing to do with it. Now, if you can accept my terms, will you help me? My idea is this. I'll write you a cheque at once for five hundred pounds. Then I'll tell my husband that I've seen you, and that I believe you'll accept one thousand five hundred pounds if he pays immediately, instead of leaving any on mortgage. I'm afraid I can't go beyond five hundred pounds, and I'm sure he won't make any advance on fifteen hundred.'

Mr Kittridge had already come to the conclusion that he had been asking a little too much, and the thought of getting the whole business settled in a day or two was very attractive. So was Mrs—— What was the woman's name? Oh yes, lucky chap, Hague. She must be a very devoted wife.

'Well, Mrs Hague,' he said, 'this is a very unusual proposition, but I can't help respecting and—and admiring your motive. The money's a good deal less than I meant to take, but if you like to make it guineas I'll say, "Done."'

'Let's see; that'll be five hundred and twenty pounds. Very well, I'll write the cheque if you'll give me a pen.'

Mr Kittridge laughed. 'Is that your arithmetic, Mrs Hague?' he asked. 'I should call it five hundred and twenty-five pounds.'

'Oh no,' declared Isabel. 'I'm sure five hundred and twenty is right. I got distinction in maths. at the Cambridge Local.'

She took a cheque-book out of her bag, and wrote and crossed a cheque for five hundred and twenty pounds.

He looked at it, and smiled. 'You were wrong in one respect,' he remarked. 'I think you're a capital business woman. Now, what sort of a receipt am I to give you?'

'Oh, give me an ordinary receipt,' she answered, 'and write me a letter saying what the money's for, and promising to return it if you and Walter—you and my husband—don't come to terms. And you'd better write me another letter saying that you've made up your mind to let the house go for a good deal less than you were asking.'

'I feel quite a conspirator,' he said, a few minutes later, as he showed her out, 'and it's a new rôle for me.'

'And for me too.' This time her smile was the smile of innocence.

VI.

That evening, at dinner, Isabel exclaimed suddenly, 'By the way, Walter, I've had another letter from that man with the house at Wembley. He says he's willing now to take a good deal less.'

'What did I tell you?' exclaimed her husband triumphantly. 'It was just a try on. The house really isn't such a treasure. It was only the garden that tempted me.'

'And the more you do in the garden the better you are. You've done wonders with this back-yard. At Wembley you'd have a perfect show. I believe he'd meet you; I do really.'

'Not he!' answered Walter. 'Eight hundred pounds is too big a drop.'

'You never know. Anyway, I should feel ever so much more satisfied if you found out what it's really going for.'

'Oh, very well,' he replied; 'but I'm getting tired of being always right.'

'Yes, it's my turn now,' she declared with a laugh that sounded unusually gay.

The next evening he came back earlier than usual, went upstairs at once to dress for dinner, and joined her in the drawing-room ten minutes before the gong was due. She had taken great pains over the menu, which was a compendium of his favourite dishes. He had definitely promised, before he went out, that he would see Kittridge, and it was all-important to have him in good-humour.

The moment he opened the door she saw that he was in high spirits, and her own rose. 'I've got those gloves!' she said to herself. All day she had been tormenting herself by imagining ingenious ways in which her daring scheme might break down. His face drove away her apprehensions in a moment.

'Well,' she asked, 'what had Mr Kittridge to say?'

'Why,' he answered, 'he said one thousand eight hundred at first. Then he came down to sixteen hundred; and then, when he saw that I really knew my own mind, he threw up the sponge and agreed to fifteen. The secret seems to be that he wants the money immediately. As soon as he found he could have it, he was ready enough to meet me.'

'And did you really settle the business?'

'Rather! He'd got a form of agreement ready, and we signed it there and then. It's the best stroke of business I've done for a long while, and you're entitled to most of the credit. It was awfully clever of you to follow him up as you did. Look here, Belle.'

He came across the room to her, took from his pocket a little morocco case, and put it into her hands. She opened it. Inside, sparkling and shimmering, lay a handsome double-hoop ring—diamonds and sapphires. She uttered a little cry of delight, sprang up, and threw her arms round his neck.

'Oh, you dear!' she cried. 'Is it really for me? How sweet of you! What perfectly lovely stones! Thank you a thousand times. Now tell me about our house on the hill, dearest. When will it be ready, do you think?'

They were standing by the fireplace, and never, he thought, had she looked so pretty, so charming, so affectionate. A shade of anxiety crossed his face. 'My darling,' he said, 'we've been very happy here, haven't we?'

'Yes, of course we have—at least I have. Who could help being happy with such a husband?'

'Well, then, my love, we'll go on being happy, in the same dear little nest.'

A sharp, hard note came suddenly into her voice. 'What do you mean, Walter?'

Not without an obvious effort, he plunged into volubility. 'I'm so glad you like that ring,' he began. 'I daren't tell you what it cost, but it was cheap if it gives you pleasure. We've both of us been clever. You know Richards—my old school crony. Well, it's the strangest thing in the world. I met him a day or two ago, and found that he was after this very house at Wembley—quite mad on it, in fact. As soon as I'd signed Kittridge's agreement I went to see him, and he offered me eighteen hundred pounds for my bargain. Three hundred pounds profit within ten minutes! That's good business, isn't it? He's a solicitor, you know, so it was soon put down in black and white, and signed. Then Rouse called about the renewal of the lease of this house, and I actually beat him down from eighty pounds to seventy-eight. Just fancy—three agreements in one day, three hundred pounds profit, and two pounds a year saved! I tell you what: you shall have a new carpet for this room—Wilton, Axminster, anything you like. Belle, Belle! What's the matter, dear? Don't look like that—don't cry—no, you really mustn't do that. Isabel, do be quiet! Remember the servants!'

The dinner-gong sounded invitingly, but high above it an angry voice rose loud and shrill, and a ring shot down, clattering and tinkling on the tiles of the hearth.

THE GREAT FAMILIES OF RUSSIA.

By A. Francis Steuart.

RUSSIA has been so long divided from Western Europe that it has never shared the same history. Indeed, until the reign of Peter the Great it scarcely did more than 'touch hands' with the West. No Russian was allowed to leave Russia unless by permission of the Tsar. Frontier and coasting trade was entirely in the hands of foreigners. Russia remained wrapped up in its traditions and customs, derived from Byzantium, and made more immutable by its isolation from the West, caused by the Tatar conquest. It was only the strong hand of Peter the Great that, after the battle of Pultava, in 1709, opened the 'window into Europe,' and allowed the light to shine through it.

The result of this isolation is that the West has up to now been absolutely ignorant of Russian history. It may know in a general way that the Tsar Ivan the Terrible sent embassies to Queen Elizabeth, and had flirtations, more or less political, with her; and it may know that after Peter the Great the autocratic Court became Germanised to a great degree; but the West has no real knowledge of the internal history of Russia. While the names Bourbon or Borgia, Douglas or Percy, convey a certain train of historical thought and possibility of traditional association, when we come to the names of historical Russian families, great though they may be, we in the West are met with abysmal ignorance about them; for we have no knowledge of their circumstances, of their origin and growth, and no *point d'appui* regarding them.

I propose, therefore, to write a few words about the greater families of Russia, showing how they began, and (sometimes) what their names—which we here regard as crackjaw and difficult—mean. It will not be a very scientific part of family history, but it may fill in a gap.

In the first place, one must point out that with the exception of princely families—and the Russian title for prince is *kniaz*—the surname is a recent introduction into Russia, as it is into Norway. It is in Russia customary to address an acquaintance only as 'John, son of John' (Ivan Ivanovitch), or 'Maria, daughter of Anthony' (Maria Antonovna), without alluding to the surname at all. A poor peasant would be perfectly respectful, polite, and within his rights if he were to address the Emperor simply as Nikolai Aleksandrovitch. This disregard of the surname has undoubtedly made it of less importance than in the West, and confined it originally to princely families.

These are very numerous in Russia. The genuineness of their titles can be vouched for by the passport of each scion, a document every Russian must have. Some are educated, some are not; some rich, many poor. Prince or princess, each must live, and so they permeate every class of society. It is interesting now to glance at their origins.

At the head of the old Russian families are without doubt those who descend from the first ancestor of the line of the old Tsars. This was Rurik, who came in 862 from 'the North'—probably from some part of Sweden, and with his brothers settled in the Slav towns of Novgorod ('new town'), Izborsk, and Belo-Ozero ('white

lake'). This Northman left a line of princely descendants. They became the old Russian princes, and grand princes, and finally Tsars of Moscow, conquering and absorbing the Tatar ordas or tribes, who had for a desolating period (1239–1480) dominated Christian Russia. The main line of the older Tsars became extinct in 1598 with the Tsar Feodor, son of Ivan the Terrible; and after a short period of wild disorder the present imperial dynasty (that of Romanov, to which we will return later) was placed on the throne by popular election in 1613, and has since been regarded by the Russians with almost a religious veneration.

But although the main line became extinct, there were, and are still, left in Russia innumerable male descendants of Rurik, all princes of ancient descent. To name but a few of these, there are the Shuiski, who gave a Tsar to Russia in Vassili V., who, elected in 1606, died a prisoner of the conquering Poles. The Princes Lobanov descend from the Princes of Rostov, and add the place-name Rostovski; the Kassatkov have a similar origin. From other lines of descent sprang the Gagarin (a great Russian name), the Kropotkin (of whom we have the author), Obolenski, Tatistchev, Repnin, Masalski, and Bariatinski princes, with many others like the Romodanovski (from Romodanov, in the government of Vladimir), Ucktomski (called from their appanage Ucktom), and Bieloselski (from *bielo*, 'white,' and *selo*, 'village'). All these descendants of Rurik still exist; but by far the most celebrated princes who sprang from him are the Dolgorouki. The name means 'long-armed,' and appears on every page of Russian history. A Dolgorouki was the first wife of the first Romanov Tsar. Another (Catharine Aleksievna) was *fiancée* of the Emperor Peter II., and with the support of her all-powerful brothers very nearly mounted the throne. Notwithstanding many eclipses, the family is still very numerous. One of its daughters, Catharine, Princess Yourievski, became second wife of the Emperor Alexander II. The descendants of Rurik, indeed, played an important rôle in Russian history. The lives of Gagarins, Dolgoroukis, and Bariatinskis alone would make a worthy book, and the deeds of the lesser known princes would fill many volumes.

Next among the families who bear the title of prince are the old houses which owe their origin—though they have been Russian for centuries—to the Lithuanian Grand Prince Gedemin (1315–40), whose descendants became either Russians or Poles, or sometimes both. Of these, the best known are the Galitzine (*galitsa*, 'a gauntlet') and the Troubetskoi (*trouba*, 'a trumpet'). The former were omnipotent under the Regent Sophia; and under Catharine II., a bastard of the Troubetskoi called Betsky (illegitmate sons of Russian princes usually halve the family name—e.g. Litzine, from Galitzine—also) was the Empress's right-hand man. The mother of Ivan the Terrible, Helena Glinska, was of a Lithuanian family as well.

Then come the Caucasian princes. There are so many of them that they are not regarded very seriously in Russia; but they have long and very exciting family histories, as they came from that debatable land which, before it became Russian, was harried alternately by Turkey and Persia. Many of their daughters were married to Moslems, and their sons made slaves. The old Tsars of Georgia are represented to some degree by the Princes Grusinki the Princes Bagration, and Prince Imeritinski; those of Mingrelia by the Princes Dadian. Of the same class are the Orbelianov, Tarakhanov, and Abachidze—all Georgians; but the Agroutinski-Dolgorouki were Princes in Armenia.

The next section of princes are more revered in Russia than one might suppose they would be from their history; for they are the descendants of the Khans of the Tatar hordes who enslaved Russia for two centuries. A Russian landowner explained the reason of this to me. 'The Khan,' he said, 'was, you see, almost a Tsar'—i.e. a sovereign prince. The origin of some of the names of their princes is curious. The Youssoupov and Ourosov descend from one 'Ouruss Khan;' the Princes Kotchoubey, from an ancestor, 'Kotchou-Bey.' The family of Kolokoltsov (*kolokol*, 'a bell') are akin to the Tsar Boris Godounov (1598–1605), who was of Tatar origin. Many more princely families began with Tatar Mourzas (Persian *mirza*, 'a noble'), who, from being Moslems, became Christians, and were adopted at once into the great Russian nation, which is very receptive.

We see this when we have now to enumerate the 'foreigners,' many of whom became Russians in very early days, mostly in the heyday of the supremacy of Novgorod the Great, which yielded to Moscow (Ivan III.) in 1478. It would be a brave man who would be definite as to the countries of which they were natives. No Russian will consent just now to his being of German origin; but it would not be historically wrong to say that most of the early immigrants came (perforce) 'through Germany.' Among these were the present imperial race of Romanov; the Cheremetiev (who boast they are akin to the Romanov), so famous in Russian history; the Pouchkin, from whom the poet sprang, whose name (from *pouchka*, 'a cannon') shows that they helped to introduce firearms into Russia. The Morosov and Saltikov were once 'foreign' also. More distinctly Germanised were the Livonian family of the Princes Lieven, who originally were feudatory to the Bishops of Riga in the thirteenth century.

Then we come to those families who have

risen through Court favour, and it is difficult to name even the most typical; for it is not easy to think that the families of Stroganoff and Demidoff, which assisted in the conquest of Siberia and the success of Peter the Great, and yet remained for long untitled, or the Tolstoi (the word means 'thick'), one of whom was made a count by that Emperor, are not just as interesting as that of his favourite, Prince Menchikov, who was originally, *on dit*, a pie-man. Among the native 'Court families' one must reckon all the kin of the Tsaritsas, who were, until the time of Peter I., chosen in the Byzantine ceremony, 'the choice of brides,' by the Tsars themselves. These included the Narichkine (Nathalia, mother of Peter I., was of this house), Saltykov, Apraxine, and Lopoukhine families. All these rose with their foundress, and at once took their place at Court. No Russian subject has, however, been made Empress since Peter I.'s second wife, Catharine I., who was born a Livonian serf. Her kinsfolk later shone at Court as the Counts Skavronski; while the Shouvalov and Razoumovski families owed their rise to the favouritism of her daughter, the Empress Elizabeth. The Princes Orlov (from *orel*, 'an eagle'), Prince Patromkine, Mamonov, and Zubov were favourites of Catharine II. The Voronzov (*vorona*, 'a crow') were great in diplomacy in her time also. The Counts Bobrinski owe their origin to her reign, the Empress herself bestowing on the first of the family the variant of her own arms—those of Auhalt-Zerbst! Nor must we forget the courtier families of foreign origin—the Counts Bruce, Scottish; Prince Ostermann, Westphalian; Bühren, Duke of Courland, originally a Courland outrider; Count Adlerberg, Swedish; the Counts Benckendorff—famous in diplomacy—from the Baltic provinces; the Princes Kantemir and Stourdza, from Moldavia; the Ribeaupierre, from France; and Prince Barclay de Tolly—the successful opponent of Napoleon—of Scottish descent.

We have now come, *via* the courtly families, to the Court itself. But, first, on its fringe, we find a host of morganatic scions of the imperial race, made so by the introduction of the German rule of 'equal birth,' which was originally quite foreign to Russia. There are many of these; but now genuine alliances have been effected between daughters of the imperial house and the old Russian princely families; so we may hope that the end of the German doctrine of *ebenbürtigkeit* is in sight in Russia.

The imperial house of Russia must be our last theme. It has a great history, which is worthy of careful study and research. As we have seen, the Tsars of the old house of Russia became extinct in 1598. A terrible period for Russia followed—elected princes, pretenders, the Polish invasion, and hideous anarchy. This 'Time of the Troubles,' as it is appropriately called in Russian history, did not cease until peace came with the election of a new Tsar from a new royal house in 1613. This Tsar was the young Michael I., of the house of Romanov. He had the good fortune to be the son of a popular hero, the Patriarch Philarete, whose sister had been the first wife of the Tsar Ivan the Terrible of the older dynasty. All this made for success. Had he not been elected, King James I. of England and VI. of Scotland dreamed for a moment of possessing the Tsarate. He thought of throwing troops into Archangel, where the British sphere of influence lay, and gaining over the friendly Russians, who feared the spread of Polish domination. He was too late. The popular young Tsar had been elected when his ambassadors arrived, and since then Russia has been under the autocratic sway of the Romanov dynasty.

The grandson of Tsar Michael was Peter the Great, the first Russian Emperor to seek close alliance with the West of Europe, and to force Western learning on Russia. With his grandson, Peter II., the male line failed. His half-sister, however, had married the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, and had a son, the Emperor Peter III., who, by his wife, the masterful Catharine II., who deposed him, and became Empress in his stead, was ancestor to the present Emperor. The Romanov have done much for Russia in the last few generations. Perhaps the greatest act was the liberation of the serfs (made serfs, *circa* 1590, by the Regent Boris Godounov) by the Emperor Alexander II. in 1861. The next in magnitude has certainly been the almost revolutionary establishment in 1906 of the Parliament, or Duma, by the present Emperor, hitherto the Autocrat of Russia. It is this act that has changed the whole outlook of Russian history, and separated the future from what has gone before.

PEACE.

DARK lies the night, and fierce the wind
  Sweeps through the trees, with creaking boughs;
The angry seas, as though confined,
  The silence of the shores arouse.

Shall tempests always shake the woods?
  And shall the ocean endless roar?
In nature there are various moods,
  And rest returneth as before.

The tree shall hang her fluttering leaves,
  The murmuring wavelets gently play,
The night her character retrieves,
  And silence holds her ancient sway.

Old nature, steadfast through the years,
  Is not for ever rudely stirred.
And, though I live with present fears,
  Peace comes at the great Peacemaker's word.

C. H. B.-L.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

IT is the regret of some of the community that they will never know with complete certainty what others think of them, to what point of human value they have attained in the general estimation as the result of their effort in life. Some are indifferent; they do not care. They may be ruthless and callous; they have an object to achieve, and they force their way regardless of opinion, either for their present satisfaction or in the belief that posterity will justify them if they are engaged in any matter with which posterity may be concerned. Such are regarded as strong characters. But with others there is hopeless curiosity, or it may even be anxiety, to know the average judgment of their fellows on them. This longing can never be satisfied. To inquire, ever so discreetly, is but to provoke flattery or resentment, and in either case insincerity. The proffered praises and the spiteful condemnations are alike valueless, and one sees so much individual prejudice at work that the truth appears undiscoverable. In every individual opinion there is necessarily prejudice; absolute impartiality is a state of perfection in judgment that it is impossible to attain with human nature and society as we know them. If it were achieved, then individualism, variety of view, and many other valuable attributes of society would vanish. A few persons of consequence have had the rare advantage, through journalistic mishaps, of reading the story of their lives in the form of premature obituary notices; fortunate among mortals, it is maintained, they have enjoyed a little of that rare fruit of sincerity which ripens only when they who covet it are gone. But in this matter are the dead so fortunate? That most universal human fault of insincerity is still at exercise, and the smug maxim that of those who have just departed only what is good should be said and written makes for the glossing over of faults, the furbishing up of the slenderest virtues. Still, this is a kindly practice. So it may be better to train conscience to safe criticism and look within for the real judgments, assured that in a world in which self-interest and expediency, influence and tact, are among the principles of practical conduct, candour is rare, and often ill-balanced when produced. None the less we should like to see ourselves as others see us, as Robert Burns, with his sure perception of our nature, declared; and for more than two years past Britain in the mass has wished to know of herself as never before. Sure in her might and right, she may have affected a certain indifference to the views of other nations upon her case and conduct. It has been interesting to read the fulminations of our enemies. How they have raged! Their most terrifying threats! They have formed our lighter reading in the most unpleasant days of this last departing war winter. The comments of the neutrals, who for the most part are our friends, have been of peculiar interest to us, because here we approach not, indeed, close to absolute impartiality, and therefore perfect judgment, but as near to it as we may reach in the difficult circumstances which exist. If we say that these neutrals are our friends, it does not follow that their views upon us are necessarily over-kind. Nations, after all, are but human beings in the mass, with all the peculiarities and the weaknesses of the individual. Our friends are not always generous to our faults, and they have exceptional opportunities for discovering them. Such friends sometimes feel jealousies that others do not; there is a mine of truth in the declaration that much of mankind feels the better for the misfortunes of its friends. With this set-off against any predisposition in our favour on the part of such friends, we may come not far from the truth on reading what the neutrals say of us.

* * *

In any case, Britain is obviously more interested now than ever before in the views expressed by other states upon her through their Press. For the lighter fare, and to know of the wrath that our enemies would pour upon us, we turn to the fiery judgments of the *Kölnische Zeitung*, the *Berliner Tageblatt*, the *Vossische Zeitung*, and the others in unhappy Germany. We were more interested sometimes in seeing what Maximilian Harden, that fierce patriot, had to say in the *Zukunft*, but these quotations have ceased of late, and it is easy to guess the reason why. Harden is a German, loves Germany, yearns for her victory; but, if often misguided, he is a man of keen perceptions and judg-

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ments, and for long past he has been blind neither to the dangers nor to the probabilities of the German situation. Almost the last of his comments that came to us was that if Germany had to go down, she would take Europe down with her. He snapped with the greed of a man mad with peace hunger at the chance he thought he saw in the recent talk of a Peace League, when Lord Grey expounded his sympathy for this scheme. Poor Harden fancied he could see the British leaders and the German very close together in their ideals and objects. Since then little has been heard of him. In her long and arduous work of reconstruction, painful with memories of what seems now almost like a part of paradise thrown away, Germany will need the assistance of men like this who have tried to tell the truth, and loved their country all the more. We have come to know the different shades of meaning in the comments of some of these distracted German newspapers, as they reach us through Amsterdam and Copenhagen. Journals of which most of our people had never heard before have acquired for them life and an individuality. Now all know *Il Secolo* of Milan, and the *Corriere d'Italia*, which express themselves with confidence and determination, but often with more restraint, with less of the thrilling cry that is shouted up from Paris. Here are different shades of the Latin temperament. Through these Italian papers, also, you come to realise that Rome is in some senses by no means the most important place in Italy. Certainly the war is teaching geography to the world. The ignorance of the world's inhabitants regarding the earth on which they live is among the strangest phenomena of the human race. This ignorance, doubtless, was cultivated by the appalling system whereby it was sought to inject dry masses of meaningless, concentrated, semi-geographical stuff into the minds of school children. No study was more badly conducted, none carried through in such a way as to stifle curiosity, interest, and imagination in the minds of the young students as this one of geography, the facts of the world to which these young lives advance, and the shaping of which is to be given to them. During the war the people of the world have begun to learn geography better, and they find it intensely interesting. They are coming to understand now. They are daily reading bits from the foreign papers. It has been of special pleasure to read the fine phrases of ringing hope that Marcel Hutin sets down in the *Echo de Paris*, that brilliant little journal whose offices are in the heart of Paris, and whose sign is noticed by the strangers who in peace-time wander through the Place de l'Opéra. For careful expression, noble determination, superb dignity, we turn to *Le Temps*, in some ways the most soulful of the great newspapers of the world. Our people know all these papers now, though they have not seen them. And, in like manner, they know and understand, and properly appraise, the comments that come from across the Atlantic. They know the difference between the *Herald* of Mr Gordon Bennett and the *American* of Mr Hearst; the high value of the *World* and the *Tribune;* the dignity, sincerity, and truth of the *New York Times*. Never in history before has editorial comment in foreign newspapers had such a value placed upon it as now. The world needs it, for in the main it tells of the feelings of nations, of the great masses of people who may or may not be politicians, better even than the statesmen often express them. Certainly it is one of the curious results of the war that even when restrictions are placed upon the Press as not for ages past, the leading article, the expression of opinion, which before the trouble began was said to have ceased to matter and to be useless, has had its importance exalted to the uttermost. It has now not only a local but a great international value. It has obtained a unique position as spokesman for its readers. It makes people think, it guides their thoughts, it challenges them upon their views, and it brings nations to know one another. It is right and proper, then, that at this time, when nations are so much upon their trial, and when each, according to its light, is endeavouring to shape the great change of the world, there should be this curiosity about what others think of us. It may make no difference; we may continue uninfluenced by adverse criticism or praise; but there is some satisfaction in the knowledge.

* * *

Whatever their sincerity, the impartiality of few of the journals that have been named is beyond question. The individual and national point of view, the difference in temperament and understanding, the personal equation, make their inevitable prejudices despite all efforts towards honesty. We have heard much of 'material interests' in this war. It is an ugly phrase; it makes a sadly disturbing consideration at times like this, when ideals are so much the thing; but we live in the world, after all, and there is much imperfection here. And the 'material interests' of the nations whose views we consider as they are given to us are very great, and affect their judgments in spite of themselves. In recent times the opinions of another neutral have come to be much considered and commented upon in this country; a vogue for them is being established—the views of Spain. There are violent differences of opinion in the Peninsula, but there is no doubt about the complexions of those who take part in the presentation, no ambiguities, no inconsistencies. There are such great newspapers as *La Epoca*, *La Correspondencia de España*, *El Liberal*, *El Imparcial*, and others on the side of right; and, again, there are such as *El Correo*

Español (in the control of the Jaimista party, but disowned by its chief leader, Don Jaime, himself), which is perhaps the most violent pro-German newspaper in the world outside the preserves of the Central Powers. So with *La Tribuna* and some others, the influence of which, even in Spain itself, is comparatively small. *El Liberal*, a very bright and vigorous newspaper printed and published not only in Madrid, but, by a multiple system with which we in England are familar, in Barcelona, Bilbao, Murcia, and Seville also, is, on the other hand, influential, and at the same time one of the most discriminating and vigorous supporters of the Allies outside the Allies' own territory. The Spanish Press in general has a far higher moral, spiritual, and literary value than most people in our country imagine. Its value, indeed, in this respect is very high, and is scarcely lower than that of the Press of any other country except France. It is the fact that if Spain has much to learn from us in the value of advertisements and other business matters with which newspapers are concerned, there is much that we might learn from the Spanish journals in the character and value of their contents. I write as one familiar with this subject. Enormously as Spain is affected by this war, distracted as she has almost been in her efforts to preserve her neutrality, material interests, as we say, seem somehow to have counted for something less in Spain than in other countries. Perhaps it is because life is taken there a little less strenuously, more carelessly, than in some other countries; but it is certainly a reasonable suggestion for contemplation that where there are smaller and fewer material interests, there may be more impartiality and sincerity. There is much sympathy between Spain and Great Britain, many excellent reasons why we should understand each other well. There are bonds in our history, in our literature, in our aims and objects, our attitude towards civilisation, and in our forms of government. It may not generally be realised that in no other country, perhaps, is the system of government so like our own as in Spain. The monarchy there is not so limited; it is more of a personal force; but the Spanish Cortes has much that is like the Mother of Parliaments at Westminster, and if our readers of newspapers were some day, with a knowledge of Castilian, to pick up a morning newspaper of Madrid and read the reports of the previous day's proceedings in the upper and lower chambers, they might wonder what mimicry and plagiarism was this, who from the shadow of Big Ben had been playing the part of professor to the parliamentarians of the Peninsula—the more so because a frequent subject of debate in the Cortes is that vexed question of Catalonia, which is a veritable 'Ireland' of Spain, ever yearning and clamouring for its independence. For all such and other reasons we do well to look at these opinions that come from Spain, from *El Liberal*, from *La Epoca* (which is a Conservative journal), from *La Correspondencia de España*, from *El Imparcial*, from the *Diario Universal*, another Liberal journal closely attached to the Premier, and others. It is of value and importance to know what the good minds of Spain think of Britain now, and with the conviction that if there is human sympathy made from bonds with France and the interest in civilisation and true culture, there is yet no undue prejudice in our favour. There is this always for the Spaniard as not for some northern tribes, that above all he is, and has been for many hundreds of years, a splendid gentleman, a man of immaculate honour, of infinite perceptions and sympathies, of a courtesy and dignity that have never been excelled. The views of this gentleman, then, are of consequence to us.

* * *

They have lately been presented in his own country in a peculiarly interesting form. I wish that British readers had had the opportunity of reading the fine statements recently laid before the readers of Spanish newspapers concerning the effort of Britain. They would have found this reading more exhilarating, more provocative of thought, and more inspiring to determination, finer still than the opinions of any other foreign countries that I have had the chance of considering since the war began. Nearly a year ago the British Government, knowing what it was doing at the time, gave a cordial invitation to three of the most distinguished Spanish journalists to come over here and see what was being done, see everything that it was possible to show them, with practically no reservations. The invitation was accepted, and the three who came were the Marqués de Valdeiglesias, editor of *La Epoca;* Señor Don Gomez Carrillo of *El Liberal;* and Señor Don Fabian Vidal of *La Correspondencia de España.* They had had some interesting experiences on the French front, and before they crossed to England they wandered among the British lines, deeply impressed with what they saw. In England they were taken about to see the munition-works and much else; and then they went home to tell Spain of the things they had wondered at, and what their thoughts and conclusions were. I have read these impressions as they have appeared in the newspapers. Señor Don Gomez Carrillo, who by this time is editor of his paper, is a writer of much distinction and fine sympathies; perhaps there is no neutral anywhere who has written with finer fervour and more knowledge of the cause of the Allies than he has done. That is because he is a man of high intellect and training, of great ideals and experience, and of a warm and subtle temperament. He lived for long in intellectual Paris, and there his best principles were formed.

He contains within him an abounding love for France. And yet his horizon is not bounded by the Bay of Biscay or the Mediterranean Sea or any local landmarks. He knows the world. He was shipwrecked many years ago off the coast of Colombia. A famous poet was then his companion, and on the deck of the steamship, under the tropical moon, the poet recited to him his famous Nocturnes. Señor Carrillo listened then to some gloomy forebodings of his friend, and, being an optimist himself, turned in, as he says, with his illusions—to be awakened some hours later with the water up to his waist, and the sailors declaring that nobody and nothing could save them. Nevertheless twenty hours later he and the poet Silva were picked up by a Spanish sailing-vessel. When they found themselves on solid earth again, the poet, having seen his friend smile his way through the exciting drama, remarked, 'Decidedly, optimism is as incurable as pessimism!' and Carrillo answered him, 'And much less inconvenient.' To his outlook on life, and especially his outlook on the war, he brings this optimism which is a belief in the powers of good, in the inevitable victory and glory of the Allies, in the future happiness and progress of the world. So he believes very much in France and Britain, loves them; and this gentle Spaniard with his graceful pen, writer of some beautiful novels, has set down in his own Castilian in Madrid his feelings on this struggle as he has considered it from the western side.

* * *

He says that the thing that interested him most in the whole of his expedition was the English psychology. In that he is not alone among foreign gentlemen who have visited us, and who cannot completely understand, even with many explanations, the marvellous British imperturbability, and the uniformity of it. He said that when he was here officers told him that in order to understand our present life and condition, it was necessary to know the depths of our national spirit; 'and afterwards,' continues Carrillo, 'with the perpetual contradiction of everything belonging to this race, they add, "But such a thing is almost impossible."' In this he thinks they may not be mistaken, since, as he says, even Kipling himself confessed that it is not easy to fathom the secret of our mentality and sensibility. He says that the English try to hide their moral detachment, which does not exist in such a high degree in any other people, under a mask of formality and silence; that if one looks casually upon England, it will seem that every man is shaved in much the same way, that all hold the same kind of silence, that they wear the same kind of dress, and all take tea at a particular time. Even, he adds, their homes are the same, and the man who asserted that in Great Britain there is only one house reproduced in millions of copies was not far wrong. This may be called instinctive discipline or the spirit of routine; it matters little. The British monotony, he says, is a fact. He gained from some of the writings of Mr Galsworthy the best key that he could find to the mysteries of the British temperament, the enigmas that puzzle the Latin peoples, and even the Germans also, in this war. The nation seemed to him to refer with a certain pride to its own slowness; he heard our soldiers speaking with disdainful lack of interest of their own deeds; it seemed astonishing to hear them sometimes replying to German hatred with a kind of flattering gallantry; and it was sometimes hard to realise that it is not a Colonial campaign, but a duel to the death over which the free citizen of peaceful Albion is still rubbing his eyes. If one feels disconcerted sometimes at the humorous tone of some of the great writers of London, one should not lose sight of the fact, says Carrillo, that even in tragedy this nation needs something that sounds like a joke.

* * *

It really all comes to this, that stolidity and the phlegmatic manner are things that are largely unknown to the Latins with all their fire, their verve, their flashing spirits, and their excitability, and they can hardly be understood or appreciated by them. To be outwardly calm, almost indifferent—but not so inwardly—to the greatest crisis the world has ever known seems an impossible thing; to be so cool and methodical, so unflurried and quietly confident, appears amazing. The war seems, as it were, to be taken in the day's work. And so to some considerable extent it is. Notwithstanding all this vast upheaval, this new organisation of the nation, the disturbance of all the people and most of their doings, there has been singularly little change in some appearances of things, if you come to reflect upon it. If you ride down Cheapside on the top of an omnibus, past the Bow Bells whose chimes Dick Whittington heard, it seems much as it was before the war, and the war before it. There are many men in khaki about; keen observers would discover that the young girl—the 'flapper' and her senior of some few years—is more in evidence than ever before, and is mostly doing something in a sprightly way; and that a girl, indeed, comes to demand the penny fare. But, for the rest, appearances have not much changed even now as the supreme moment of the crisis comes quickly on, and Gomez Carrillo is right. We are not an ordinary people, and we must be truly an enigma to the Latins. But in the end we win.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XVI.—OF THE FIRST AND SECOND PERSONS SINGULAR NUMBER.

IT was Saturday morning, and Hermione was making a pie and looking uncommonly handsome about it, and altogether feminine and adorable; at least, so Ravenslee thought as he watched her bending above the pastry-board, her round white arms bared to each dimpled elbow, and with the rebellious curl wantoning at her temple as usual.

'But why kidneys, my dear?' demanded Mrs Trapes, glancing up from the potatoes she was peeling. 'Kidneys is rose again; kidneys is always risin', it seems to me. If you must have pie, why not good plain beefsteak? It 's jest as fillin', an' cheaper, my dear—so why an' wherefore kidneys?'

'Arthur likes them, and he 'll be hungry when he comes in.'

'Hungry!' snorted Mrs Trapes. 'That b'y 's been hungry ever since he drawed the breath o' life. How 's he gettin' on with his new job?'

'Oh, splendidly,' cried Hermione, flushing with sisterly pride; 'they 've promised him a rise next month.'

'What! already?' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, cutting viciously into a potato. 'If he don't watch out they 'll be makin' him a partner next.'

'Oh, Ann, I wish you were not quite so—so hard on him,' sighed Hermione; 'remember, he 's only a boy.'

'You were a woman at his age, earnin' enough t' keep ye both. But there, I don't mean t' be hard, Hermy. Anyway, a man 's never much good till he 's growed up, an' then only because some woman teaches him how t' be.'

'What do you say to that, Mr Geoffrey?' inquired Hermione, pausing, flour-dredger in hand, to glance at him slyly under her brows.

'I think Mrs Trapes is a wonderful woman,' he answered.

'Ah now, Mr Geoffrey, quit yer jollyin',' said Mrs Trapes, smiling at the potato.

'Mrs Trapes has taught me much wisdom already, and, among other things, that I shall never be or do anything worth while without the aid of a woman.'

'Lord, Mr Geoffrey! I never remember sayin' no sich thing.'

'Not in so many words perhaps, but you implied it, Mrs Trapes.'

'H'm!' said Mrs Trapes dubiously.

'Consequently, I mean to ask that woman—on the very first opportunity, Miss Hermione.'

Seeing that Hermione was silent, all her attention being centred in the dough her white fists were kneading, Mrs Trapes spoke instead: 'D' ye mean as you want some one t' look 'after you—to sew an' cook an' wash an' sew buttons on for ye? I know the sort.'

'I certainly do, and'——

'Ah, it 's a slave you want, Mr Geoffrey, an' pea-nut men don't have slaves—not unless they marries 'em, an' a woman as would marry a pea-nut man has only herself t' blame—pea-nuts!'

Hermione laughed, reached for the rolling-pin, and immediately fell to work with it, her head stooped rather lower than was necessary. As for Ravenslee, he lounged in his chair, watching the play of those round, white arms.

'But why the kidneys, Hermy? You 've got to cut out luxuries now, my dear—we all have. I guess it 'll be dry bread next, I reckon.'

'Why so?' inquired Ravenslee lazily.

'Why?' cried Mrs Trapes bitterly. 'I 'll tell you why; because me an' Hermy an' every one else is bein' squeezed dry t' fill the pockets o' a thing as calls itself a man—a thievin' beast on two legs as is suckin' our blood, gnawin' our flesh, grindin' the life out o' us—a great fat man as is treadin' us down under his big boots, down an' down to slavery—death—an' worse—it 's such men as him as keeps the flames o' hell goin'—fat frizzles well, an' so will Mulligan, I hope.'

'Mulligan?' inquired Ravenslee.

'He 's raised the rents on us, Mr Geoffrey,' sighed Hermione.

'Raised the rents?' said Ravenslee, forgetting to lounge.

'Sure!' nodded Mrs Trapes grimly. 'I guess he thinks we live too easy an' luxoorious, so he 's boosted it up a dollar per. A dollar a week don't sound a whole lot p'r'aps, but it sure takes some gettin'; folks expect a deal o' scrubbin' an' sewin' an' slavin' for a dollar—yes, sir.'

'We shall just have to work a little harder, that 's all, Ann dear.'

'Harder? I guess you work hard enough for two; an' who gets the benefit? Why, Mulligan does. Oh, it 's a great comfort t' remember the flames o' hell sometimes. Lord, when I think how we have t' slave t' make enough t' live!'

'There are others worse than us, Ann.'

'Why, yes, there 's poor Mrs Finlay—she 's got to go, an' her husband paralysed! There 's little Mrs Bowker sewed herself pretty well blind t' keep her home together—she's got to go. There 's Mrs Sims with all those children, and the—— But there, who cares for the likes o' them; who cares—eh, Mr Geoffrey? An' what might you be dreamin' over this time?' she inquired, eyeing Ravenslee's long figure a little contemptuously, for he had fallen to lounging again, sleepy eyes half-closed.

'I was thinking what a lot of interest we might find in this busy world—if we would only take the trouble to look for it!' he answered. 'The fool who complains that his life is empty is blind and deaf and—damnably thick—er—pardon me, I—er—nearly got excited.'

'Excited!' snorted Mrs Trapes. 'I'd pay good money t' see you like that!'

'You see, I had an idea—a rather original idea.'

'Then take care of it, Mr Geoffrey, nurse it careful, an' we'll have ye doin' bigger things than push a pea-nut barrer—pea-nuts!'

'Mrs Trapes, I've got a strangle-hold on that idea, for it is rather brilliant.'

'There's that kettle b'ilin' at last, thank goodness!' sighed Mrs Trapes, crossing to the stove. 'Tea's a luxury, I suppose; but—oh, drat Mulligan, anyway!'

So Mrs Trapes brewed the tea, while Ravenslee gazed at Hermione again, at her shapely arms, her dimpled elbows, her preoccupied face—a face so serenely, so utterly unaware of his regard of course, until he chanced to look away, and then Hermione stole a glance at him.

'There, my dear,' said Mrs Trapes after a while, 'there's a cup o' tea as *is* a cup o' tea, brewed jest on the b'il, in a hot pot, an' drawed to perfection. Set right down an' drink it, slow an' deliberate. Tea ain't meant to be swallowed down careless like a man does his beer! An' why,' demanded Mrs Trapes, as they sipped the fragrant beverage, all three—'why ain't you out with your precious—pea-nuts, Mr Geoffrey?'

Ravenslee set down his cup and turned to Hermione. 'Mrs Trapes has told you, I think, that I am become—er—an itinerant vender of the ubiquitous pea-nut.'

'Mr Geoffrey!' gasped Mrs Trapes, gulping a mouthful of hot tea and blinking; 'I never did! Never in all my days would I allow myself such expressions. Mr Geoffrey, I'm ashamed at you! An' that reminds me—it was chicken fricassee, wasn't it? For your supper, I mean?'

'I believe it was.'

'Then,' said Mrs Trapes, rising, 'I'll go an' buy it. Was you wantin' anything fetched, Hermy?'

'If you wouldn't mind, bring a bunch of asparagus.'

'Sparrergrass!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes in horror-struck tones. 'Why, it's anywhere from thirty to sixty cents.'

'But Arthur loves it, dear; and now that he's working so hard'——

'Arthur likes!' cried Mrs Trapes indignantly. 'Mr Geoffrey, it's been Arthur ever since he was born, an' her scrinchin' an' pinchin' herself for the sake o' that b'y. O' course he likes sparrergrass—so do I; but I make shift with pertatoes or cabbidge or carrots—an' so should he. Come now, Hermy, you take a bunch o' carrots instead; carrots is healthy an' cheap! Come now, is that sparrergrass to be carrots or not?'

'Ann, that asparagus is to be—asparagus!'

'Such wicked extravagance, an' all for that b'y! Hermy, I'm surprised at ye!'

For a long moment after Mrs Trapes had departed there was silence, while Ravenslee sat gazing where Hermione stood busy at her pastry again.

'Mr Geoffrey,' said she at last, 'I want to thank you for watching over my boy. Arthur told me how good you were to him while I was away. I want you to know how grateful I am.'

'What beautiful hands you have, Hermione! And I shall dream of your arms.'

'My arms?' she repeated, staring.

'They're so—smooth and white.'

'Oh, that's flour!' said she, bending over the table again.

'And so—round.'

'Oh, Mr Geoffrey! Can't you find something else to talk about?'

'Why, of course,' he answered, 'there are your feet, so slender and shapely.'

'In these frightful old shoes!' she added.

'Worn out mostly in other people's service,' he nodded. 'God bless them!'

'They let the wet in horribly when it rains!' she sighed.

'So Heaven send us dry weather! Then there is your wonderful hair,' he continued, 'so long and soft and'——

'And all bunched up anyhow!' said she, touching the heavy, shining braids with tentative fingers. 'Please don't say any more, Mr Geoffrey, because I just know I look a sight—I feel it! And in this old gown too—it's the one I keep to scrub the floors in.'

'Scrub the floors?' he repeated.

'Why, of course, floors must be scrubbed, and I've had plenty—oh, plenty of experience. Now what are you thinking?'

'That a great many women might envy you that gown for the beauty that goes with it. You are very beautiful, you know, Hermione.'

'And beauty in a woman is—everything, isn't it?' she said a little bitterly and with head suddenly averted.

'Have I offended you?'

'No,' she answered without looking round; 'only, sometimes you are so very—personal.'

'Because the First and Second Persons Singular Number are the most interesting persons in the world; and, Hermione, in all this big world there is only one person I want. Could you ever learn to love a pea-nut man?'

'That would all depend—on the pea-nut man,' she answered softly, 'and you—you don't talk or act a little bit like a real pea-nut man.'

'Well, could you stoop to love this pea-nut man just as he is, with all his faults and failings—

love him enough to trust yourself to his keeping, to follow him into the unknown, to help him find that Beautiful City of Perhaps—could you, Hermione?' As he ended he rose to his feet, but swiftly, dexterously, she eluded him.

'Wait!' she pleaded, facing him across the table; 'I—I want to talk to you—to ask you some questions, and I want you to be serious, please.'

'Solemn as sixty judges!' he nodded.

'Well, first, Mr Geoffrey—why do you pretend to sell pea-nuts?'

'Pretend!' he repeated, trying to sound aggrieved.

'Oh, I'm not blind, Mr Geoffrey.'

'No, indeed—I think your eyes are the most beau'——

'Oh, please, please be serious!'

'As a dozen owls!'

'I—I know,' she went on quickly—'I'm sure you haven't always had to live in such—such places as Mulligan's; I know you don't belong here as I do. Is it necessity that has driven you to live here, or only—curiosity?'

'Well—er—perhaps a little of both,' he admitted.

'Then you're not obliged to sell pea-nuts for a living?'

'"Obliged" is scarcely the word, perhaps; let us call it a pea-nut penchant, a hobby, a'——

'You are not quite so—poverty-stricken as you pretend?' Her voice was very soft and gentle, but she kept her head averted; also her foot was tapping nervously in its worn shoe.

'Oh, as to money,' he answered, 'I have enough for my simple needs, but in every other sense I am a miserable pauper. You see, there are some things no money can buy, and they are generally the best things of life.'

'And so,' she said, interrupting him gently, 'you come here to Mulligan's, you deceive every one into thinking you are very poor, you make a pretence of selling pea-nuts, and push a barrow through the streets—why?'

'First, because pushing a barrow is—er—very healthy exercise.'

'Yes, Mr Geoffrey?' she said in the same soft voice.

'And, second,' he continued, wishing he could see her face—'second, because I find it—er, well—highly amusing.'

'Amusing!' she cried, turning suddenly, her eyes very bright and her cheeks hot and anger-flushed. 'Amusing!' she repeated. 'Ah, yes—that's just it—it's all only a joke to you, to be done with when it grows tiresome; but my life here—our life—is very real—ah, terribly real, and has been sordid sometimes. What is only sport to you for a little while is deadly earnest to me. You are only playing at poverty, but I must live it.'

'And, thirdly,' he continued gently, 'because I love you, Hermione!'

'Love me!' she repeated, shaking her head. 'Ah, no, no—your world is not my world, nor ever could be.'

'Why, then, your world shall be mine.'

'Yes, but for how long?' she demanded feverishly. 'I wonder how long you could endure this world of mine? I have had to work and slave all my life; but you—look at your hands, so white and well-cared-for—yours are not the hands of a worker!'

'No, I'm afraid they're not!' he admitted, a little ruefully.

'Now look at mine—see, my fingers all roughened by my needle.'

'Such busy, capable hands!' said he, drawing a pace nearer—'hands always working for others, so strong to help the distressed. I love and honour them the more just because of those work-roughened fingers.' As he spoke he reached out very suddenly, and, clasping these slender hands, stooped and kissed them reverently. Now glancing up, he beheld her red lips all a-quiver, while her eyes were suffused all at once, as, drooping her head, she strove to loose his hold.

'Let me go! she whispered. 'I—I—ah, let me go!'

'Hermione,' he breathed, 'oh, Hermione, how beautiful you are!'

But at this she cried out almost as if he had struck her, and, wrenching her hands free, covered her face. 'Oh God! are all men the same?'

'Hermione,' he stammered—'Hermione—what do you mean?'

'I mean,' she answered, proud head upflung, 'there were always plenty of men to tell me that—when I was an office scrub-woman. Well,' she demanded fiercely, stung by something in his look, 'what did you think I'd been? When a girl is left alone with a baby brother to care for, she can't wait and pick and choose work that is nice and lady-like; she must take what comes along, or starve—so I worked. I used to scrub floors and stairs in an office building—I was very young then, and Arthur hardly more than a baby, and it was either that or starvation, or'—— She flushed painfully, but her blue eyes met his regard unflinchingly. 'Anyway, I preferred to be a scrub-woman. So now you know what I mean by your world not being my world, and I—I guess you see how impossible it all is?'

For a long moment was a silence, wherein she stood turned from him, her trembling fingers busily folding and refolding a pleat in her apron, while he stared down blindly at the floor.

'So you preferred the slavery of scrubbing floors, did you, Hermione?' he said at last.

'Of course!' she answered, without turning or lifting her heavy head.

'And that,' said he, his voice as placid, as

serenely unhurried, as usual—'and that is just why all things are going to be possible to us; yes, even turning my wasted years to profit. Oh, my Hermione, help me to be worthy of you—teach me what a glorious thing life may be'——

'I?' she said wonderingly, her drooping head still averted. 'But I am'——

'Just the one woman I want to be my own for ever and always, more—far more than I have ever wanted anything in my life.'

'But,' she whispered, 'I am only'——

'The best, the noblest I have ever known.'

'But a—scrub-woman!'

'With dimples in her elbows, Hermione!' In one stride he was beside her; and she, because of his light tone, must turn at last to glance up at him half-fearfully; but those gray eyes were grave and reverent, the hands stretched out to her were strangely unsteady, and when he spoke again his voice was placid no longer.

'Dear,' he said, leaning toward her, 'from the very first I've been dying to have you in my arms; but now I—I dare not touch you unless you will it so. Ah, don't—don't turn from me; let me have my answer; look up, Hermione!'

Slowly she obeyed, and now, beholding the shy languor of her eyes, the sweet hurry of her breathing, and all the sighing, trembling loveliness of her, he set his arms about her, drawing her close, and she, yielding to those compelling arms, gave herself to the passion of his embrace. And so he kissed her, her warm, soft, quivering mouth, her eyes, her silken hair, until she sighed and struggled in his clasp.

'My hair,' she whispered—'see, it's all coming down!'

'Well, let it. I'd love to see it so, Hermione.'

'Should you? Why, then, let me go,' she pleaded.

Reluctantly he loosed her; and she, standing well beyond his reach, shook her shapely head, and down, down fell the heavy coils, past shoulder and waist and hip, rippling in shining splendour to her knees. Then, while he gazed, spell-bound by her loveliness, she laughed a little unsteadily, and, flushing beneath his look, turned and fled from him to the door.

When he would have followed, she stayed him. 'Please,' she said, tender-voiced, 'I want to be alone; it is all so wonderful, I want to be alone, and—think.'

'I may see you again to-night, Hermione? Dear, I must.'

'Why, if you must,' she said, 'how can I—prevent you?'

Then, all at once, her cool, soft arms were about his neck, had drawn him down to meet her kiss, and—he was alone with the pastry-board, the rolling-pin, and the flour-dredger; but he saw them all through a golden glory, and when he somehow found himself out upon the dingy landing the glory was all about him still.

(*Continued on page 294.*)

THE SURFING-GROUND OF HAWAII.

By F. CARTWRIGHT.

BENEATH the volcanic cliffs of Diamond Head stands the Bay of Waikiki, where the famous surfing-ground of the Hawaiian Islands is situated. Curving gently inward from the giant headland, the bay is two miles across, and, fringed with palms and other tropical growth, provides an ideal refuge from the stress and strain of the busy city. Honolulu, the capital, is only five miles distant in a north-westerly direction. A splendid motor-road connects the two places, while the car-line service is both rapid and efficient. Many fine homes dot the shore and its vicinity, while the hotel accommodation is all that can be desired. Since the late Robert Louis Stevenson honoured Waikiki with his residence there a great expansion has taken place. Marsh-lands have been drained for building purposes, and Uncle Sam has also taken over large tracts for military uses. Fortunately the planting of fourteen-inch guns has not spoilt the beauties of Waikiki, for the necessary emplacements are well hidden, and, indeed, the uninitiated might pass within a dozen yards of these heavy batteries and yet not see them.

One looks across the Pacific and notes the great coral-reef three-quarters of a mile or more away, smothered in foam. Giant rollers hurl themselves over it in mountains of spray, and, untamed, dash forward at express speed toward the shore. The depth of the lagoon is trifling considering its extent, and this it is which makes surfing there so safe and enjoyable. It is almost impossible to be drowned in it. 'Why not go beyond the reef and make a bigger run of it?' say the unsophisticated. The reply is—'Sharks!' And so one stays within the reef, where there is room for thousands, young and old; where there is no undertow; and where the beach slopes very gradually, to rise again as the coral line is approached.

There are two kinds of surf-riding—on boards and in canoes. The former method is incomparably the more exciting and skilful, and we will deal with that first. Surf-boards vary in length and width, but a good average size is eight feet by eighteen inches. They are made from the wood of the native koa-tree, which will take a very high polish. Tapering to a blunt point in front, these boards are comparatively light and are easily handled. Some have a history.

To an enthusiastic surfer, his board is what the bat is to the keen cricketer, a thing of joy and loving care.

Having watched the accomplished hand careering on the crest of a mighty roller, one judges the performance to be comparatively easy. Not so. There are difficulties ahead for the green hand, and it takes time and patience to attain passable skill. A great deal depends on the board, which must balance well. However, having obtained a satisfactory piece of timber, the tyro can go ahead.

Starting from the beach, the surfer has to push his board in front of him as soon as he reaches the deeper stretches fringing the coral. This process disgusts many learners, but no sport is worth while where all is plain sailing. Arrived in the region of broken water, the swimmer has to watch his chances keenly, and correct timing is all the battle at this stage. Should he miscalculate, back he is thrown, and possibly he and his *koa* part company for a while. However, he succeeds at last in mounting his board and turning it toward the shore. The next move is perhaps the most difficult—manœuvring for position in order to ride the roller, which has to be attacked in a slanting direction. And here a certain amount of knack is requisite to tilt the board. Many disappointments have to be faced, and the least one can say of the experience is that it is tantalising. Strength and skill, an eye for the psychological moment, with a perfect confidence in his tool—these are the surfer's assets. But those ignominious plunges into the deep, locally termed 'taking the diploma,' are common to all learners.

The conventional way of occupying the board consists in lying flat on it, with head raised and hands acting as guides. Once learnt, this position is really all that is necessary. Some, however, go beyond this, and kneel or stand upright; while the freak performer is always to be encountered.

We left the surfer awaiting his chance. Noting a giant wave careering toward him, he prepares to catch it, and meanwhile down he goes into the green abyss. Gradually he is caught upward as the object of his attention roars toward him, and in a trice his board is slanted. Will he do it? Yes; breathless and excited, he is on the crest, the nose of his *koa* is skilfully pointed shoreward, and wave and man are speedily borne for hundreds of yards in a wonderful ecstatic progress. Finally the mass breaks on the beach, and the surfer presently emerges, dazed yet exhilarated, and—goes forth again.

That nowhere else can surfing be so safely practised as in Hawaii is well known to real travellers. There is absolutely no danger to the person who can swim. Though this sport was originally confined to the natives, the white man now revels in it; and many of the gentler sex are really clever surf-riders who lose nothing by comparison.

Of surf-canoeing not so much can be said, for there is not so great an element of risk attaching to it, nor is the personal factor so paramount. Yet its pursuit is marked by a measure of excitement, and there certainly is a subtle charm. Probably we might define canoeing as a sport more suited to those who have lost some of their youthful activity. Those long, graceful outrigger canoes are a picturesque sight anywhere, but especially so when topping the breakers. In canoeing one dons a bathing-suit, and the craft is paddled toward the edge of the reef. Awaiting their opportunity, the natives neatly turn before the oncoming roller. Caught up like a feather, away she goes, skilfully placed by the crew with prow and stern rising clear, and in a minute a crash on the beach announces that the end is reached. Sometimes the craft is overturned, but it is easily righted and return made to the beginning of things. It is a rare occurrence when misfortune comes along.

It may here be said that the strong and high waves are termed 'queen surf,' while the more moderate rollers come under the title 'canoe surf.'

Near the beach are the headquarters of the Outrigger Club, built in native fashion, with grass roof, the leading organisation of the surfing fraternity. Much hospitality is dispensed here, and visitors are cordially welcomed. Across the way are the famous Aquarium and the lovely Kapiolani Park, both of which will well repay a visit.

A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS.

By Mrs Comyns Carr.

THE lawns at the hospital were bright with the daffodil and the whitening blossom.

The nurse who was pacing up and down with Lieutenant Eric Fortescue told him so. But she was sorry when she had done it, for this was a patient whom one must be careful not to depress by reminding him of his blindness—he took his misfortune so very hard.

'Blossom!' echoed he. 'Yes, I suppose it's spring—season of hope, don't they call it? Not much hope for me—eh, nurse?'

The nurse silently turned a pair of kind, brown eyes upon him; they were not liquid brown eyes—not, indeed, beautiful eyes at all; they were small, and flatly set in a large, strong, and—yes—plain face.

But Eric Fortescue could not see this. He only knew that her arm was strong; that her touch was firm, yet very gentle; that her large hand was soft; and that her voice—and this was more to him than anything—her voice was wondrous deep and sweet, full of the most varied and delicate inflections, always soothing to his sore spirit, always pleasant to his fastidious, musician's ear.

'There are different kinds of hope,' said she, 'and different things to hope for.'

He laughed harshly. 'Oh, you mean resignation and a contented spirit and all that!' he cried. 'Now, don't *you* come any preachifying over me! *You've* never tried that game, at least.'

'I shouldn't *think* of being so impertinent,' answered the young woman quietly, loosening her hold on him a little.

He clutched the arm, gripping it to his side.

'Oh, come now! Don't be offended,' said he, half-petulantly. 'Of course you're right; a contented spirit would be a jolly, cosy thing—and they say blind folk get it at last. Though how the—they do it, when they've so much more time to think than other folk, passes me.'

'Why, you have got glorious things to think about!' she cried. 'How about that day up at the bridge-head that you talk of sometimes?'

'Yes! That was good!' He smiled—a smile that lit his handsome, boyish face as with a wondrous inner light.

She was gazing at him, though he did not know it, and smiled in sympathy.

'Yes, that was very good—till'——

'Till you went down! I know. But even then it was good. When Private Jones carried you out under fire, wasn't it good? Perhaps men don't do that for officers they don't admire—and love.'

'They do it because they're fine fellows—that's why,' he answered quickly. 'But, yes, I'll admit that was good, too—very good. I shall never forget it.'

There was a pause.

'And when you went up—when we went up—the other day to get your Military Cross? Wasn't that good? Weren't you proud? I know I was!'

'Well, the thought of those things comes in and helps one a bit sometimes; and if they could have patched me up enough to go back, the war would have been a blessing to me—shown me things straight. But a useless log.' He threw up his one usable hand—the left was maimed—to emphasise his words.

But she drew him towards an empty seat by the side of the water.

'Come and sit in the sun and listen to the birds,' said she. 'They'll tell you things. I admit you never can go back—your arm would have prevented that, anyhow—but haven't you got your old profession left? Why need you be a useless log?'

'Do you mean my music?' he laughed bitterly.

'Yes; a composer can work in the dark. Why, Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* when he was blind.'

'Oh, he had a daughter devoted enough—and clever and sympathetic enough—to write it down for him. I'm not likely to find some one who could, and would, write down my symphony.'

'You never can tell,' said the nurse.

He sat down wearily. 'I can't even listen to the birds to-day,' he grumbled. 'They mock one with that light, gay song. No more gaiety in life for me, nurse.'

'You think too much,' she said.

'Think!' echoed he. 'How's one to prevent it when one has only a woman's heartlessness to think of?'

She moved; her lips parted, as though on a word; but she did not speak it; only her eyes spoke, and he could not see them.

But the kindness in her must have passed to him, for he put his hand into the breast of his tunic, and drew out an ear-marked letter, fingering it.

'Read that,' he said. 'It had to be read to me—by her brother who brought it—and I little thought I should ever want any one else to see my shame! But you—you understand things. You see, it was written after *this* happened.'

And she read. It was the letter of a selfish, cruel woman—written without even sufficient sympathy to sheathe her sword in velvet. 'You would be the last man to want to be hampered with a wife in your present circumstances,' she wrote. 'No one is more sorry for you than I am, but I feel you would rather be free.'

The flush of a righteous wrath rose in the nurse's face; but she said quietly, as she put the letter back in his hand, 'You were engaged to her?' It was a question; but when she added, 'You loved her,' it was not in the tone of a question.

'Yes! I was engaged to her,' he answered, tearing up the paper, and letting the pieces flutter to the ground, 'for two years. I hadn't enough to marry on when I asked her, and we were waiting, and then the war broke out.'

He paused. Then, 'As for loving her—well—she was very beautiful.'

'Beautiful!' echoed the woman beside him beneath her breath.

'Yes—with that kind of beauty that makes people turn round in the street, you know. Tall, slender, fine features, fine eyes, gorgeous colouring, gorgeous red hair.'

The nurse drew in her breath.

'Of course, that sort of thing sweeps a man away if he's fool enough to throw himself in its path, and I'm dreadfully susceptible to physical beauty.'

The woman made no sign, except that her

hands were clenched. Yet presently she said, 'Perhaps she's sorry now.'

'Sorry? She? Never! She's the wife of a big gun—queening it! Well, she has got what she needed; and I have lost what would have been a burthen and nothing else now. Oh yes! I may well cry, "Thank God!" nurse.' And turning to the woman whom he could not see, he added, '*She* wouldn't have brought me here to listen to the song of that thrush.'

'Perhaps she didn't care for music,' said the nurse.

'No. She heard none of the music that rings through life—as you do!'

There was no reply; but the thrush sang.

'You can hear the world-music—and give it out again, too,' he added softly. 'You're a musician.'

He did not say it as one who asks, but as one who states a fact.

'Well, yes, I was a singer before the war,' she admitted. 'I wonder how you guessed!'

He laughed. Then, 'And you gave it up to help poor, embittered wretches like me!' he added gravely. 'Well, you won't have lost by it, my dear!'

She quivered, and moved imperceptibly a little farther on the bench.

'No, indeed,' she declared. 'I wouldn't have missed a fraction of it for worlds! It has given me a happiness which I should never have known. I couldn't live the old life again.'

'None of us could do that,' he said gravely. 'But *you* could never have lived without helping some one, somehow.'

'Ah! You've put me on a pedestal, you see. But I've got to come off it!' She laughed softly—a tender, rippling, happy laugh.

'*I* won't help you off it. I want to keep you there for the rest of your life—and mine. I want'——

His arm was stealing about her; but she put it firmly back, and jumped to her feet.

'Good gracious!' cried she, glancing at the watch on her wrist; 'it's close on the hour for the doctors. I shall be in a scrape.'

He rose, sighing. 'I'm sick of doctors, nurse! What has been the use of them, eh? There's nothing more to be done.'

'One never can tell,' she replied. 'Wait until to-morrow before you make up your mind about *them*—or anything else.'

She spoke in the old, firm, optimistic, professional voice; but she was not really hopeful—not about the doctors' opinion. Whether there was any other hope in her breast, dependent on the very adverseness of that opinion, was known only to herself.

. . . . . .

But Nurse Beaumont and her patient were both wrong; there *was* something more to be done.

It was a new specialist who had examined the injured eyes that spring day on which the thrush had sung a new song; he had advised an operation—he had unfurled the flag of hope, and the operation had been a success.

Six weeks ago Eric Fortescue had been a blind man; to-day he saw. The oculist had just given him the glasses that were to finish the cure, and had told him that he might read his letters.

The nurse—a pretty little slip of a thing—handed them to him, including one that bore no postmark.

'Nurse Beaumont asked me to give you that,' said a voice that was strange to him. 'She left the hospital two days ago.'

His fingers closed tightly over the thin paper; but he asked no question.

'I believe she means to give up nursing. She's done her bit—perhaps she's marrying. They often do,' said the voice that sounded so harsh to him.

He opened the letter, slowly—as a hint that the nurse should leave him. Yet when she did, he stopped—his fingers trembled too much to do it. But he could read his name in a firm hand on the cover; the glasses were all right, and this was the first use that he was to make of them.

'I know,' he read, when he could muster courage at last—'I felt sure last week that it was going to be all right, and I'm glad—oh, I'm glad for you, my friend! But you won't *want* me now. And I haven't the courage to wait and see the look on your face when your eyes open for the first time on your nurse. Because, not only do I not possess real beauty, to which you admit you are susceptible, but I have not even the sort which your imagination conjured up as suited to my voice. I am one of Nature's cruellest freaks—I am a very plain woman. And I couldn't be the one to inflict the sight of my face upon you for a lifetime; I understand the artist's temperament too well! Oh, I know you would have been true to me! And perhaps you might even have fancied that you could get over it. But I know better. So good-bye, my friend. I thank you for the good days you gave me—though they were dark days to you in one way; I thank you for having let me lighten them a little. I shall watch your career; I think it will be worthy of the mercy that has befallen you.—Your friend, ELSPETH.'

. . . . . .

The summer was nearly spent; the grimy dust of a hot day in late August lay upon the City. The oppression of it weighed upon the spirit of Eric Fortescue as he walked down the street, crowded with workers escaping from close rooms for an evening breath of air.

He had laboured hard the last three months, but not with any result satisfactory to himself. That morning, however, he had chanced to see in an advertisement that a song of his was to be performed at a charity concert, and he had

suddenly determined that he would go and hear it. And he went.

There were one or two indifferent items and one excellent number; then that for which he had come—set down to a Miss Fletcher, a singer unknown to him.

A tall, gaunt, plain, young woman came quietly on to the platform. Scarce a hand welcomed her; but she stood, in a simple dignity, gazing, with parted lips, straight into the audience.

Eric Fortescue wondered what it was in her that compelled attention, though she was so very badly endowed with the usual armour of attraction. Then, to the soft accompaniment of a lute, she began to sing, and a hush fell upon the audience, and an awful—a holy and awful—hush upon his own heart; for the voice was the voice that was always ringing in his ears, the voice of the woman who had brought him back from a spiritual death to hope, and—to love. He had never before heard her sing; but he *knew*—love could not deceive.

And this was the song that she sang:

'Ah, why dost sigh and moan?
Ah, why? Ah, why?
Queen of the laughing May,
Who wears thy crown to-day?
Good-bye! Good-bye!
Yea, for all mirth hath flown;
The strings have all one tone—
Ah, why? Ah, why?

'It is the lute that sings,
Not I! Not I!
Methinks some sleeping heart
That once had felt love's smart
Doth wake and cry!
Nay, hark! 'tis love's own wings
That fan the trembling strings—
Not I! Not I!'*

He had sat with his head bent—listening only; unconsciously his critical powers were alive, in spite of his beating heart—and they were satisfied. The girl had rendered his music as an artist; but she added thereto something which he gloried to think he alone could explain, though it appealed to the whole room.

And with the last words of the song he raised his eyes to her face. It was no longer ugly to him; it shone with a beautiful light—the light of the same spirit that spoke in the tender tones of the last whispered notes; it was, as he had told her in his days of blindness, the face proper to the voice—to the mind that spoke in the voice. Thank God! The eyes of his soul had not been more blind now than the eyes of his body were then.

A burst of applause followed the first pause of satisfaction. Eric Fortescue jumped up, and, while Miss Fletcher was still bowing her acknowledgments, he hastened out and found his way to the artistes' room.

She came in, and was at once the centre of a little group of friends. There was a smile on her large, sensitive mouth as she received the praises of her fellow-performers; but it was a dreamy smile, as though her thoughts were elsewhere.

And then he saw that he had drawn her eyes to his, where he stood in the doorway. Her sallow cheek went a shade paler, and then a faint flush crept up to it. The crush gave her time to recover, and to receive him with perfect self-possession as the mere composer complimenting her on the adequate rendering of his music.

It was the natural thing that he should see her downstairs; but when they were out in the street and he took the hand which she held out in farewell, he looked her straight in the eyes. 'What a pity you have taken another name for the profession!' said he. 'Beaumont was so much prettier.' He felt her fingers close in a convulsive grip before she withdrew her hand.

'What makes you think that is my name?' said she faintly.

'Have you forgotten that a musician's ear is acute, and that it grows even more acute when he is blind? You should know that, having nursed the blind.'

Then, as she was silent, 'Do you suppose that I could ever forget your voice? I should have known it in a thousand.'

Still she was silent. But his courage was not dashed; rather was it strengthened by that silence.

'You have tried very hard to run away from me, but you will have to give me a better reason than you gave me in your letter before you shall run away from me again,' he ended on a note of triumph.

Yet even then she did not speak. She stood still, with bent head; but he took his permission from the very pose, and drew her arm quietly within his own.

'It was my arm in yours before,' he said. 'But things have changed, Elspeth. It has got to be yours in mine for the rest of our lives. There's no denying me now—your voice has spoken, you see!'

She was trembling, as he remembered she had trembled in the hospital garden on the day when the thrush had warbled to them its spring love-song; then he had been diffident, but now he spoke with the ringing triumph of certainty.

He pressed the firm, round arm to his side in his strength, as he had pressed it before in his weakness, and then he saw her smile. It was a smile akin to that tender, rippling laughter which had cheered his spirit in the old, bitter days; a smile that shone from within, lighting the honest, brown eyes with a deep and holy light, touching the heavy features to brightness, telling of a selfless and passionate love flowing richly from a good heart. Truly, the voice in the wilderness had led the feet of the blind man into green pastures.

* Words of the song by J. Comyns Carr.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

CONCRETE SHIPS.

THE importance to this country of shipbuilding, in view of the number of British vessels being destroyed by enemy submarines, can hardly be over-estimated, and any new development which will cheapen the construction of ships, while shortening the time taken in building them, is of vital interest at the present time. From time to time during the last decade barges and lighters have been built of concrete reinforced with steel bars and netting. The scarcity of steel plates has given a strong impetus to this method, and a number of barges have recently been built on this system in Norway, while ships of two thousand tons and a floating dock are said to be in course of construction in that country. No British shipbuilder has yet adopted this plan, but some interesting lighters are being built in this country for use with a dredger. The largest of these vessels is over seventy feet in length, and has a width of twelve feet, and a depth of between five and six feet. When such a structure is built, a framework of steel bars, forming the longitudinal ribs, the cross-beams, and the uprights, is constructed, and the parts in between them are covered with stout steel netting known as 'expanded metal.' The concrete is then run in between wooden moulds in the usual way. So far as barges and lighters are concerned, the cost is stated to be little more than one-third that of steel vessels, while the boats are practically everlasting. Another advantage is that no painting is necessary for the preservation of such craft; consequently the cost of upkeep is nil, except for an occasional scrub to clean off weeds and other marine growths. Even if this method cannot be applied to large ships, its adoption for lighters and barges will save money, labour, and steel for the construction of bigger craft.

NEW SYSTEM OF FORECASTING THE WEATHER.

Many people note the rise or fall of the barometer from day to day, and a few enthusiasts possess instruments which record these movements continuously on a strip of paper. To the layman these records appear as a hopelessly irregular line. Those who study meteorology, however, have long since discovered that there are series of regular rises and falls, but so complicated in character that the possibility of forecasting the weather therefrom appears to be extremely remote. Recently an Italian meteorologist, Professor Vecelli, who has been studying this problem for several years, has evolved some approach to order out of apparent chaos, and his predicted movements of the barometer for about a month ahead, as illustrated by the curves given in *Popular Science Siftings*, show a remarkably close resemblance to the actual records. This new method is still far from perfect, but Professor Vecelli hopes in time to predict the weather at certain places for several weeks in advance after a careful study of past barometric records.

DIVING-ARMOUR FOR GREAT DEPTHS.

The greatest depth of water at which divers can work in the ordinary rubber dress is a little over two hundred feet, and at this depth the pressure causes so much discomfort that they can remain below for only short intervals of time. The diving apparatus involves a supply of air to the helmet, pumped through a rubber pipe, the pipe forming an additional danger from the risk of entanglement with wreckage. A new diving-dress has recently been invented by an American in which depths up to three hundred and sixty feet can be safely reached, while it is possible for the diver to remain below for several hours at a time. Instead of being flexible, like the ordinary costume, this dress is in the nature of armour, the body of the diver being relieved entirely of pressure from the water; yet it is so constructed that movements of the arms and legs are practicable. Another advantage is the elimination of the air-pipe in favour of chemical breathing apparatus contained in the dress, which remains effective for several hours. Thus only one line, that for lowering and raising him, is attached to the diver, as, although a telephone is included in the outfit, the cables are embodied in this line.

ELECTRIC TORCH WHICH REQUIRES NO REFILLS.

As most of us are aware, great reductions in the amount of electricity needed for lamps, including those used for electric torches, have been made during the last few years, and this development has made possible the lighting of torch-lamps by miniature dynamos worked by the hand. A Hungarian is credited with the invention of a torch based on this principle in which a tiny dynamo is worked by a spring for two or three seconds to light the lamp. When a lever is pressed down by the thumb this spring is wound up, and as the dynamo runs, the lever comes back again into its original position, ready for another wind, with the resultant flash of the lamp. Pocket-torches made upon the above principle have the advantage of being a permanent source of light instead of requiring refills from time to time. In larger lamps the squeezing-power of the two hands is utilised to wind up the springs.

POCKET WIRELESS RECEIVER.

According to *Popular Mechanics*, in which a drawing of a section of the instrument is given,

a wireless receiver very little larger than a fountain pen has been devised by a well-known American pioneer in wireless telegraphy. This tiny apparatus contains the electric batteries and magnetic coils needed for receiving messages, and is supplemented by an aerial wire passing down the coat-sleeve to the end of a walking-cane, the ground connection being carried down the leg to a metal plate on the heel of the boot. When the instrument is held to the ear with the cane at arm's length, messages can be picked up from transmitting stations in the vicinity.

ANGLO-FRENCH RAILWAY FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN TO BAGDAD.

What is known as the Bagdad Railway has been so much in the public eye of late years that an important British and French scheme for connecting Bagdad by rail with the Mediterranean on the one side and the Persian Gulf on the other is liable to be overlooked. Although no actual constructional work has been done on this line, its course has been mapped out and subjected to a preliminary survey, and there is little doubt that it will be proceeded with in the near future. The proposed terminal port on the Persian Gulf is Koweit, whence the line will run to Bagdad, about four hundred miles distant, and thence through Hit, Ana, and Deir to Homs, a further distance of about six hundred miles. A line already connects the last-named place with the port of Tripoli in the north of Palestine. From Bagdad the line will run due west to the Euphrates, which will be crossed by a large bridge, the river valley being then followed to Deir. Apart from the opening up of new fertile country, this line will shorten the time taken to reach India by several days, while a heavy traffic from pilgrims may be expected. No great difficulties are likely to be met with in building the railway, and a rough estimate places the cost at about twelve thousand pounds per mile. Nor are financial obstacles likely to stand in the way of its construction, as the scheme has the support of both the British and the French Governments, while the certainty of profitable traffic in the long-run will attract private capital. The undertaking is being promoted by the Persian Gulf and Mesopotamia Development Company, Limited, the originator of the scheme being Mr Bernard Maimon, and the engineers Messrs Sir John Wolfe Barry and Partners.

ELECTRIC CURRENT PREVENTS RUST AND CORROSION.

Those in charge of steam-boilers know how difficult it is to prevent the insides from being eaten away by rust or corrosion, while with hard water a scale forms which has to be chipped off with hammers at frequent intervals. It has been known for many years that the natural tendency to rust of the inside surfaces of boilers is accentuated by galvanic action, the complete boiler forming a huge electric battery in which feeble currents of electricity flow from one part to another. Now in an electric battery one part, which in a cell for an electric bell is a zinc plate or bar, wastes away, and for many years zinc plates have been inserted in steam-boilers for the purpose of forming electrodes which shall be subject to this galvanic corrosion instead of parts of the boiler itself. This plan was successful so long as the zinc remained clean, but when it became partially corroded there was a risk of the electric current reversing, so that the boiler wasted instead of the zinc. A new system of preventing corrosion, known as the 'Cumberland' Electrolytic Method, is based on a similar principle to that of the zinc plates; but with this system the action is intensified by an electric current from a dynamo, while reversal is rendered impossible. Another beneficial effect is that scale from hard waters is not formed on the plates and tubes; consequently the labour of chipping and the inconvenience of having the boiler idle for a day or two every couple of months are eliminated. Not only is the formation of scale prevented, but old scale is softened, so that it can be brushed off. A large number of boilers have already been fitted with the apparatus, the result being a saving in cleaning, repairs, and coal, which repays many times over the cost of the necessary equipment and electric current. In addition to the boilers, the condensers, in which the steam from the engines is condensed into water, suffer severely from corrosion. These appliances consist of large numbers of brass tubes, which are very costly to renew, and which often waste away quickly from galvanic action when salt-water is passed through them, as is the case in steamships. The Cumberland system has also been found effective in preserving these tubes from corrosion, whereby the heavy cost of periodical renewal is saved. In one instance the apparatus reduced the loss of condenser-tubes from one hundred a month to a trifle over one a year. It is interesting to note, also, that the growth of barnacles and shell-fish inside the condensers, which is by no means uncommon, and which impairs their efficiency, is entirely prevented by the Cumberland apparatus. As regards cost, one penny a day for current in a large electric-power station saves something like one thousand pounds a year in condenser-tubes.

PROTECTIVE SMOKE-HELMETS AND LAMPS FOR FIREMEN.

Two interesting appliances for the use of firemen in fire-brigades have recently been invented which should be of value in certain circumstances. One of these is a smoke-helmet of a novel type, to which fresh air is supplied for breathing from a container carried across the shoulders, in which it is compressed to a

pressure of two hundred pounds to the square inch. One of the most important features of the apparatus is a crown capable of withstanding violent shocks from falling bodies, in conjunction with a rigid framework which transfers such shocks to the shoulders, where a cushion of cotton-wool padding softens the blows. It is easy to understand that a falling beam which would break a man's neck in an ordinary helmet might hit the appliances described without causing serious injury to the wearer. The new helmet has windows in front similar to those of a diving-helmet, telephones opposite the ears, and a whistle which can be blown when the fireman needs assistance. Moreover, the wearer can take off the helmet himself without external aid. The second invention is a powerful gas-lamp, fitted with a reflector, and supplied with gas under pressure from a reservoir carried on the back of a fireman. The reservoir has a wide base, so that it can be taken off and placed on the ground if desired. The lamp-head swivels, and can be made to project a powerful beam of light in any direction. According to *Popular Mechanics*, this invention has been adopted by the Cincinnati fire department.

SUCCESSFUL TREATMENT FOR SEVERED NERVES.

The injury or complete severance of important nerves by bullets or pieces of shell is no uncommon occurrence at the Front. When a piece of the nerve has been actually carried away, something to take its place is essential if the wounded man is to recover the use of the muscles affected. A German professor is said to have originated a method whereby injured nerves can easily be mended, although portions may be missing. Part of a small artery from some animal is filled with nerve fluid, and used to join up the two ends of the nerve, which soon grow together again under this treatment. In one case several inches of the nerve going to an arm were destroyed, but the above method proved successful, and the patient was able to use the limb within a few weeks.

NEW SOURCES OF WEALTH TO RELIEVE TAXATION.

Wealth which is equally free to all nations can only be drawn from the sea or the air, and these sources appear to be practically inexhaustible. The small number of many kinds of fish taken out of the sea does not appear appreciably to affect the quantity therein; while agricultural produce, which is partly derived from the air, can be grown continuously on the largest scale without apparently altering the quantity or constituents of the atmosphere. By fishing and agriculture, therefore, we collect materials which would otherwise remain useless. This view seems to be taken by the Empire Resources Development Committee, of which the object, according to Lord Milner, who presided at the first meeting, is to open up new sources of revenue for the Government which will relieve the heavy taxation we are likely to suffer from after the war. A scheme suggested by Mr Bigland, M.P., consists in an Empire monopoly of home and colonial fisheries, in which the Colonies will join the home Government in supplying fish for almost the whole world, the estimated profits at a penny a pound being thirty-six million pounds in ten years. Palm-oil and coco-nut products have also been mentioned as a hopeful source of wealth if properly developed. The chairman of the above committee is Sir Starr Jameson, while Mr H. Wilson-Fox is the honorary secretary.

POSSIBLE EXISTENCE OF LARGE SUPPLIES OF PETROLEUM IN ENGLAND.

The possibility of petroleum being found on a commercial scale in England will come as a surprise to many. Yet such is the opinion of Mr William Forbes Leslie as set forth in a paper read before the Institution of Petroleum Technologists. Oil from shale has been obtained in Scotland for many years past, but the yield meets only a very small proportion of the demand in this country. According to Mr Leslie, certain indications point towards the existence of vast quantities of oil-shales in a zone bounded on the north by a line between Whitehaven and the mouth of the Tees, and extending to the western end of the English Channel. Intermittent flows of petroleum mixed with water have been noted from time to time at several collieries within this area, the yield in one case being as much as one thousand gallons a week. A borehole at Kelham, in Nottinghamshire, is said to afford proof of a true oil-bearing stratum below the surface rocks. No doubt this matter, of which the importance can hardly be over-estimated, will be exhaustively investigated after the war, as the discovery of large quantities of petroleum in this country would have an important bearing upon the payment of interest on war loans, and even upon the repayment of the principal.

LIFE-SAVING APPLIANCES FOR SUBMARINES.

Inventors have long been busy trying to devise means of escape for the crews of submarines which have been so damaged that they cannot rise to the surface. A favourite idea is a compartment embodied in the upper surface of the hull, and so attached that it can be quickly released for carrying the crew up to safety. One such device recently invented is a detachable conning-tower, normally held down by several large bolts, which can be quickly undone. At each end is a windlass, upon which is wound enough wire cable to reach to the surface from any depth that the submarine can sink to without collapsing. When an accident happens the crew enter the conning-tower

through a water-tight door in the bottom, which is then closed, while the bolts holding the structure to the hull of the vessel are unscrewed. The windlasses are now operated to pay out cable as the tower floats upwards, the speed being adjusted at each end so as to keep it level. Should the submarine be slowly sinking in water too deep for the length of the cables, these can be cast off entirely when their full length has been paid out. A somewhat similar device by another inventor consists of a compartment fitting into the top of the submarine, and also fixed by quickly releasable bolts, but without the windlasses for controlling the journey to the surface. In each case the life-saving compartment contains a supply of oxygen and stores of food and water, as well as means for attracting the attention of passing vessels.

BREAD FROM WHEAT WITHOUT GRINDING.

The Italians are credited with having invented a method of making bread direct from wheat without grinding it. After being well washed, the wheat is soaked in warm water for three days, by which time it has become quite soft. The grain can then be kneaded in the ordinary way, made into loaves, and baked after being allowed to 'rise.' Bread made in this way has a much higher food value than the ordinary article, as even the husk has useful dietetic qualities. The wheat should be of good quality for this process, and, of course, should be free from dirt, seeds, or other species of grain. Hence, although no grinding is needed, the processes which precede this operation must be carried out. In view of the shortage of labour and fuel, this process of making bread should be particularly worthy of adoption at the present time.

A NEW BICYCLE GEAR.

In view of the fact that before the war is over there will be thousands of soldiers suffering from the loss of a foot, or maimed in one or other of their legs, it may be of interest to know that a bicycle has been designed which, on account of being fitted with foot-levers, may be ridden by men who could not operate an ordinary crank machine. The driving-power is applied by means of two levers working independently, the length of each stroke varying according to requirements. Thus a man minus one foot, or with one leg shorter than the other, could operate the bicycle with ease. A further advantage consists in varying leverages, or speed-gears, ranging from forty to eighty, fifty to one hundred, &c. A machine of this description may also be ridden by any one over ten years of age, as any length of stroke may be taken, according to length of reach. On mounting, the levers are always in one definite position, ready to take a stroke with either foot. Chain-wheel troubles are eliminated, owing to the absence of chains and gear-wheels. The lever principle of propulsion as applied to bicycles is, of course, no new idea, but as embodied in the above machine offers particular advantages never before combined. The appliance is not yet on the market; but in view of the particular uses above suggested, its manufacture should be made possible even in war-time. Some such device must be looked on as a necessity if men disabled in the ways referred to above are to be able to get about and find employment.

AN APOLOGY.

The Editor regrets to find that the article by Mr Reginald B. Span, entitled 'Some Royal Apparitions,' which appeared in the December number of *Chambers's Journal*, was in some instances an almost verbatim copy of an article by Mr Eliot O'Donnell, entitled 'Haunted Royalties,' which appeared in *The Occult Review* for November 1915. It is hardly necessary to say that the Editor had not previously seen the article in *The Occult Review*, and he desires to offer his sincere apologies to Mr O'Donnell for the unintentional infringement of his rights.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

A LOST EDEN.

If I could hear the nightingales,
And 'mid the roses stand,
As on one night, in one far June,
In Love's enchanted land,

With spirits hushed and still we stood,
While, through the dusk, your eyes
Shone like the altar-light that falls
Upon the sacrifice.

The birds' song passionate and sweet,
The roses drenched in dew,
The magic and the mystery,
Our souls together drew.

And then you drifted from my reach—
Not ours Love's paradise.
Oh, angel of the flaming sword,
Is wisdom always wise?

MARIE HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE PASTEL.

By Douglas G. Browne.

CHAPTER I.

IN the small studio that housed Mr Humphrey Rippingill, the marine painter, the clock had just struck nine on a November evening. The gas was not lighted, for there was no gas to light. The curtains, as a precautionary measure, were closely drawn across the big north window. An oil lamp, standing amid the raffle of supper on the gate-legged table, gave forth an indifferent illumination and a powerful smell. The tortoise stove, however, was glowing comfortably through all its cracks, filling the room with coke-fumes; and before it Mr Rippingill himself slumbered uneasily in a basket chair, and dreamed of the water-rates.

It was at this juncture that Mr Porson, the well-known solicitor, fell into the studio through the skylight. His entry was unrehearsed and lacking in composure; but very happily the drop was short and a large ottoman lay immediately below. The painter, aroused by the crash of breaking glass and woodwork, and the sudden impact of an icy blast, sat up and blinked, to discover his skylight hanging inward in tatters, and a small, stout, infuriate gentleman, stuck all over with glass as a pudding is with almonds, bouncing on his ottoman.

'Well, I'm blessed!' said the marine painter; but this was nothing to the language that proceeded to flow from Mr Porson as he got himself into an upright posture, and, sitting gingerly on the edge of the couch, began to pluck the fragments of glass out of his person. Mr Rippingill made no attempt to go to his help, but sat staring with an air of mingled astonishment and disgust. 'It's your own fault, you know,' he said at length; 'but you really shouldn't swear like that at your age. Of course, it's creditable in a way; one admires it in sailors—and parrots.'

'Curse your impudence!' Mr Porson cried. 'Why don't you'——

'Why don't I rush to your help?' Mr Rippingill continued for him. 'Well, now, why should I? You and your friends have led me a nice dance these last few days. Besides, I take it you've got me now; although your methods *are* a little drastic, you know. What about my window? Who are you, by the way?'

'My name is Porson,' said the solicitor. While continuing to feel himself all over with plump white hands, he was staring at the other with some astonishment.

'Porson!' the painter repeated. 'Porson! Ah, of course, the grocer!'

'Grocer!' cried the solicitor. '*Grocer!* What the devil do you mean, sir? Grocer, indeed! I tell you my name is Porson, of Porson, Williams, & Whichcord, solicitors, of Lincoln's Inn!'

Mr Rippingill regarded him critically, his head on one side.

'Certainly,' said he; 'you are not quite my idea of a grocer; though in these days one never knows. But I had no notion that full-blown solicitors—nothing personal intended—demeaned themselves by this sort of work. And was it really necessary to precipitate yourself like a bomb through the window?'

'I banged your cursed door till I blistered my hands,' Mr Porson said savagely. 'Do you suppose'——

'Oh, that was you, was it?' the painter interrupted. 'I should have taken you for a man of sense. Did you seriously think I should let you in? No, no! Little Willie is not quite such an ass! His friends have their own signals. While this strained situation continues, other knocks receive no attention.'

Mr Porson glared at him, speechless. He was still seated on the ottoman, a somewhat ludicrous figure—his hat gone, his tie under his ear, his thick gray hair in disorder, and one trouser-leg hitched up to the knee.

'And you were in!' he stuttered at length; 'you were in! And you let me climb that infernal ladder and risk my neck on your predestined skylight!'

'I didn't ask you to,' said Mr Rippingill simply. 'I thought you had gone away. I would really much rather you hadn't chosen this mode of entry, though it is distinctly sporting in a man of your age. As for the skylight, it isn't my fault. The whole studio is as rotten as touchwood. You could run a butter-

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knife into the timber anywhere. It belongs to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, you know —*Q.E.D.*'

The solicitor had now risen cautiously to his feet, and was indulging in gentle oscillatory movements calculated both to adjust his disordered dress and to reveal the presence of any stray fragments of glass he might have overlooked. As a matter of fact, although rudely shaken, he was not hurt at all. His plump face, inflamed to an alarming degree with rage and agitation, did not show a scratch.

Mr Rippingill, who had not moved from his chair, suddenly lay back and laughed until he was weak.

'Oh, very funny!' said Mr Porson furiously; 'very funny, I have no doubt! But let me tell you, sir, I consider your conduct outrageous! I have always maintained that painters as a class are impudent, unwashed, empirical coxcombs; and this exhibition fully confirms that belief!'

'Oh, come, come!' the painter gasped, struggling for breath. 'It is deuced comic, you know! You'll see it yourself when you're calmer. You're just talking through your hat now. Funny? Why, damme, it's as good as a play! Oh Lord! how weak I am!' He fell back again, laughing helplessly, the tears running down his cheeks. And then, 'Gad! there is your hat!' he cried, pointing upward.

Indeed, Mr Porson's immaculate top-hat, a masterpiece by Heath, could be seen far above their heads, hanging precariously from a splinter of the window-frame. Its owner felt himself incapable of doing justice to his feelings; and, while he hesitated and fumed, the painter recovered himself and spoke again. 'Well, hand it over,' he said in a small, weak voice.

'Hand over what?' asked Mr Porson, staring.

'The summons, or writ, or whatever you call the beastly thing.'

It was plain that Mr Porson was completely at a loss.

'You seem to be labouring under some delusion,' he said shortly. 'I know nothing of any writ or summons. I am in the habit of leaving such things to my clerks. Why, good God, sir!' he cried, with a fresh access of wrath, 'do you suppose I should serve a writ with my own hands?'

It was the turn of Mr Rippingill to be surprised. 'Then what *are* you here for?' he asked, sitting up.

'To ask you a few simple questions,' the lawyer replied. 'By the way, you are Mr Humphrey Rippingill, I suppose?'

'I am.'

'And you were on friendly terms with the late Mr Sholto Abernethy?'

'Of course I was!' the painter said, jumping to his feet. 'Is *that* what you want to see me about? My sainted aunt! why didn't you say so before? And why smash my skylight to ask a few simple questions?'

Mr Porson stamped with irritation, trod on some glass, swore, and retreated to clearer manœuvring-ground.

'Because you would not answer my knock, sir!' he retorted. 'I must have hammered on your door for ten minutes without eliciting any reply. It was imperative that I should see you at once. I went to No. 3, but there was no one there. I knew Mr Abernethy's studio was empty. I was turning away, when I saw a glimmer of light in your top window. I had excellent reasons for suspecting that some unauthorised person might, in your absence, have forced an entry here. I came and knocked again without result, and my suspicions were increased. How could I suppose you were here all the while? It was no time for scruples. I fetched the ladder, which I had previously noticed by your neighbour's studio, set it against the window, and climbed up. I trust you are visited by some compunction when you picture this! The ladder is short, and as I was leaning rather heavily on the window, attempting to see in, the cursed thing gave way! I might have broken my neck!'

'You might have broken mine,' the artist put in. 'I often go to sleep on that ottoman.'

'As if that were not enough,' Mr Porson continued firmly, disregarding the interruption—'as if that were not enough, I am received with ridicule and confounded with a dun! A dun, indeed! Only my sense of professional duty restrains me from walking out of this place at once!'

'Oh, I don't wonder you feel a little ruffled,' Mr Rippingill said; 'any one would. And perhaps I owe you some apologies. You see, Mr Porson, I am in a state of siege. The defalcations of a picture-dealer, who is, I believe, now in Rio de Janeiro, have landed me in penury. Duns lie in wait for me in the street, so that I have not put my nose out of this yard for a week past. If I opened my door to any but the preconcerted signals, writs would descend on me like snowflakes. It began by being amusing, but now it is merely tiresome. In addition to the gas and the water people, who are always with us, there are a tailor, two artists' colourmen, a grocer (I remember now, his name is Pawkins), and I dare say several more. Ah! and, of course, there is the inevitable Shylock himself, one Ian Heriot of that ilk, *né* Isaacsohn. I wonder why Jew moneylenders always take Scotch names! My friend Ian is hardly a spiritually minded person, but he gets there with both feet every time.'

'I have heard of him,' said Mr Porson. During this speech he had been softening, and he was now regarding the painter with a keen but not unfriendly eye. He was, in fact, a man of kindly nature, but irritable and prejudiced; and

certainly the manner of his descent into the studio would have upset the nervous system of an amœba. Moreover, artists as a class were anathema to Mr Porson, although his oldest friend had been Mr Abernethy the painter. But then, in the opinion of many, Mr Abernethy was not an artist.

'Well, well!' said he, 'there seems to have been a mutual misunderstanding. Perhaps there were faults on both sides. I beg to withdraw any strictures I may have passed, in the heat of the moment, on your profession, Mr Rippingill. A little natural vexation'——

'The fault was entirely mine!' the painter replied, not to be outdone. 'I was grossly uncivil. And now, is there anything I can do for you? A drink? Some vaseline or sticking-plaster?'

But Mr Porson's attention had wandered. He was peering anxiously about the studio, where canvases, easels, clothes, books, and other things filled every corner and covered every piece of furniture. He seemed to be looking for something. And suddenly, crying, 'Ah, excuse me!' he stepped over the débris of the window, pushed hurriedly past its owner, and from the top of an untidy bookcase behind him took up a small picture. It was a bright, clever little sketch of a field of poppies done in pastel. With a chuckle of triumph the lawyer turned again to Mr Rippingill. 'Will you favour me,' he said, 'with a brief statement of the circumstances under which this came into your possession?'

'Do you suppose I stole it?' the painter cried.

'No, no!' said the solicitor impatiently; 'I suppose nothing of the kind! Pray answer my question. We may be interrupted at any moment.'

'Why should we be?' the other murmured; but, without further argument, he embarked upon the required explanation, which may be both summarised and amplified as follows.

The Chichele Studios are only three in number, and they stand in a pleasant enclosure behind a high brick wall. In No. 3 dwelt intermittently a dipsomaniac, who is no concern of ours. No. 2 was Mr Rippingill's messuage or tenement. No. 1, the largest of the three, had, until two days before, belonged to Mr Sholto Abernethy, R.A. Everybody is familiar with Mr Abernethy's work; and this fact, together with the national characteristic of looking three times before he leaped, and then declining to leap after all, explains how he contrived to amass his considerable fortune. In private life (and his whole life was private) he was a kindly, modest man, who refused annually to figure in the columns of *Who's Who*. A widower, he lived with one servant—an Irishman named O'Shea—in No. 1 Chichele Studios; and, except on the occasions of his lightning descents upon the Finchley Road in search of tobacco, the enlightened public who bought the signed artist's proofs of his sentimental pot-boilers never saw him at all. Between him and his neighbour, the young marine painter, a considerable intimacy had arisen in the two years since the latter took the cheapest of the studios. Notwithstanding a great disparity between their ages, they discovered many common interests, from the theories of M. Comte (in which the Academician was a firm believer) to the vastly overrated art of Izaak Walton. They were in daily communication for months together; for Mr Abernethy seldom showed any desire to get away from London, and Mr Rippingill seldom could afford to. Some three months, however, before the present crisis in the young man's affairs, Mr Abernethy fell ill, and presently departed, albeit with extreme reluctance, to recuperate upon the Folkestone Leas. It was not then supposed that he would be away longer than a week or two; but before he left he begged the other to do him a service. This was no more than to take charge, during his absence, of a certain picture (or, rather, sketch), his own handiwork, to which he seemed to attach some mysterious significance. It was, in fact, the small pastel now in Mr Porson's hand.

'You see, Humphrey,' Mr Abernethy had said, 'I'm very fond of that little sketch. Not, God knows, as a work of art—it's not worth a bawbee—but for what we may call its associations. Yes, I think we might very well call them associations. It means a lot to me, that wee sketch, and maybe to others forby. Yet it seems daft-like to send it to the bank, and lawyer-men I never could abide. Of course, my dear Humphrey, I don't want you to mount guard over it, or lock it up, or fash yourself in any way whatever; just hang it on your wall and think no more about it. Maybe it will bring you luck. Truth is, I'm none so easy about this studio of mine. You can't say who might get in.'

Although there were undoubtedly many articles of value in Mr Abernethy's studio, this did not explain why any one should want to steal or damage a pastel sketch of no intrinsic value at all. The old gentleman, however, plainly had set his heart on leaving it in safe keeping; and Mr Rippingill gladly accepted the very slight responsibility. The object of this solicitude might seem unworthy; but that was no business of his. What is the use of being a Royal Academician if you cannot support a few whims?

As it happened, the friends never met again. Mr Abernethy wrote several times from Folkestone, and never omitted to ask after the pastel. Meanwhile his fortnight grew to a month, the month to two, and then to three; and then one morning it was found he had passed quietly into that other life where, presumably, the tenets of M. Comte will undergo the most practical test of all. Unhappily, his death occurred during

Mr Rippingill's humiliating imprisonment in his studio—only two days, in fact, before the surprising arrival there of Mr Porson. The young painter was sincerely distressed, but amid his own thronging troubles the event and its possible consequences filled less of his thoughts than they would ordinarily have done. And, until the solicitor leaped upon it with such ardour, the pastel had slipped altogether out of his mind.

Such, however, was the history of its coming into his possession, which did not take long in the telling.

When it was done, 'Thank you, Mr Rippingill,' the lawyer said cordially; 'I am greatly indebted to you. Indeed, notwithstanding my own misadventure, the fact that you have sported your oak so thoroughly may prove to have saved us an infinity of bother. Have you had many callers to-day?'

'Four or five,' said the painter.

'And you opened to none?'

'Not one.'

'Excellent!' Mr Porson cried. 'I suppose you have no idea who they were?'

'None whatever.'

'Now tell me, did Mr Abernethy ever speak to you of his family?'

'Not in so many words,' the other replied; 'but from what he let fall I gathered he was not on the best of terms with any of them.'

'That is putting it mildly,' the lawyer said. 'Did he never mention his son?'

'Never. I did not know he had one.'

'What is your opinion of O'Shea?' was the next question.

'Well,' said the painter, 'if you really want to know, I think he's a humbug.'

The solicitor had another question on the tip of his tongue, when both were startled by a loud rat-tat upon the studio door.

'There's another!' said Mr Rippingill. 'They might leave a man alone at this time of night! Well, let them knock! I sha'n't open.'

But Mr Porson motioned him to keep quiet. 'Speak low,' he whispered. 'Wait a minute and see what happens. I shall be surprised if this is anybody you expect. Can you hide me anywhere?'

'Hide you?' the astonished painter echoed. 'Well, there's my bedroom, or we could pull that screen out a bit.'

'The screen will do,' the lawyer said in the same low tone; and in a minute he was hidden behind it, taking the pastel with him. Then he put his head out again.

'My hat!' he whispered; 'can you get it down and shove it out of sight?'

By standing on the ottoman, Mr Rippingill was able to hook down Heath's masterpiece with a walking-stick. As he stowed it behind some canvases, feeling rather like a criminal in a nightmare, there came a second heavy battering upon the door. But he was well used to this sort of thing. He was lighting a pipe when the woodwork was assaulted for the third time; after which, he glanced at the screen for instructions, and saw Mr Porson thrust his head out once more, shake it, wink, and point up at the skylight.

(*Continued on page 311.*)

OIL-BEARING SEEDS AND NUTS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

By L. L. Blacknell.

IN various ways the importance of oil-yielding seeds and nuts in international trade has been brought to our notice during the last year or two. Germany was a large importer of oil-seeds from British colonies, and after several months of war it was realised that vegetable oils are a valuable source of glycerine, which is required in making explosives, and that in permitting Germany to import oil-seeds we were allowing her to have this essential war material as well as valuable food products. A serious shortage of animal fats and vegetable oils undoubtedly now exists in Germany, and it is sought to replace this shortage by emergency cultivation of such oil-seeds as poppy-seed, rape-seed, and sunflower-seed. Fats are an essential part of our diet, and in temperate climates animal fats such as butter, lard, suet, &c. have been mainly consumed until quite recent years. On the other hand, in tropical countries—as, for instance, in West Africa—the natives consume large quantities of vegetable oils with their food. Butter is now being replaced to a remarkable extent by margarine made largely of vegetable oils such as coco-nut oil and palm-kernel oil. Great advances have been made in the treatment of oils, so that they can be used in the manufacture of margarine. Liquid oils are converted into solid fats, their distinctive flavours removed, and wholesome and palatable butter substitutes produced. Older uses of vegetable oils in this country are those of linseed-oil in making paints, varnishes, and linoleum, and of rape-seed for the production of colza-oil for burning. But the margarine-making industry bids fair to become the largest consumer of vegetable oils in the future, and there is no reason why all the margarine consumed in this country should not be made by British industry with British materials, instead of being largely imported from foreign countries, as is the case at the present moment.

A matter of moment to the British Empire lies in the fact that the Empire includes some of the most important oil-seed-producing countries of the world. India exports oil-seeds and vegetable oils to the value of over seventeen million pounds a year; Ceylon and the British islands in the Pacific are large producers of copra; whilst British West Africa exports enormous quantities of palm-oil, palm-kernels, and ground-nuts.

Castor-seed.—Besides its well-known medicinal use, the chief uses of castor-oil are in dressing leather, and as a lubricating oil for aircraft engines. The normal export of castor-seed from India amounts in value to nearly a million pounds annually. More than half the exports come to this country, and are crushed chiefly at Hull. Mills for crushing castor and other oil seeds are working successfully in Bombay and other parts of India, and the tendency to export oil instead of seed is increasing.

Copra.—It is thought that the long-prophesied 'boom' in coco-nut planting will take place as soon as normal conditions are restored after the war. About 35 per cent. of the world's output of copra, the dried kernel of the coco-nut, is produced in the British Empire—Ceylon, India, and the British possessions in the Pacific being the chief exporters. The Philippines, Java, and Celebes are the largest foreign producers. Copra from the west coast of India, known as Cochin copra, commands the highest price in the world's markets. The production of coco-nut oil for shipment instead of copra is rapidly expanding in southern India.

Ceylon is the largest exporter of products of the coco-nut palm in the Empire. The shipments in 1915 were fifty-five thousand tons of copra, twenty-five thousand tons of oil, and seventeen thousand tons of desiccated coco-nut. Amongst British African colonies, British East Africa, Zanzibar, and the Gold Coast produce copra. In the West Indies the coco-nuts are more often shipped as fruit than in the form of copra.

Cotton-seed oil is used in soap-making, by pastry-cooks and confectioners, for frying, and also in making vegetable lard and butter substitutes. This seed is imported into the United Kingdom, for crushing, to the value of over four million pounds a year, mainly from Egypt and India; whilst refined cotton-seed oil is also imported from the United States to the value of over a million sterling.

The *ground-nut* (or pea-nut) oil industry in France is very important, and deals with half-a-million tons of nuts a year, derived chiefly from French and British colonies. The oil is used as a salad-oil, for cooking purposes, in canning sardines, and in the manufacture of margarine. The best qualities of ground-nut oil compare favourably with olive-oil, and can be produced at a much lower cost. The cake is one of the best feeding-cakes for stock. The present high prices of cotton-seed have caused seed-crushers in the United States to turn their attention to ground-nuts, which are grown there on a large scale, and are eaten in the form of roasted pea-nuts and as 'pea-nut butter.' Seeing that ground-nuts are very largely produced in the British Empire, it is surprising that they have been hitherto almost entirely neglected by British oil-seed crushers. The unshelled nuts are sold by fruiterers in this country, and the roasted kernels are used by manufacturing confectioners as a substitute for more expensive edible nuts; but there is room for a much larger consumption for the production of oil and cake, especially in view of the need of finding a market for the nuts from India and Gambia, which formerly went to Germany.

Linseed is in a different category from that of the oil-seeds so far mentioned, inasmuch as the oil is not an edible oil, but a 'drying' oil used in the manufacture of paints, varnishes, and linoleum. The Argentine and India are our chief sources of supply of linseed, the value of our imports being between five and six million pounds a year. Four or five years ago we were importing large quantities of linseed-oil from the Netherlands and Belgium, but practically all our requirements of linseed-oil are now produced from seed crushed in this country.

Mowra-seed is an Indian oil-seed which was formerly shipped to Germany, and for which no new purchaser has yet been found. The result is that the export from India has seriously declined. Mowra fat is used in soap and candle making and as a chocolate fat.

Niger-seed oil is used as a substitute for linseed-oil when the latter is scarce, though it has not such good drying properties. It is suitable for soap-making, and for use as an edible oil. Niger-seed is produced largely in India.

Much has been heard recently of *palm-kernel oil*, a product of the West African oil-palm, which also yields palm-oil. Palm-oil is obtained from the pericarp or outer pulpy layer of the palm fruit. The kernels are obtained by shelling the palm-nuts which are left when the pericarp is removed from the fruit. Palm-kernel 'oil' is a soft fat with a pleasant nutty taste, and resembling coco-nut oil both in appearance and character. It is used in soap and candle manufacture, and in the preparation of margarine and cooking fats. The cake or meal which is left after expression or extraction of the oil from palm-kernels is a useful cattle food, which was much used in Germany, and is speedily finding favour amongst dairymen and stock-feeders in the United Kingdom. Up to the time of the war West African palm-kernels were mainly shipped to Germany, where the oil was expressed and sent to this country either unrefined or manufactured into butter substitute. The crushing of palm-kernels has now been taken up by British oil-seed

crushers, and this valuable trade has been captured from Germany. To ensure that the industry shall be retained in the Empire after the war, an export duty has been placed on shipments of palm-kernels from British West African colonies to destinations other than British.

Sesamum-seed, also known as sesame, sim-sim, til, gingelly, and benni seed, is the product of an annual plant cultivated in India, China, Turkey, and throughout the warmer regions of the world. The oil from the seed is used as an article of food in the countries where it is produced, and for soap-making and margarine manufacture in European countries, particularly France. Exports of sesamum-seed from India have fallen from nearly a hundred thousand tons in the year 1913–14 to less than fourteen thousand tons in the year 1915–16. Here again is a valuable Empire product which is almost unknown to British importers and manufacturers. Small quantities of sesamum-seed are occasionally imported into this country, and used as an ingredient in compound feeding-cakes, but the crushing of sesamum-seed on a large scale has not yet been undertaken here. The presence of very small quantities of sesamum-oil can be readily demonstrated by means of a chemical test producing a characteristic crimson colour, and in some Continental countries manufacturers of margarine are required by law to include a small quantity of this oil in their products, so that the difference between margarine and butter can be easily detected.

Shea butter is the fat obtained from the kernels of the shea-tree of West Africa. It is used by the natives for food, and the nuts are exported to the extent of about ten thousand tons a year. In Europe the fat obtained from the kernels is used in candle-making and, mixed with other oils, for soap-making. The shea-butter tree flourishes over large areas in Northern Nigeria. In northern Ashanti large tracts of country containing these trees are waiting to be exploited when cheap transport is available.

Poppy-seed has been for many years crushed for its oil in France, supplies of seed being obtained from India, whence the shipments have been as much as forty thousand tons in a year, and from Turkey. The poppy is also cultivated for its seed in France and Russia. Poppy-seed oil is a colourless or very pale golden yellow oil, with little or no odour and a pleasant taste; it is used as a salad oil, and is often added to olive-oil. Its 'drying' properties enable it to be used as a fixing agent in the preparation of artists' colours. Exposure to light renders it perfectly colourless, and it is therefore particularly suitable for use in making white paints.

The chief use of *rape-seed* is for the expression of its oil (colza-oil), which is used for burning. The crushing of rape-seed is an important industry in this country, our supplies being obtained largely from India and, in normal times, from Russia. Havre is another important centre for the crushing of rape-seed, whilst Japan also grows the seed and exports the oil.

The *soya-bean* of Manchuria has long been an important article of food in the East. In Europe the oil pressed from the bean is used by manufacturers of margarine, soap, and candles, and in the manufacture of varnish and printing-ink. Experiments in growing soya-beans have been made in many parts of the British Empire; but it seems unlikely that the crop can be profitably grown for export in competition with the Manchurian beans, which are raised under ideal climatic conditions and by the cheapest possible labour. Imports of soya-beans into the United Kingdom fluctuate rather strangely, but they have averaged over a hundred thousand tons a year for the last five years.

Sunflower-seed is extensively produced, and crushed for its oil, in Russia; but not much attention has been given elsewhere to the cultivation of the sunflower for its seed. The oil is suitable for edible purposes, and when refined is a good substitute for olive-oil. The cake is a good feeding-stuff for stock.

It will be seen that the world's trade in oil-seeds is now of the greatest importance, and that the British Empire is concerned in a very large share of it. The world's demand for oil-seeds has increased enormously during the last few years, partly owing to the requirements of soap, glycerine, and lubricant makers, but more especially to the growth of the margarine-manufacturing industry, which, it is to be hoped, will ere long become firmly established on the largest scale in the United Kingdom.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By JEFFERY FARNOL.

CHAPTER XVII.—HOW GEOFFREY RAVENSLEE MADE A DEAL IN REAL ESTATE.

THE morning sun blazed down, and Tenth Avenue was full of noise and dust and heat; children screamed and played and fought together, carts rumbled past, distant street-cars clanged their bells, the side-walks were full of the stir and bustle of Saturday; but Ravenslee went his way heedless of all this, even of the heat, for before his eyes was the vision of a maid's shy loveliness, and he thrilled anew at the memory of two warm lips. Thus he strode

unheeding through the jostling throng at a speed very different from his ordinary lounging gait. Very soon he came to a small drug-store, weather-beaten and grimy of exterior, but very bright within, where everything seemed in a perpetual state of glitter, from the multitudinous array of bottles and glassware upon the shelves to the taps and knobs of the soda-fountain. Yet nowhere was there anything quite so bright as the shrewd, twinkling eyes of the little, gray-haired man who greeted Ravenslee with a cheery nod.

'Hot enough?' he inquired.

'Quite!' answered Ravenslee.

'Goin' to be hotter.'

'Afraid so.'

'Rough on th' kiddies, an' ice goin' up. Which reminds me I sent on the mixture you ordered for little Hazel Bowker.'

'Good,' nodded Ravenslee.

'And the pills to Mrs Sims.'

'Good again.'

'An' the sleepin'-draught for old Martin Finlay.'

'Good once more.'

'Won't last long, old Martin, I guess. Never been the same since little Maggie drowned herself, poor child! What d' ye want this mornin'?'

'First, to pay for the medicine,' said Ravenslee, laying a five-dollar bill on the counter, 'and then the use of your 'phone.'

'Right there,' said the chemist, nodding toward a certain shady corner, where, remote from all intruding bustle, was a telephone-booth, into which Ravenslee stepped forthwith, and where ensued the following one-sided conversation.

Ravenslee—'Hallo!'

Telephone—'Buzz!'

Ravenslee—'Hallo, Central! give me thirty-three Wall, please.'

Telephone—'Ting-a-ling—buzz-z!'

Ravenslee—'Damn this 'phone—what? No, I said double-three Wall.'

Telephone—'Buzz! Ting! Zut!'

Ravenslee—'Sounded different, did it? Well, I want'——

Telephone—'Buzz! Zut! Ting!'

Ravenslee—'Thanks. Hallo! that thirty-three Wall? Dana & Anderson's office? Good! I want to speak with Mr Anderson—say Mr Ravenslee.'

Telephone—'Zing!'

Ravenslee—'Thanks. That you, Anderson?'

Telephone—'Pang!'

Ravenslee—'Thanks—very well! What the devil's wrong with this instrument of torment? Can you hear me?'

Telephone—'Crack!'

Ravenslee—'Good! Yes—that's better! Now listen; I want you to do some business for me. No, I'm buying, not selling. I'm going into real estate. What! a bad speculation? Well, anyway, I'm buying tenement property in Tenth Avenue, known as Mulligan's, I believe. Oh, you've heard of it, eh? Not in the market? Not for sale? Well, I'll buy it. Oh yes, you can—what d' you suppose is his figure? So much? Phew! Oh, well, double it. No, I'm not mad, Anderson. No, nor drunk. I just happen to want Mulligan's—and I'll have it. When can you put the deal through? Oh, nonsense; make him sell at once—get him on the 'phone. Oh yes, he will if you offer enough—Mulligan would sell his mother—at his own price. You quite understand—at once, mind! All right. Good-bye. No, I'm not mad—or drunk, man; I haven't tasted a cocktail for a month. Eh—go and get one? I will!'

So saying, Ravenslee hung up the receiver and hasted out of the stifling heat of the suffocating booth, mopping perspiring brow.

'You look kinder warm!' nodded the chemist.

'I feel it.'

'An' it's goin' to be warmer. Try an ice-cream soda—healthy an' invigoratin'.'

'And better than any cocktail on such a day!'

'I guess! Take one?'

'Thank you, yes.'

So the bright-eyed chemist mixed the beverage and handed it over the counter. 'Chin-chin!' he nodded.

'Twice,' said Ravenslee, lifting the long glass. 'To the beautiful City of Perhaps!' and he drank deep.

'Say,' said the chemist, staring, 'that sounds t' me like a touch of the sun. Try a bottle of my summer mixture; good for sunstroke, heat-bumps, colic, spasms, and Hell's Kitchen generally. Try a bottle?'

'Thanks,' said Ravenslee, 'I will.' And grimly pocketing the bottled panacea, he stepped out into the hot and noisy avenue.

CHAPTER XVIII.—HOW SPIKE HEARKENED TO POISONOUS SUGGESTION, AND SOAPY BEGAN TO WONDER.

SPIKE was on his way from the office, very conscious of his new straw hat and immaculate collar; his erstwhile shabby suit had been cleaned and pressed by Hermione's skilled and loving fingers; hence Spike turned now and then as he passed some shop window to observe the general effect with furtive eye; and, stimulated by his unwontedly smart appearance, he whistled joyously as he betook himself homeward. Moreover, in his breast-pocket was his pay-envelope—not very bulky, to be sure—wherein lay his first week's wages, and as often as he turned to glance at the tilt of his straw hat or heed the set of his tie, his hand must needs steal to this envelope to make sure of its safety.

His fingers were so employed when he chanced to espy a certain article exposed for sale in an adjacent shop window; whereupon, envelope in hand, he incontinently entered and addressed the plump Semitic merchant in his usual easy manner.

'Greetin's, Abe! I'll take one o' them hair-combs.'

'Hair-gombs?' nodded the merchant. 'Vot kind?'

'What kind? Why, the best you got.'

'Ve got 'em up to veefty dollars.'

'Come off it, Cain—come off. I ain't purchasin' a diamond aigrette to-day; it's a lady's hair-comb I want, good, but not too flossy-lookin'—savvy that? This'll do, I guess—how much? Right there!' said Spike, flicking a bill upon the counter. 'That's it, stick it in a box—oh, never mind th' wrappin's. S' long, Daniel!'

With his purchase in his pocket, Spike strode out of the shop whistling cheerily, but the merry notes ended very suddenly as he dodged back again, yet not quite quick enough, for a rough voice hailed him, hoarse and jovial.

'Why, hallo, kid, how goes it?' M'Ginnis's heavy hand descended on his shrinking shoulder, and next moment he was out on the side-walk, where Soapy lounged, a smouldering cigarette pendent from his thin, pallid lips, as usual. And Soapy's eyes, so bright between their narrowed, puffy lids, so old-seeming in the youthful oval of his pale face, were like his cigarette, in that they smouldered also.

'Holy smoke!' exclaimed M'Ginnis, surveying Spike up and down in mock amazement, 'this ain't you, kid—no, this sure ain't you.—Looks all t' th' company-promoter, don't he, Soapy?'

''S right, kid; 's right!' nodded the pallid youth, his smouldering eyes always turning toward M'Ginnis.

'Say now, Bud, quit yer kiddin'!' said Spike petulantly.

'But, gee-whiz!' exclaimed M'Ginnis, tightening his grasp, 'you sure are some class, kid, in that stiff collar an' sporty tie. How's the stock-market? Are ye a bull or a bear?'

'Ah, cut it out, Bud!' cried the lad, writhing.

'Right-o, kid; right-o!' said M'Ginnis, loosing his hold. 'You're comin' over t' O'Rourke's to-night, of course?'

'Why, no, Bud, I can't.'

'Oh, t' hell wid that! I got you all fixed up to go ten rounds wid Young Alf, th' East Side Wonder.'

'What!' exclaimed Spike, his eyes bright and eager; 'you got me a match wi' Young Alf? Say, Bud, you ain't stringin' me, are ye?'

'Not much. I told you I'd get ye a real chance.'

'Why,' cried Spike, 'if I was t' lick Young Alf I'd be in line t' meet th' top-notchers!'

'Sure—if you lick him!' nodded M'Ginnis grimly.

'Say,' said Spike, his face radiant, 'I've just been waitin' an' waitin' for a chance like this—a chance t' show you an' th' bunch I can handle meself—an' now'—— He stopped all at once, and, shaking his head gloomily, turned away. 'I forgot, I—I can't, Bud.'

'Aw, what's bitin' ye?'

'I can't come t'-night.'

'Won't come, ye mean!'

'Can't, Bud.'

'Why not?'

'I promised Hermy t' quit fightin'.'

'Is that all? Hermy don't have t' know nothin' about it. This is a swell chance for ye, kid—the best you'll ever get; so just shin over t'-night, an' don't say nothin' t' nobody.'

'I—can't, Bud—that's sure.'

'Goin' t' give me de throw-down, are ye?'

'I don't mean it that ways, Bud, but I can't break my promise t' Hermy.'

'She'd never know.'

'She'd find out some ways—she always does, and I can't lie t' her.'

'So you won't come, hey? We ain't classy enough for ye these days, hey? I guess goin' to an office every day is one thing, an' crackin' a millionaire's crib's another.'

'Cheese it, Bud—cheese it!' gasped Spike, pale and trembling.

'Right-o, kid!' nodded M'Ginnis; 'but I've been wantin t' know how ye made your get-away that night.'

'Oh, quit—quit talkin' of it!' Spike panted. 'I—I want t' forget all about it. I been tryin' t' think it never happened.'

'Ah, but you know it did,' said M'Ginnis, 'an' I know it, an' Soapy knows it did.—Don'tcher, Soapy?'

''S right,' nodded Soapy, his voice soft, his eyes hard and malevolent.

'So we kinder want t' know,' continued M'Ginnis, heedless always of those baleful watching eyes—'we just want t' get on t' how you'——

'Oh, say—give it a rest!' cried Spike desperately; 'give it a rest, can't ye?'

'Why, then, kid, what about comin' over t' O'Rourke's t'-night?'

Spike wrung his hands. 'If Hermy finds out she'll—cry, I guess.'

'Hermy!' growled M'Ginnis, black brows fierce and scowling. 'A hell o' a lot you care for Hermy, I—don't think!'

'Say now, you Bud, whatcher mean?' demanded Spike, quivering with sudden anger.

'Just this, kid—what kind o' a brother are ye t' go lettin' that noo pal o' yours—that guy you call Geoff—go sneakin' round her mornin', noon, an' night?'

'You cut that out, Bud M'Ginnis. Geoff don't! Geoff ain't that kind.'

'He don't, eh? Well, what about all this

talk that 's goin' on—about him an' her, an' her an' him—eh?'

'What talk?' demanded Spike, suddenly troubled.

'Why, every one 's beginnin' t' notice as they 're always meetin' on th' stairs—an' him goin' into her flat, an' them talkin' an' laughin' together when you 're out o' th' way—ah,' growled M'Ginnis between grinding white teeth, 'an' likely as not kissin' an' squeezin' in corners.'

'That 's enough—that 's enough!' cried the boy, fronting M'Ginnis fierce-eyed; 'nobody ain't goin' t' speak about Hermy that way.'

'Ye can't help it, kid. Here 's this guy Geoff, this pal o' yours—been with her—in her flat with her, all th' mornin'.—Ain't he, Soapy?'

''S right, kid!' nodded that pallid individual, the smouldering cigarette a-swing between pale lips; and, though he addressed Spike, his furtive eyes, watching aslant between narrowed lids, glittered to behold M'Ginnis's scowling brow; also the wolverine mouth curled faintly, so that the pendulous cigarette stirred and quivered.

'Oh, I 'm handin' ye the straight goods, kid,' M'Ginnis went on; 'I 'm puttin' ye wise because you 're my pal, an' because I 've known Hermy an' been kind o' soft about her since we was kids.'

'Well, then, you know she—she ain't that sort,' said Spike, his voice quavering oddly, 'so—don't you—say no more—see?'

'All right, kid; all right—only I don't like t' see this pal o' yours gettin' in his dirty work behind your back. If anythin' happens—don't blame me.'

'What—what you tryin' t' tell me—you, Bud?' questioned Spike between quivering lips.

'I 'm tellin' ye things are gettin' too warm. Oh, Hermy ain't the icicle she tries t' make out she is.'

'An' I 'm tellin' you—you 're a liar, Bud M'Ginnis—a dirty liar!' cried the boy.

M'Ginnis's bull-neck swelled; between his thick, black brows was a vein that swelled and pulsed; and, viewing this, Soapy's glittering eyes blinked and the pendulous cigarette quivered faintly again.

'Now, by'—— began M'Ginnis, lifting menacing fist; then his arm sank and he shook his big handsome head. 'Oh, pshaw!' he exclaimed, 'I guess you 're all worked up, kid, so I ain't takin' no notice. But savvy this, kid; if Hermy ain't goin' t' marry me on th' level, she ain't goin' t' let this guy have her—the other way—not much! I guess you ain't forgotten little Maggie Finlay? Well, watch out your pal Geoff don't make Hermy go th' same.'

Uttering a wild, inarticulate cry, the lad sprang—to be caught in M'Ginnis's powerful grasp; but, even so, his fist grazed M'Ginnis's full-lipped mouth. For a moment Spike strove desperately to reach Bud's grim, smiling face, until, finding all his efforts vain, he ceased all at once, bowed his head upon his arms, and burst into a passion of bitter sobbing; then, with an agile twist, he wrenched himself free, and, turning, sped away, heedless of his jaunty straw hat that had fallen and lay upon the dusty side-walk. Languidly Soapy stooped and picked it up.

'His noo lid!' said he; 'only bought t'-day, I reckon!'

'Gee!' exclaimed M'Ginnis, staring after Spike's fleeing figure, already far away; 'he sure was some peevish!'

'Some!' nodded Soapy. 'If he 'd happened t' have a gun handy, here 's where you 'd have cashed in for good, I reckon. Yes, Bud, you 'd be deader 'n mutton!' sighed Soapy, turning Spike's hat upon his finger; 'you 'd be as dead as—little Maggie Finlay you was mentionin'!'

M'Ginnis wheeled so suddenly upon the speaker that he took a long step backwards, but he still spun Spike's hat upon his finger, and the pendulous cigarette quivered quite noticeably. 'Aw, quit it, Bud; quit it!' he sighed. 'You know I ain't th' kind o' guy it 's healthy to punch around promiscuous.'

'You mean, if he 'd missed, there was you, eh?'

'Well, I dunno, Bud; if it had been my sister—maybe'——

'Oh, I know the sort o' dirty tyke you are, Soapy; but I 'm awake—an' I 've got you, see? If anythin' was t' happen t' me, I 've left papers—proofs—'n' it 'ud be the chair for yours—savvy?'

'Anyway, Bud, I—I haven't got a sister,' said Soapy, juggling deftly with the hat. 'But there 's one thing, Bud; th' guy who gets actin' Mr Freshy with Hermy is sure goin' to ante-up in kingdom come if th' kid 's around.'

'You 're a dirty dog, Soapy, but you 've got brains in your ugly dome. I guess you 're right about th' kid, an' that gives me an almighty good idea!' And M'Ginnis walked on awhile deep in thought; and ever as he went, so between those pale and puffy lids two malevolent eyes watched and watched him.

'No,' sighed Soapy at last, sliding a long, pale hand into the pocket of his smartly tailored coat—'no, I ain't got a sister, Bud; but there was little Maggie Finlay—I kind o' used t' think she was all t' th' harps an' halos—I used t' kind o' hope—but, pshaw! she 's dead—ain't she, Bud?'

'I guess so!' nodded M'Ginnis, yet deep in thought.

'An' buried—ain't she, Bud?'

'What th' hell!' exclaimed Bud, turning to stare—'what 's bitin' ye?'

'I 'm wonderin' "why," an' I 'm likewise wonderin' "who," Bud. Maybe I 'll find out for sure some day. I 'm—waitin', Bud—waitin'. Goin' around t' O'Rourke's, are ye? Oh, well, I guess I 'll hike along wid ye, Bud.'

(*Continued on page 308.*)

JOHN NAPIER, THE INVENTOR OF LOGARITHMS.

By GEORGE PHILIP, M.A., D.Sc.

THIS year is the tercentenary of the death of John Napier, Laird of Merchiston, the inventor of logarithms. He was born in 1550, and died 4th April 1617. One hears a great deal just now of the neglect of science in this country, and nowhere is this neglect more evident than in the scanty interest shown in the lives of our great men of science. The subject of the present article is a glaring example of this. Some books on the history of Scotland pass him over in silence; others dispose of him and his works in a very few lines; while others simply refer to him as a recluse who won a reputation as a devotee of the black art. Writers on general history are not entirely to blame in this respect, as scientific men themselves have paid little attention to the ways trodden by their great forerunners. Curiously enough, the only historian of Scotland who does anything like credit to Napier's memory is David Hume, who showed in general very little appreciation for any talent other than literary. Hume said that 'John Napier was the person to whom the title of a great man was more justly due than to any other whom his country ever produced.' Most people will probably dissent from this opinion; nevertheless, it is a fact that, whether we judge a man by the brilliance of his genius or by the influence of his discovery on succeeding generations, John Napier will rank among the very greatest of our countrymen. It is regrettable that more information is not circulated about the great scientific achievements of the men of these islands; it would effectually dispose of a very prevalent idea that in the matter of invention or discovery we are the inferiors of the Teuton. Many notable results of far-reaching importance have been attained by men of our race, but one is safe in saying that not one of these results has had a greater influence on the progress of science than the invention of logarithms. To bear this out, it is sufficient to remark that the process invented by Napier is employed in the everyday routine work of the engineer, the surveyor, the navigator, the actuary, and the accountant; and when these are mentioned it will be seen that the whole fabric of our commercial life is intimately associated with that invention.

Every one knows that the most tedious operations we have to perform in arithmetical calculations are those that involve multiplication and division; addition and subtraction are, comparatively speaking, simple. Now, if a person is in possession of a table of logarithms, and knows how to use it, any calculation involving multiplication or division can be converted into one involving respectively addition or subtraction. Similarly, finding the power or the root of a number is merely a question of multiplication or division. A single example will suffice to show how much time is saved by utilising the remarkable process invented by Napier. Suppose we wish to find what answer we should get by multiplying 675 by 873. All we have to do is to turn up our table of logarithms, which tells us right away that the logarithm of 675 is 2·8293038 and that of 873 is 2·9410142. These numbers found in the tables have to be added, since our original numbers had to be multiplied. Our tables again tell us that the number which has for its logarithm 5·770318—the answer to our addition—is 589275, which is the answer desired.

Some readers to whom this process of calculation is new will be curious to see how it may be applied to assist a business man, say, in calculating what £3520 would amount to in 20 years at 4 per cent. per annum compound interest. If this had to be worked out by finding the interest year by year, it would take probably a couple of hours. But by our new method all that has to be done is as follows. (We are not here explaining the why and the wherefore of this method; we are merely showing how it is applied, and how effective it is in saving time.) We proceed thus: Take the logarithm of 1·04; multiply that by 20; add to the answer the logarithm of 3520; find from the tables the number which has this number for its logarithm, and you have your answer. It takes merely a few minutes.

If any evidence is required to show how universal the use of logarithms is, and how many different types of businesses are assisted by it, we have only to glance over the list of societies and associations that took a prominent part in the Napier Tercentenary Celebrations held in Edinburgh in July 1914, just before the outbreak of war. That year was the tercentenary of the publication of Napier's great book on logarithms. In addition to delegates from the learned scientific societies (strictly so called) of all the civilised countries of the globe, representatives were sent from the Society of Shipbuilders, the Faculty of Actuaries, the Association of Chartered Accountants, the Institute of Bankers, and a host of other bodies that concern themselves entirely with practical business of one kind or another. They are not primarily interested in questions of abstract mathematics, and the very fact that representatives of all the great industries of the world met together to do honour to the memory of John Napier is surely ample proof of the greatness of his invention and of its far-reaching importance.

This article is not meant to usurp the place of a text-book of mathematics. It is merely intended to give the general public some idea of the achievements of this wonderful man of whom so little notice has hitherto been taken. We therefore make no attempt to explain to the reader who is unacquainted with logarithms the principle on which they are based. Suffice it to say that even after conceiving the idea and formulating his plan of working, Napier had a colossal amount of calculation to perform; yet his working was so accurate that in his final results, after calculating the logarithms of the first thousand numbers, he made only one arithmetical mistake, and an insignificant one at that, as it involved only a figure in the ninth decimal place. Napier called his tables *The Wonderful Canon or Rule*, knowing full well the value of the process he had elaborated, and the surprise it would cause when given to the world.

A brief summary of the state of physical science at the end of the sixteenth century will show that such an invention was greatly needed, the striking fact being that it came from such a totally unexpected quarter as the little kingdom of Scotland, which hitherto had not produced one single man of eminence in this department of learning.

Up till the beginning of the seventeenth century, and indeed for some time after, the only subject of study that can be dignified by the name of science was astronomy, which exerted a fascination over men's minds from the very earliest times. The motion of the heavenly bodies was closely watched in order to explain the theory of the universe, and rules were sought for calculating their position at any given time. To facilitate the use of these rules tables were constructed, these, in fact, being to the astronomer something like a ready-reckoner in the hands of a business man. By the time we speak of, these tables were tolerably complete, but the labour involved in using them was very heavy. The sixteenth century contained the working periods of the lives of the astronomers Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, and these two—especially the latter—left an immense mass of observational data which was greatly increased by Kepler, and was destined in his hands to be of invaluable service in establishing the laws of planetary motion, now known as Kepler's Laws. These in turn formed the facts from which Sir Isaac Newton deduced his law of gravitation. The invention of the Galilean telescope in the early years of the seventeenth century provided a means of making astronomical data more numerous and more accurate, but no simultaneous advance had yet been made in simplifying the calculations involved in the working up of these results. It is said that Kepler performed each calculation ten times, and that one hundred folio pages were taken up with each opposition of Mars. Any real progress was therefore impossible so long as astronomers were trammelled with ponderous arithmetical calculations, and it is not surprising that men of an inventive turn of mind directed their attention to constructing mechanical devices to facilitate computation. Napier himself devised his 'Bones' for such a purpose. It must also be borne in mind, too, that by this time the science of algebra, which was brought by the Arabs from the East, was percolating slowly through western Europe, and people in general were beginning to employ calculation more freely in their everyday life. The first English book on arithmetic was published about sixty years before Napier published his great *Canon*, but only a very few could perform even the simplest arithmetical operations. It will surprise most people to learn that even so late as the beginning of the seventeenth century there was no notation for the simple processes of algebra such as are now known to every schoolboy who has had his second lesson in that subject. These processes were expressed in words, and even the common signs of plus and minus were not in general use.

Such was the state of science in Europe when Napier in 1614 published his *Description of the Wonderful Table of Logarithmes*. It was not until 1619, five years after its publication, and two years after the death of its author, that Kepler saw the book. Yet he immediately wrote a letter to Napier, the news of whose death had not reached him, and in this letter he referred in the most glowing terms to the processes explained in the book. To make the whole world know of his indebtedness to Napier, he caused the letter to be published in his *Ephemeris* for 1620, an astronomical almanac published annually under his guidance.

The outstanding facts of Napier's life are now well established. He was born at Merchiston Castle—at that time *near* Edinburgh, now *in* the city—in 1550, his father, Sir Archibald Napier, like all the Napiers of Merchiston, being a man of high standing in the councils of the State. On his mother's side he was related to the Bellenden family, and indeed either by blood relationship or by marriage ties he was connected with the most powerful members of the Scottish nobility. For generations the Napier family were prominent in all matters affecting the welfare of the Scottish people, and in a turbulent age, when fortune proved a fickle mistress to many a Scottish noble, the Napiers of Merchiston preserved the goodwill and esteem of both sovereign and people.

At the age of fifteen John Napier went to St Salvator's College, St Andrews, and although he must have remained there for a few years, he left without taking a degree. After this, he is lost sight of for several years. There is little doubt that he went abroad to continue his education, and perhaps also to escape as far as possible from the turmoil that was threatening to overwhelm

Scotland at that time. In all probability he studied at the University of Paris, an institution that attracted many Scotsmen, who acquired there the education which their own country could not provide. This residence abroad had very far-reaching effects on Napier. In his day the only subjects taught at St Andrews were divinity and philosophy; if mathematics were taught at all, it was as a very subsidiary branch of philosophy. But in the Continental universities it was beginning to hold an important place in a general education, and at Paris we know that the celebrated mathematician Peter Ramus taught with great distinction. If we are right in our surmise that Napier studied at Paris, he would there come under the influence of Ramus, and that will account for the fact that soon after his return to Scotland he started to write his *De Arte Logistica*, which is essentially a work on algebra and arithmetic. A study of this book shows that Napier was at least abreast of his time in this department of mathematics. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that it affords evidence that he was aware of certain processes that were not in general use for fully a century later. These facts are worth recording, as they show that Napier was, without doubt, one of the foremost scholars of his day.

It must be a matter of intense satisfaction to all his countrymen to know that the honour of the first invention of logarithms belongs indubitably to John Napier. Students of the history of science know well the difficulty that often surrounds a claim to priority of discovery, but it is now a well-accepted dictum that priority of publication carries with it presumable priority of discovery. The facts that establish Napier's claim are of national interest to us, and consequently there is no necessity to crave forgiveness for introducing them here. His most formidable rival for the honour was Jacob Bürgi, a native of Prague, who did certainly construct a scheme of logarithms; but his process was not made public until 1620. We have, moreover, other grounds for establishing Napier's claim.

In a letter to Cugerus the mathematician, Kepler remarked that 'a certain Scotsman even in the year 1594 held out some promise of that wonderful canon [of Napier's] in a letter to Tycho Brahe.' Who this Scotsman was, and how the promise came to be made, is indicated by a discovery made in the Edinburgh University Library by Mark Napier, the biographer of John Napier. Here a copy of a book by Tycho Brahe was found which bears on one of its blank leaves in manuscript a Latin inscription to the following effect: 'To Doctor John Craig of Edinburgh, in Scotland, a most illustrious man and highly gifted with varied and excellent learning, Tycho Brahe hath sent this gift, and with his own hand hath written that at Uraniborg, 2 November 1588.' The only Dr John Craig this can refer to is the son of Sir Thomas Craig, the celebrated jurist of James VI.'s reign, and the intimate friend of Sir Archibald Napier of Merchiston.

There is very little known of John Craig except that he was physician-in-chief to James VI., and that he had some reputation as a mathematician. He and Sir Alexander Napier's eldest son were friends, and we know that he was on intimate terms with the family at Merchiston. That Craig was also a friend of Tycho Brahe is shown by the fact that in a collection of letters published in Brunswick in 1737 the first three letters are from Dr Craig to the Danish astronomer, and in one of these he says that 'about the beginning of last winter that excellent man Sir Wm. Stewart delivered to me your letter and the book you sent.' The book mentioned here is almost certainly that in the Edinburgh University Library, and the date of the letter is fixed, therefore, as 1589. As further confirmation of this we have the fact that this Sir William Stewart was in Denmark in 1588, making arrangements for the marriage of King James to the daughter of the Danish king. Two years afterwards the king himself visited Denmark, and in his capacity as patron of learning paid his respects to Tycho Brahe, who was then living in great splendour in his observatory at Uraniborg. Dr John Craig was with the king in his capacity as physician. These well-attested facts show that by the year 1590 John Napier of Merchiston and Tycho Brahe had a mutual friend, well versed in mathematics, and nothing is more probable than that the arithmetical labours that troubled practical astronomers formed the subject of conversation between Craig and his friends on both sides of the North Sea. There is accordingly good ground for believing that Kepler's information was correct, and that by the year 1590 Napier was engaged in the work of constructing his tables, twenty years before the earliest date claimed for the existence of Bürgi's table, and thirty years before its publication. It is very probable that both men independently invented a system of logarithms, but Kepler's enthusiastic welcome of Napier's tables, when he first became acquainted with them in 1620, appears to indicate that he had seen nothing like them before, which would hardly have been the case had Bürgi's work been then published.

A word or two must now be said about Napier's other activities. His prominence in public affairs disposes effectually of the widespread idea that he lived the life of a recluse either at Merchiston Castle or in his Stirlingshire residence. No man of his religious zeal could possibly remain a mere spectator when the newly formed Church had to fight so strenuously against a powerful faction that had many supporters both at home and abroad. No doubt the retired life of a scholar would have pleased him better than extorting pledges from an unwilling

monarch whose personal tastes were in entire antagonism to the wishes of the majority of his people. But this aspect of Napier's life must not be overlooked, as it had a powerful influence on his intellectual state at the time. His entire mental energies were taken up with religious matters, and the enemies of Protestantism assumed in his mind the form of fiends or monsters. The events through which Scotland had just passed, the reported alliance with the Spanish, and the fact that a Napier of Merchiston found himself ranged against his sovereign were quite sufficient to justify his looking on these happenings as the precursors of the end of all things. It was during these years that he was engaged in writing his book, *A Plaine Discovery of the Revelation of St John*, a treatise, published in 1593, which is perfectly ludicrous to this generation, but which gave Napier a reputation on the Continent which not even his invention of logarithms could give. To us it looks like an intelligence run riot. But when we reflect that the greatest thinkers of even a century later indulged in such grotesque speculations, we need not be surprised at Napier's prolonged studies in this subject. It seems to have been a subject specially attractive to a mind of a mathematical turn, as we find that Sir Isaac Newton, who was born practically a century after Napier, devoted a great deal of attention to interpretations of a similar kind.

Any sketch of John Napier's life would be incomplete without a reference to another sphere of activity in which he gained fame or notoriety. Popular opinion in the neighbourhood of his residences in Edinburgh and in Stirlingshire would have it that he was in league with the powers of darkness, and there is on record one instance at least in which he took advantage of the credulity and ignorance that pervaded all classes of his countrymen at that time. One almost forgives Napier's action in this case, for the dupe was a noted rascal named Logan of Restalrig, against whom Napier probably had a score to wipe out. Logan—so the story goes—had heard that there was a large quantity of hidden treasure somewhere in the neighbourhood of Fast Castle, a stronghold on the coast of Haddington, and after having failed to locate it himself, he called in the assistance of the wizard laird of Merchiston. Knowing his man, Napier expressed his willingness to go, on condition that he was given a safe conduct both to and from the castle. Whether the quest was successful or not we do not know, but on the road home Napier was waylaid and robbed by persons who, he supposed, were the retainers of Logan. No room for doubt remains as to his opinion of Logan of Restalrig and of all others of that name, for he gave instructions that in all leases issued subsequent to this a clause was to be inserted that no farm on his estates was to be let to any one of the name of Logan. Another story is related showing how he was popularly supposed to have superhuman powers. He had as a pet a jet-black cock, which was thought to give its master access to the most secret thoughts of his domestics. On one occasion Napier suspected a member of his household of theft, and to find out the culprit he put the cock, after having covered it with soot, into a darkened room, and then made his servants pass into the chamber one by one. He had previously informed them that the cock would crow when the guilty person touched it. The cock remained silent throughout, but the guilty person was soon discovered, as he alone emerged with clean hands.

Napier died, as we have said, in April 1617. We are not certain as to his burying-place, but in all probability it was the churchyard of St Cuthbert's, Edinburgh. Dr Robert Pont, the minister of St Cuthbert's for many years, was an intimate friend of Napier's. Some readers perhaps know his son better—Timothy Pont, one of the most famous of our early geographers and map-makers.

It is impossible in an article like this to do full justice to the claims of John Napier, but even from what has been said it is evident that Hume's estimate was in no way exaggerated, and that he was not only one of the greatest Scotsmen, but also one of the greatest men in the history of science.

A BOAT-CRUISING EXPERIENCE.

By Commander P. J. STOPFORD, R.N.

TO the north of the island of Zanzibar lies the island of Pemba, which used to be the hunting-ground of H.M. ships engaged in the suppression of the slave-trade.

The procedure was as follows. A ship would leave from one to four boats, provisioned for three weeks, to patrol a portion of the coast of the island, and then return to her ordinary duties. At the end of this period the ship would return, reprovision the boats, and relieve the crews, either partially or wholly, and again leave them. This was generally carried out at night, the ship showing no lights and sounding no bugle-calls. The slaves used to be brought over from the mainland, after marches often exceeding a hundred miles, during which they suffered indescribable hardships and ill-treatment, in gangs of ten to a hundred in small dhows, in which they were packed in the most appalling state of filth and misery.

It happened that the present writer (when sixteen years of age) was away on this service in a twenty-eight-foot cutter upon a memorable occasion. My crew consisted of six seamen, besides the coxswain, one marine, a native interpreter, and one seedie-boy (native sailor). Armament—seven Martini-Henry rifles, three revolvers, and three cutlasses. We had been away for a fortnight, during which time we had captured two empty dhows bearing obvious signs of having recently landed slaves. Both were subsequently condemned in the Prize Court.

It was a Sunday evening, and we were lying at anchor, with an awning spread, in a bay at the south-eastern extremity of the island, which was well known as a likely place for slaves to be landed. Suddenly a dhow was observed to round the point forming the eastern side of the bay, hauling her wind to come in. Instantly the awning under which we had been resting was furled, the anchor was weighed, and sail made. Upon observing this action, the dhow immediately bore up and disappeared in the direction from which she had come. This was fairly good evidence of her nefarious intention, and it did not take us long to follow in her tracks. We soon sighted her again, but she had considerable start of us; there was a very heavy sea outside, and it was evident that no mean chase was before us. Moreover, from her size we assumed that she would have a large cargo on board, and there was every prospect of her making a stout resistance.

The rules of this business required us to fire blank-cartridge from a rifle as a signal for her to heave to, and if that was disregarded, to fire a shot across her bows; but as she was dead to windward of us, and it was obvious that a blank could not be heard, we proceeded at once to fire ball to windward of her. But the motion of the boat made firing very erratic. Some shots were seen to strike the water less than half-way; some were never seen at all. After a few rounds without effect, we started firing at her sail. In the meantime everything was prepared for the anticipated 'scrap.' A stern chase is proverbially a long chase, and how long this one might have lasted cannot be known; for after about half-an-hour of it, we saw the dhow suddenly come up into the wind and take a quantity of water over her bow, and before the ejaculation 'That's a good one!' was finished, she gave a tremendous lurch the other way, and capsized before our astonished eyes. In a moment the surrounding sea was covered with struggling and yelling black figures.

Our excitement was now naturally intense, but there was nothing to be done but to sit tight and sail on. In a short time we saw one or two figures separate themselves from the remainder, and do their utmost to reach us. One of these, a strong swimmer, soon got near enough for us to see that he was almost exhausted. One of the crew immediately plunged into the sea, and soon reached the black, whom he supported. The boat was hove-to, and, with a life-buoy secured to a line, both were hauled into the boat. (The bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society was awarded for this deed.) This man, a slave, told us that there were a hundred slaves on board the dhow, and nine Arabs, who had guns.

We then sailed on towards the capsized dhow, on whose high stern, mast, and yard we could distinguish a crowd of poor wretches, whose terrible shrieks were becoming audible. It was a ghastly sight. Most of the slaves were unable to swim. Some, frightened by the Arabs' misrepresentations that the white man's object was to catch them and eat them, abandoned themselves to the sea, while others did their utmost to avoid us. We were sailing through a mass of inert and helpless bodies. Whenever we saw men alive—and in many cases these had others clinging to them—we threw our life-buoy towards them, and so saved a few. When we got abreast of the dhow, but to leeward of her, we tacked and went close past her, then went about again and sailed right over her, getting a good 'haul' off her yard. But it was maddening to see the way in which they quitted even that support to elude us. For the rest, we had to content ourselves with plane sailing through the crowd.

The same man who had made the previous rescue now made a second attempt, this time to save two little boys not very far off. One sank before he could reach him, and the other promptly grappled his would-be rescuer so dangerously that it was only by getting our oars out and pulling all we knew that we got to him in time to save him. He was nearly done up when we did so.

By this time the sun had set, and darkness was coming on with the rapidity of the tropics. Our number in the boat was more than doubled, and we had shipped a great deal of water. We went about once more and got one last lot; for to have stayed longer would have been to endanger our own boat and the lives we had saved.

We therefore reluctantly bore up for our own depot, about seven miles distant, and proceeded to take stock of the result. Of twenty bodies that we had secured, two were found to be dead, and two belonged to the dhow's crew, so that the slaves rescued numbered only sixteen—a sad minority out of one hundred, if what we had been told was true, as seemed likely. We did our best to make the poor wretches as comfortable as possible, and gave them as big a blow-out of rice, oatmeal, and tea as we could provide. There was a lot of bailing to be done to free the boat of water, and with a fair wind we made good progress. But we managed to run aground, and remained stuck for half-an-hour.

We reached our destination at half-past one

in the morning, and, having transferred our freight to an empty dhow that was there, we proceeded to restore the boat to a condition resembling good order, and then sought such rest as wet thwarts afforded.

Later inquiries in the neighbourhood showed that the bodies of fifty-six slaves, three Arabs, and the captain of the dhow had been recovered and buried by fishermen, and that six Arabs and one slave had escaped alive.

So ended an experience of which no one who took part therein is likely to wish for a repetition.

LIQUID-FIRE AND POISON-GAS.

By Arnold Freeman.

THOUGH it is now a long time since our German enemies introduced liquid-fire into this world-war, it is quite surprising how little is known in England, and what erroneous ideas are held, of this weapon of *Kultur*. It is not very long ago since I saw in a newspaper an account of an interview a correspondent had had with a *poilu* on the Somme front, in which the French Tommy described how from a vantage-point he had watched the Germans during an attack pour liquid-fire into a trench and shrivel up the defenders. Had that correspondent known the least thing about *Flammenwerferen*, he would have realised at once that the *poilu* was 'pulling his leg,' and I and a good many others would have missed a laugh. As a matter of fact, a trench is the safest place (excepting a dug-out) a man can be in if there is any so-called liquid-fire about.

I have played liquid-fire over a trench full of Tommies, and, the demonstration over, they have emerged smiling, unsinged, without even the smell of burning about them. I have been in a trench when the flame of the *Werfer* has been roaring overhead, and have felt a pleasant warmth; that is all.

For this reason. The flame about which so much (and so little) has been heard is from twenty to thirty feet long—the earlier *Werfer* throws the shorter distance—and *it cannot be directed downwards;* the extremity of the flame is never so near the ground as its beginning; for, the surrounding air being heated by the flame, it rises, as hot air is bound to do, and the cooler air below, moving upward to take its place, causes the flame to rise. Thus when the flame of a *Werfer* is directed upon a trench it passes harmlessly over the top, provided that the trench is not so badly constructed as to have the parados higher than the parapet; and provided, also, that the men have kept their heads and are lying down in the bottom of the trench. Once only have I known a man in a trench to be singed by the flame. He was a staff-officer, and perhaps considered it beneath his dignity to lie flat. He merely bent down. His dignity cost him a new tunic.

The only real value of this instrument of German *Kultur* is its moral effect. Certainly its appearance is fearsome enough. Just imagine the orange-coloured flame, thirty feet long and five or six feet in diameter, darting out towards one; the dense masses of black smoke given off by it; the great roar of its burning, and one can realise what its effect upon green troops might be. Consequently demonstrations are constantly being given at our training-centres in France, and also in the field, by means of captured flame-throwers. Whole companies of various battalions are placed in trenches, and the flames played over them, in order that the soldiers may realise how empty a blusterer the *Flammenwerfer* is, and that they may have confidence in the protection the trench gives them, and so deprive this instrument of its sole asset—its moral effect.

The liquid-fire apparatus is quite a simple affair. Outwardly, all one sees is a metal cylinder, which is fastened by means of straps to the back of the soldier whose duty it is to operate it, and a piece of metal hose-pipe attached to the cylinder. This pipe ends in a nozzle, which has attached to it a piece of wick, lighted before the attack begins.

The cylinder, or container, is divided into two parts. The upper half is filled with compressed hydrogen, the lower half with a mixture of burning and lubricating oils. The turning of a tap releases the hydrogen, which forces the oil in a fine spray through the pipe, the spray being ignited as it passes out of the nozzle by the piece of burning wick.

The *Flammenwerfer* operators have no enviable job, for the moment they are seen advancing they are the target for every rifle within reach. I remember once (it was before we knew how innocuous this weapon was), when the Germans were coming over to pay us a call, a big Irishman saw across an open space, where part of the gray-clad phalanx had been mown down, a man rushing forward with a cylinder arrangement on his back. He yelled out, 'Boys, that baste wid the hurdy-gurdy on 's back!' He was pumping out rapid fire as he spoke. 'Glory be to God!' he added as the man went down. 'Sure, it 's the flames of hell he was afther bringing to you!' A patrol went out afterwards to secure the apparatus, and they found that the man had been riddled with bullets from head to heel, and that the container he carried resembled a sieve.

Poison-gas when first introduced was certainly a more effective weapon than the *Flammenwerfer*,

whether one considers its moral effect or the number of men put out of action by its use. British troops were not prepared for it; so that when the first death-cloud was released by the Boche, to float slowly over and into our trenches, our men had no weapon with which to fight it. They had to choose between sticking to their posts and being poisoned, or running away and letting in the enemy. To their eternal honour, they chose to stay. Gasping, choking, retching, they kept on firing until, in some cases, they could hold the rifle no longer; in others, until relief came.

Steps were soon taken by the powers that be to meet the gas menace; for at the outset a very real menace it was. First, a respirator or pad to cover mouth and nostrils was introduced. It did not prove very effective. Many of my own regiment—the Duke's—wore them on a terrible day in May 1915, and were gassed in spite of them. Next a helmet with mica windows or eyepieces was introduced; but it was found that the mica was often broken in the folding of the helmet, and so the present helmet (of which every man possesses two), fitted with strong, flanged, glass eyepieces, was provided.

The present helmet is a perfect defence against gas. Wearing it, a man may walk about in the thickest gas-cloud unharmed (I have done so), though the formaldehyde generated inside the helmet does cause rather an unpleasant feeling in the throat. This is quite harmless, but it has caused many a man to imagine he was gassed when really he ailed nothing. I could tell a few laughable stories to illustrate this.

The men being in possession of helmets which protect them from the physical effects of a gas-cloud, it is necessary to instil in them confidence in their helmets, in order to rob the gas-cloud of its moral effect. For this purpose anti-gas schools were started—divisional ones, to which relays of men were and are sent from the various battalions in the division; and army-schools for the training of non-commissioned officers. In these schools lectures dealing with anti-gas methods are given each day, in the morning session. In the afternoon the men (wearing their gas-helmets) are placed in a specially built room, in which are fixed a number of gas-cylinders. The gas is turned on; the room is filled with a thick fog. So the men learn that a helmet gives them adequate protection; and after that, for them, a gas-cloud has no terrors. The men have confidence in their masks, and consequently there is no fear of their *moral* being shaken by such an attack.

At the gas-schools the men are also taught the use of the Vermorel Sprayer—an instrument not unlike a *Flammenwerfer* in appearance—which after an attack sprays trenches and dug-outs with a solution that kills the gas which (being heavier than air) is left in all hollows.

Poison-gas is conveyed to the trenches in cylinders about forty inches in length by seven in diameter. They are fixed—dug in in the front wall of the trench—in batteries of five, with a space of about twenty yards between them. The five cylinders are connected with one pipe, which runs through the sandbags and projects slightly over the slope of the parapet. As each cylinder is emptied the next is turned on, the battery being exhausted in about fifteen minutes. The gas issuing from the cylinders forms a fan-shaped cloud, which joins up with the clouds sent out by the batteries on either side, so that one long, unbroken cloud is formed. It is often mixed with smoke, in order to form a more effective cover from view, and thus facilitate an attack. For instance, a gas-cloud may be discharged over a mile front, and it may only be intended to attack at one point. The enemy being screened by a gas-and-smoke cloud, the defenders cannot tell at which point the attack is going to be launched, until it is too late to concentrate at that point.

To sum up, gas when first used was effective both for its effect upon *moral* and for the losses it caused. To-day, in consequence of the admirable training of the troops in anti-gas methods, it is in effect negligible. If any man is gas-poisoned, it is pretty safe to conclude that it is caused by carelessness or some other fault of the man himself.

AN ORKNEY MAID.

She dwells beneath a northern sky,
Where sometimes night
Seems strangely bright,
As if the day had not gone by,
And there beside Pomona's bay
Has from a child
Admired the wild,
Romantic scene of Orcady.

Its legends, too, of time long fled,
When on the wave
With daring brave
A roving life the Norsemen led,
Enkindled in her early years
An ardour keen
As theirs had been
That yielded not to craven fears.

Hence now a maiden fully grown,
Of aspect fair
And courage rare,
She often launches forth alone
Upon the heaving dark-blue sea
To sail her craft
The winds abaft,
In spite of dangers which may be.

Her seamanship so skilful aye,
That of the maid
'Tis aptly said,
When o'er the surf she glides away,
There goes a scion of the race
Who knew of old
As sailors bold
How perils of the deep to face.

JOHN OLIVER, M.A., V.D.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE RIVER.

By E. K. VENNER.

IT flows calmly along, under the bridge, and onward between its deep banks, faithfully recording all their varied reflections on its way, a thing of beauty and a picture of peace in the light of evening, with an evil reputation sufficient for a German. For, despite its innocent appearance, it is one of the most dangerous streams that flow. Underneath the calm, flowing surface are holes of surprising depth, and mingling with it unexpected currents full of deadly purpose. The toll of victims in the neighbourhood of the bridge alone, stretching far back into bygone days, must be of appalling length, and still the river asks for more. And, alas! it is likely to get them, for warnings and cautions are thrown away on the large class that contribute to the boating and bathing fatalities every year.

Splash! a salmon has jumped close to the bridge—a most effective check to melancholy reflections if you are a fisherman. There he is, dimly seen in the deep water, lying a little to the left of those weeds, his mouth showing a gleam of white as it opens and shuts—twenty pounds, if an ounce. There is a theory that the salmon here are quite aware of the presence of observers on the bridge, and jump up to have a good look at them. If this is so, they gratify their curiosity pretty often, as it is seldom that a pause on the bridge is not followed by a splash below. But whatever salmon are feeding on, they have at present little use for home-made flies, and takes are few and far between.

Not far from the farthermost pier lies a dead member of the community. Is he the victim of an otter, or what? More probably a case of disease. People who know say the drought and need of fresh water affect salmon very unfavourably. Perhaps this is a case in point. A local fishmonger told me that fish taken from the river at this time are quite off colour, the flesh of a recently caught one being white instead of the beautiful pink that has given its name to a much-used colour. But a forty-two-pounder set up in a neighbouring building in the pink of condition shows what the river can produce, an inscription beneath recording that it had been two years in the sea.

But here is a very different kind of fish swimming out from the bridge, a 'great logger-headed' chub in fact, of which the river is full. It seems strange to find a chub almost within the august circle made by one of the kings of the river, for he is one of the coarsest of fish. Into his capacious leathery mouth goes a large and varied selection of food. Bumble-bees, flies, frogs, minnows, and much else are all alike to him; cheese he is especially partial to—the stronger the better.

I tried the other day by that overhanging bush to indulge his appetite in this last particular, while Mollie read to me Izaak Walton's advice on the subject from the bank above. But, in the language of the day, there was 'nothing doing' on this occasion. Still, it was a pleasant experience to fish and have old Izaak behind one, as it were, and to hear of the chub which he caught.

'Look you, sir, there is a trial of my skill; there he is; that very chub which I showed you with the white spot on his tail, and I'll be as certain to make him a good dish of meat as I was to catch him. I'll now lead you to an honest ale-house where we shall find a cleanly room, lavender in the windows, and twenty ballads stuck about the wall. There my hostess, which I may tell you is both cleanly and handsome and civil, hath dressed many a one for me, and shall now dress it after my fashion, and I warrant it a good meat.' The secret of making a chub 'a good dish of meat' appears to be to cook him the day of his capture. But I must say, however, that, much as I should have liked to see this one caught, I should have been quite content to leave the eating of him to Izaak and his scholar, for, when all is said and done, the chub remains *un villain*, as the French call him.

There is one great drawback to fishing in our river, and that is the presence of a ravenous host of small gudgeon, which, when you are bottom-fishing, bite voraciously at the worm, which is not intended for the consumption of the nursery. Any number of these may be caught in a short time, and as they number almost six to the ounce, there is nothing for it but to throw them back again, unless, indeed, you want them for bait, in which event they would be sure to be affected by an unaccountable fit of shyness. But the persistent way in which at other times they can get a good-sized hook into their tiny

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mouths is quite remarkable. On one occasion, tired of having my bait spoilt and of returning the marauders to the water, I *did* use one of them as a bait, with the result of hooking a few minutes later a small jack, which I found exceedingly difficult, with such tackle, to pull out of a bed of weeds. These jack run up to a large size in our river, and vie with the salmon themselves in the weight to which they attain.

About a mile below the bridge are the falls, where the river suddenly breaks away from its slow and stately progress and speeds onward in a smother of froth and bubbles. Here in the gravel reaches is a grayling-ground par excellence, and many a fish has come to hand on the ideal landing-place, which looks as if it were made for fishermen. The water also looks as if it should be full of trout, but, strange to relate, that fish is very rarely taken in the river; why, I cannot say.

As you fish from here there is a pool at your feet swarming with what appear to be tiny grayling. So densely packed is this nursery that the nurslings may be scooped up in a landing-net before they have time to pass through the meshes. They are beautiful little silvery creatures, and would be the delight of a boy with a pickle-bottle.

While you are fishing you will also probably see a pair of kingfishers, whose special haunt this is, flashing up towards the falls, and giving warning of their approach by a sound which makes one imagine tiny wheels which require greasing.

Much more difficult to see are the otters and badgers which are about the high sand-banks. One can imagine the large toll of fish taken by the former in the river below, and what a mark for destruction they must present to the river-keepers.

But if otters are the enemies of the keepers, the badgers are equally the enemies of the farmers. A neighbour of mine told me they simply played havoc with his lambs, killing some out of pure mischief apparently, and dragging others to their holes in the river-banks. This hardly accords with the description of the badger which sets him forth as 'one of the most quiet and inoffensive of our indigenous animals.' Here he almost rivals the fox as a depredator.

But there is no doubt as to which of the two is the more destructive, and the river people would instantly award the palm to the little red rover. He has multiplied exceedingly of late years, and his raids on the fowl-houses of cottager and farmer are numerous and slaughtering. In fact, what between the damage done by him and that done by the rabbits, whose name is legion, and who have undermined the river-banks in many places in such a way as to make them positively dangerous, the people of the neighbourhood have a very bad time; and if you try to keep down the one, you have to deal with the other; for, a farmer told me, it was no good setting traps for rabbits, as the foxes always heard them and carried them off.

Just level with the falls an island divides the river into two branches, the water that is not drawn into the rapids finding its way round the other side of the island in a broad, rapid stream. In this branch a heron may sometimes be seen standing in a contemplative attitude; at other times he will rise from under the nearer bank, affording one a close view of the splendid spread of his wings and of his beautiful ash-gray plumage. He must have a sumptuous time amongst the small fry which swarm here as in other parts of the river, especially salmon par, which are as great a nuisance as are the gudgeon in the upper reaches, should you be fly-fishing for grayling. They are hauled out time after time, only to be returned to the water. This was not their fate in former years before they were protected by law, and many a choice dish of them has appeared on the breakfast-tables of the past. The readiness with which they are caught is all the more exasperating in view of the difficulty in this water of landing grayling. These are generally hooked some distance down-stream, with the result that after a few seconds' play the hook is pulled out of mouths tender enough even when hooked in more favourable circumstances, and hardly one in six comes to the landing-net.

The island is reputed to be a great otter stronghold, and it certainly seems an ideal place for such a shy community.

A fisherman once witnessed a curious encounter on it between a rabbit and a stoat. The rabbit suddenly appeared on the edge in an abject state of terror, and vanished a second after, a stoat occupying the place where it had stood; then the stoat vanished on the track of the rabbit. After some minutes the rabbit reappeared, having apparently made the circuit of the island, and once more gave place to the stoat. On the third appearance the rabbit had evidently come to the conclusion that the island was not big enough for the two of them, and that anything would be better than remaining on it with such a terrible little pursuer. It stood for a second looking at the river, and then suddenly plunged in and struck out for the shore. A minute later the stoat came into view on the taking-off place, and was plainly quite taken aback by the sight of the swimming rabbit. It had evidently never entered into his blood-thirsty calculations that a rabbit could swim. He gazed after it, absolutely baffled, and perhaps hoping in his ferocious little mind that the rabbit would be drowned. But the valiant swimmer was equal to the occasion, and the would-be assassin had the mortification of seeing it land and scramble up the opposite bank.

In the upper reaches of the river the water is of great and unexpected depth, shelving down within a foot or so from the bottom of the steep

banks to a depth of ten or twelve feet, and getting proportionately deeper farther out. One of these places is known to us as the Perch Hole, from its being a favourite haunt of these game fish. It is also one of the few favourable spots afforded for bank-fishing, the banks having been eaten out in a large semicircle, the sides of which lead easily down to the water. Here, where the water is fringed with water plantain, just outside a bed of weeds, the fisherman may have an exciting time watching his float, which may be taken down any moment by a good fish. The water plantain very much resembles gypsophila, but the angler will probably have more reason to notice the aggravating way in which his hook fits round its knots, to every one of which it is a perfect fit. It is bad enough in August, but it is worse in the autumn, when the plant lies submerged in the flood-water, for then a fixture means a breakage.

In this still-fishing it is extraordinary how much you can see of the life of the river, and how accustomed the river-folk become to your presence. As I was standing here recently, a dabchick suddenly appeared within a few feet of my float, and remained a few seconds near it, looking at me with her wild dark eyes, before paddling very leisurely over to the other side. The animal world is so full of starts and sudden movements that a perfectly still figure always seems to exert a soothing influence on it.

The bridge from here, perhaps, never looks to better advantage than when the river is all aglow with the golden light of sunset, when the water-fowl show black against its magic surface, and when the waters, as they flow onward, seem almost to have come down from the western sky —a river of liquid gold. Then the bridge hangs across, a fairy-like structure, a dream-bridge, such as you would imagine to lead to some cloud-capped castle set in the hills beyond.

But there is no such fair illusion when you stand in the same place and see the river raging along in full autumn flood, level with its fifteen-feet banks; you then only wonder at the strength of the bridge and the solidity of the piers which are withstanding the wild rush of waters.

This part of the river is subject to wind-storms of extraordinary violence, which often arise with startling suddenness, and rush up a magnificent avenue of Scotch firs which runs parallel with its course with the roar of an express train. On a recent memorable occasion a more than usually violent storm left behind it a scene of destruction amongst the trees which almost baffles description.

The people of the river country are surprisingly intelligent when one considers the remoteness of their situation. From our bridge it is two miles and more to the next bridge, and the cottages between the two are very much scattered. In these the people will talk to you in a low, attractive tone of voice, and show sometimes a quite unexpected knowledge of the questions of the day. Some of them speak with great aversion and horror of the river. They will tell you they never walk along its banks if they can help it, and, if you are a stranger, will earnestly warn you of its dangers. In one of the cottages lives an acute old fisherman, who by no means shares this aversion, for he spends all his spare time by the river-side, where his knowledge of the finny folk has been gained by much experience, and from which he generally goes homeward with something in his bag. It had a couple of eels in it when I last met him, and as the eels of the river have a great reputation for savouriness, his supper that night must have been well worth eating. But, like most rustic fishermen, he keeps his knowledge to himself. The story goes that a party of unsuccessful fishermen once came across him, and immediately divining that he knew the ropes, or, rather, the banks, proceeded to make much of him in the hope of extracting some useful information. They gave him an excellent lunch, and supplied him with unlimited tobacco, to both of which he took very kindly; but the net amount of information they got from him in return would have been sufficient 'to put on the point of a knife and choke a daw withal,' as Beatrice has it in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

I remember one of the same sort on another river, who assured me he knew of a certain bend some distance off where great sport was to be expected, and an arrangement was speedily made with him by myself and a friend to act as a guide to the place, his hand having been liberally crossed with silver. There was one bite during the day of a tentative description, that was all, and a weary trudge home at the end of it with anything but pleasant thoughts of the old rascal who had promised us such unusual sport. Of course, fish are uncertain things; but I think it quite possible that, knowing the ways of such gentry, he had taken our money to lead us to a place where we could not possibly spoil sport for him and his companions.

I saw another of the breed the other day fly-fishing a promising piece of water on the other side of the river. He could throw a fly, I could see, and seemed to know where to throw it; but as it meant a walk of two miles to get into communication with him by way of the bridge, I had to watch him in silence, and wonder what fly he was using. But would he have shown it to me had I been able to reach him? It is very doubtful.

When all is said and done, being able to fish at all is better than being by a river teeming with fish, where you may only look and long, and when the trout are rising in all directions under your eyes as if they knew you must not fish for them. On such a river it was calculated that the price paid for a season's fishing worked out at something like a guinea a trout of those caught.

Within sound of the falls of our river, where there ought to be trout and are not, there rises the tower of an ancient church under whose shadow Owen Glendower is said to be buried. The supposed place of burial is marked by a much-worn and broken stone slab, which, from its appearance, might well date back to his times. But whether this is his place of burial or not, there is no doubt that the ancient princes of Wales were much in its neighbourhood, often perhaps using the river for purposes of defence. All traces of fords have long since disappeared, but ours is not a river which looks as if it ever took kindly to the idea, and no doubt its appetite for victims was quite as voracious then as now.

There is one curious feature connected with the old church of the river which appears in the register of burials. These date back to 1678, and, for some years from the beginning, to every burial entry is attached an affidavit setting forth 'it was buried in woollen,' with the addition, in some cases, of the information, 'neither was the coffin lined with anything at all.' This was in compliance with the Act of 1666 under which woollen shrouds only were permitted to be used in England. To this obligation the lines written on a famous actress buried in Westminster Abbey would seem to refer:

'Odious in woollen, 'twould a saint provoke,'
Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke.
'One would not, sure, be ugly when one's dead,
And Betty, give this cheek a touch of red.'

How many woollen shrouds the river has been responsible for the extracts do not tell us.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XIX.—IN WHICH THE POISON BEGINS TO WORK.

SPIKE sat glowering at the newspaper, yet very conscious none the less that Hermione often turned to glance at him wistfully as she bustled to and fro. At last she spoke. 'Arthur dear, why so gloomy?'

'I ain't—I mean, I'm not.'

'You're not sulking about anything?'

'No.'

'Then you're sick.'

'I'm all right.'

'But you didn't enjoy your dinner a little bit.'

'I—I wasn't hungry, I guess,' said Spike, frowning down at the paper.

But Hermione was beside him, her cool fingers caressing his curls. 'Boy dear, what is it?'

'Say, Hermy, where'd you get them roses?' and he nodded to the flowers she had set among her shining hair.

'Oh, Mr Geoffrey brought them.'

'Been here, has he?'

'Yes; he came in with Ann this morning. Why?'

'Did he—did he stay long?'

'N-o, I don't think so. Why?'

'Comes round here pretty often, don't he?'

'Why, you see, he's your friend, dear, and we are very near neighbours.'

'Oh, I know all that; but—folks are beginning to—talk.'

Hermione's smooth brows were wrinkled faintly and her caressing hand had fallen away. 'To talk!' she repeated. 'You mean about—me?'

'Yes!' nodded Spike, avoiding her eyes; 'about you and—him!'

'Well, let them!' she answered gently. 'You and Ann are all I care about, so let them talk.'

'But I—I don't like folk t' talk about my sister, an' it's got to stop. You got t' tell him so, or else I will. What's he got t' go buyin' ye flowers for, anyway?'

Hermione's black brows knit in a sudden frown. 'Arthur, don't be silly!'

'Oh, I know you think I'm only a kid; but I ain't—I'm not. If you can't take care of—of yourself, I must, and'——

'Arthur, stop!'

'Well, but what's he always crawlin' around here for?'

'He doesn't crawl—he couldn't,' she cried in sudden anger; then in gentler tones, 'I don't think you'd better say any more, or maybe I shall grow angry. If you have grown to think so—so badly of him, remember I'm your sister.'

'But you're a girl, an' he's a man, an''——

'Stop it!' Hermione stamped her foot, and, meeting her flashing glance, Spike wilted and—stopped it. So, while he glowered at the paper again, Hermione put away the dinner-things, making more clatter about it than was usual, and turning now and then to glance at him under her long lashes.

'Where did you meet M'Ginnis as you came home, Arthur?'

'At the corner of—say, who told you I met him?'

'You did.'

'I never said a word about meetin' him.'

'No; but you've been telling me what he told you. Only M'Ginnis could be vile enough to dare say such things about me. Oh Arthur, for shame! How can you listen to that brute beast? For shame!'

Now, meeting the virginal purity of those eyes, Spike felt his cheeks burn, and he wriggled in his chair. 'Bud only told me Geoff had been—been here,' he stammered, 'and I guess it was the truth—I—I mean'——

'Oh, boy, for shame!' and, turning about, she swept from the room, her head carried very high, leaving him crouched in his chair, his nervous fingers twisting and turning a small box

in his pocket—the box that held the forgotten hair-comb. He was still sitting miserably thus, when he started to hear a knock on the outer door, and a moment later a woman's voice, querulous and high-pitched.

'Oh, Miss Hermy, my Martin 's very bad t'-night, an' I got t' go out, an' I can't leave him alone. Would ye mind comin' down an' sittin' with him for a bit?'

'Why, of course I will.'

'Ye see, since he had th' stroke he 's sorrered for our little Maggie—he was hard on her, ye see, an' since she—she died he 's been grievin' for her. Had himself laid in her little room—seemed to comfort him, somehow. But to-day, when he heard we had to leave because th' rent was rose, it nigh broke his poor heart. An' I got to go out, an' I can't leave him alone; so—if ye wouldn't mind, Miss Hermy'——

'Just a moment—I 'll come right now.'

As she spoke Hermione re-entered the kitchen, untying her apron as she came. Spike sat watching, waiting, yearning for a word, but without even a glance Hermione turned and left him. When he was alone he started to his feet, and, tearing the box from his pocket, dashed it fiercely to the floor; then as suddenly picked it up, and, approaching the open window, drew back his hand to hurl it out, and so stood, staring into the face that had risen to view beyond the window-ledge, a round face with two very round eyes, a round button of a nose, and a wide mouth just now up-curving in a grin.

'Hey, you, Larry, what you hangin' around here for?' demanded Spike, slipping the box into his pocket again. 'What you doin' on our fire-escape, hey?'

'Brought back yer roof!' replied the lad.

'Well, where is it?'

'Here it is,' and, climbing astride the window-sill, Larry handed in the jaunty straw.

'Where 'd you find it?'

'Bud give it me. 'N' say'——

'All right,' nodded Spike, dusting the straw tenderly with a handkerchief. 'Now git; I wanter be alone.'

'But, say, kid, Bud says I was ter say as he 's sorry for what he said 's mornin'; 'n' say, he says you 'd better be gettin' over t' O'Rourke's. 'N' say'——

'I ain't comin'!'

'But, say, you 're t' fight Young Alf. 'N' say'——

'I ain't comin'!'

'But, say, dere 's a lot o' our money on ye—I got two plunks meself; 'n' say, you just gotter fight, anyway—Bud says so.'

'I can't help what Bud says; I ain't comin'.'

'Not comin'!' exclaimed Larry, his eyes rounder than ever.

'No!'

Larry's wide mouth curved in a slow grin, and he nodded his close-cropped head. Said he, 'Say, kiddo, you know Young Alf 's a punishin' fighter, I guess; you know as nobody 's never stopped him yet, don'tcher; you know as you 're givin' him six pounds—say, you ain't—scared, are ye?'

'Scared?' repeated Spike, frowning. 'Do I look like I was scared? You know there ain't any guy I 'm scared of; but I promised Hermy'——

'Pip-pip!' grinned Larry. 'Say, if you don't turn up t'-night, d' ye know what de bunch 'll say? Dey 'll say you 're a—quitter!'

'Well, don't you say it, that 's all!' said Spike, laying aside his hat and clenching his fists.

'Not me!' grinned Larry. 'There 'll be plenty to do that, I guess. Dey 'll call it after ye in de streets. Dey 'll give ye th' ha! ha! Dey 'll say Hermy Chesterton's brother 's a quitter—a quitter!'

For a long moment Spike stood with bent head and hands tight-clenched; then crossing to the sideboard, he took thence his shabby cap.

'Who 's in my corner?'

'Now you 're talkin', kiddo. I know as you'——

'Who 's in my corner?'

'Bud an' Lefty. 'N' say, I guess they can handle you all right, eh? 'N' say, come on, let 's cop a sneak before any one butts in—de fire-escape for ours, eh?'

'Sure!' said Spike, climbing through the window. 'Oh, there ain't nobody goin' t' call Hermy Chesterton's brother a quitter!'

'You bet there ain't!' grinned Larry. 'Come on, kid!'

(*Continued on page 327.*)

SLEEP, TWIN BROTHER OF DEATH.

By F. G. Aflalo.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE reminds us that but for the fall of Adam there need have been no parsons, lawyers, or doctors. Even less important events, however, have had consequences little less appalling than the flourishing condition of the three professions, for if it had not been for the safe return of Emin Pasha and his troops from the Congo, there need have been no sleeping sickness in Uganda. It was by the infected remnant of soldiers who had served under Emin and Stanley that the disease was introduced into the Protectorate of Uganda,

bringing to the shores of Victoria Nyanza, as well as to its islands, a devastating horror that is appreciated only by those who have seen for themselves the visible results. Figures are too abstract. The bare statement that a quarter of a million natives succumbed to the new and hitherto unsuspected disease in the course of fifteen years, 'dying in the wilderness the same as the Israelites,' conveys little more realisation of the existing misery than any statistics of mortality from endemic outbreaks of more familiar description. One must look on the dreadful desolation of the silent islands from which the native population has perforce been removed by the Government, or journey through districts of the protectorate populated by human beings emaciated to the point of death, to understand what sleeping sickness actually signifies. Nor is it necessary to travel far before making acquaintance with the evil agent of destruction, the particular tsetse fly (*Glossina palpalis*), associated with the spread of the infection. As a matter of more recent discovery, an allied fly (*G. morsitans*), hitherto regarded as infecting only domestic cattle, is also suspected of transmitting sleeping sickness to human victims. It is, however, the first-named that is beyond all doubt an active vehicle of the disease. I have two before me as I write, not capable of doing any further mischief, but safely pinned on cork, and much more harmless than others that I remember attacking me in the country. Each is rather larger than our common house-fly, with a peculiar and, for the expert eye, unmistakable venation of the wings, the tips of which, when the fly is at rest, are crossed scissors fashion. The flight is so rapid as almost to baffle the eye. I have known them dash at a passing motor-van going fifteen miles an hour, and alight on a passenger. On one occasion, as we were travelling along the Masindi road, one of these insects suddenly appeared from nowhere on my sleeve; but, finding that I wore gauntlets, it shifted to the bare hand of a fellow-passenger, and promptly bit him. As he had been making game of my precautions, which comprised, in addition to the said gauntlets, a beekeeper's veil and mosquito-boots, his surprise was rather ludicrous; and the chances of his being infected with sleeping sickness were slight, for so effectually has the Government dealt with the problem, as will presently be shown, that it is officially computed that not more than four flies in every thousand are infected. The estimate may savour of optimism, but it is beyond denial that the insect's power for evil must have been enormously curtailed by the clearance of bush and the removal of infected natives out of reach of further flies. It is, therefore, once more possible over considerable areas of Uganda to be bitten by the tsetse with no worse consequences than used to result in the happy days before Stanley's troops brought this curse on the country. The alternative is too terrible to dwell on, and Europeans are by no means immune, as some folk appear to imagine. The wretched victim takes years in dying, and goes through successive stages of wasting, lassitude, and, in the majority of cases, mental decay.

The tsetse fly comes suddenly into view, darting from some low bush; inflicts its bite, generally after alighting unnoticed on the victim's wrist, neck, or ankle; and then, having taken its fill and done its evil work, departs. The most awkward position in which I remember having been attacked by one was when I was fishing at the Ripon Falls, where the Nile issues grandly from Lake Victoria. The fisherman has to stand on a narrow spit of rock close to the falls, with the roaring waters hurrying past his feet; and his freedom of movement on that precarious foothold is yet further restricted by the possibility of falling among crocodiles, which, at the headwaters of the Nile anyway, by no means confine their operations, as they are said to do elsewhere, to stagnant water, but have been known to show themselves aggressive in the mighty torrent racing north to Egypt. It was while standing on the rock that I suddenly became aware of a tsetse fly on my khaki sleeve. When disturbed, it flew across to the other sleeve, and it then became necessary to reel in line and lay down the rod to do battle in earnest. The fly got away with its life, but it stayed away, which was something. For the rest of the afternoon there was no trouble from anything worse than the little *umba* flies that swarm at that spot, and inflict a painful bite without further consequences.

Mention has been made of the swiftness of the tsetse on the wing, and its power of rapid flight has the effect of reducing its dangerous natural enemies to two, a bee-eater and a dragon-fly, the only known creatures regularly able to capture it in the air. The dragon-fly is probably the more efficient destroyer of the two, for the bee-eaters pass most of the day high up in the trees, and rarely come down to hunt round the low bush in which the tsetse has its haunts. It is, in fact, the need of such covert, combined with a humid atmosphere, that keeps the tsetse in the vicinity of overgrown lake-shores, and gives us some power over it, since by clearing the bush we can drive the hated insect elsewhere. I remember fishing one day with a party of natives and a seine-net on a newly cleared strip of foreshore about a mile from Entebbe, and there was no vestige of the fly on a spot that only a few weeks before had been forbidden ground. The policy of regarding infected natives as reservoirs of the disease, and removing them under surveillance to new quarters, where other flies will not have the chance of getting at them to lay in a fresh supply of *trypanosomes*, attacks the problem from another side, and, though admittedly less effective than clearing operations, may also contribute to improved conditions.

The mention of reservoirs brings us to the

possibility of a like purpose being served by buffalo and other big game, a hypothesis which rests on disputed evidence, but which has inspired those who accept it to urge the wholesale destruction of all wild animals in fly country. The causal connection between big game and sleeping sickness is not unanimously admitted, but there is certainly grave significance in the above-mentioned discovery that the germ of the disease can also be conveyed to human beings by a second species of tsetse fly heretofore regarded as hostile only to cattle. Whether any good purpose would be served by waging a war of extermination against the wild buffalo, without also attacking crocodiles and the monitor lizards which—a familiar sight as they lie basking on rocks and stumps along the shores of Lake Victoria—are even more favourite victims of the tsetse than the larger reptiles, is a matter for discussion; and it looks as if the game-rangers, jealous for their protégés, have at least as good a case as those who clamour for destruction.

Acquaintance with the tsetse fly and its haunts is necessarily restricted, so far as the unofficial traveller in Uganda is concerned, by the wise action of the medical officer in putting all infected areas out of bounds. This it was that recently prevented my visiting the Murchison Falls, which are said to combine entrancing scenery with wonderful fishing; but I came across the insect more than once during a brief visit to Lake Albert. One alighted on the table as I was at lunch on the deck of the *Samuel Baker* with Captain Dugdale. On the following morning the gig in which I was fishing was driven by a violent squall into a little bay on the farther shore, and my crew suddenly set about belabouring a couple of natives whom we discovered loading bananas into their canoe. Inquiry as to the reason for this seemingly unprovoked attack elicited the fact that the men had no right to be ashore at that spot, a perfect hive of tsetse flies, and this unwelcome information inspired a hurried mobilisation of all hands to shove the gig off and out of risk of infection.

The horror of sleeping sickness lies in our helplessness to fight it. It is almost the only disease of importance which still absolutely defies both medicine and surgery. It remains, in short, *opprobrium medicorum*, and there is no immediate prospect of removing this terrible reproach. Every specific, including at least one of which much was hoped, has failed in turn. Antimony and atoxyl have been discarded as futile; and the one remedy that promised relief proved, unless administered in insufficient doses, worse than the disease.

If we can do nothing to cure the disease, we are almost as powerless to prevent it. True, the clearing operations afore-mentioned are efficient so far as they go, but lack of funds precludes extending them beyond the immediate vicinity of ports and landings on the lake-shores. The tsetse fly is not vulnerable in the succeeding stages of its development in the same way as the mosquito responsible for carrying malaria or yellow fever is vulnerable. The nurseries of the latter insects, which pass their early days in stagnant water, are amenable to drainage or to treatment with paraffin. Even the adult mosquito, most dreaded after sunset and during the evening, when people in the tropics are often indoors, can, to a great extent, be kept at bay by screens and curtains. The tsetse fly lives all its life on land, and is hatched in situations by no means easy to discover. Its flight, as we have said, is exceedingly rapid. The period of its greatest activity is not after sunset, but in the afternoon; and the place is not indoors, but in the open. From these few facts, the difficulty of coping with so elusive an enemy can be appreciated.

The medical department is more hampered by lack of funds for this work than it ought to be. Fifteen years ago the Busoga and Bunyoro natives knew nothing of the scourge in store for them, and they owe it entirely to Europeans. It is true that the suppression of sleeping sickness is a less paying proposition than the endowment of further facilities for the extended export of cotton. No economic comparison is, in fact, possible. There is, however, just the chance that the industrial salvation of Uganda may indirectly depend on the effectual eradication of this fell disease. What is on humane grounds even more certain is that this is incomparably the most urgent problem before the Colonial Office in its administration of the protectorate, in taking over which we not only acquired possible profits in the cultivation of cotton, coffee, and cocoa, but also incurred imperial obligations that we cannot possibly repudiate unless we wish to bring ridicule and derision on the spirit and letter of all that is implied in that much-abused phrase, 'the white man's burden.'

THE PASTEL.

CHAPTER II.

THE painter looked. Through the great ragged hole nothing was to be seen but the blackness of the night. The cold wind blew fitfully in, carrying the murmur of the outside world. But almost immediately other, nearer noises became audible—soft, scraping sounds as of some one climbing the ladder Mr Porson had placed there; and then, suddenly, a white face appeared against the black void.

'Hello, there!' said Mr Rippingill.

'Hello!' replied the owner of the face. 'So you *are* in! I thought something must be wrong. I couldn't get an answer at the door, and then I saw the ladder and the state of this window. So up I came. What's the matter?'

'A meteorite,' said the painter. 'What do you want?'

'I want to speak to you? May I come in?'

'You can speak quite well from where you are.'

'I should prefer to come in,' the stranger said, peering about the studio. He was a youngish man, with a thin, vicious face that somehow seemed familiar to Mr Rippingill. 'I should prefer to come in,' he repeated. 'It's confidential, you know. By the by, I suppose you are Mr Rippingill.'

That harassed individual admitted that he was.

'I am very glad to meet you, Mr Rippingill!' the other said, with as much effusion as could be expected in his situation. 'I have often heard of you from my poor father—the late Mr Abernethy, you know.'

'Oh, indeed!' Mr Rippingill murmured. 'Well?'

'Well, mayn't I come in?'

'I hate to seem inhospitable,' said the painter; 'but, really, my dear sir, I don't see why you should. You are quite private up there. It isn't likely there is any one else on the roof.'

'But I can't discuss confidential matters while I'm stuck up here like a steeple-jack!' Mr Abernethy cried petulantly. 'Why shouldn't I come in? Aren't you alone? I must see you alone—quite alone! I hope I'm not indiscreet; but if there's any—er—er—reason why I shouldn't come in, pray remove the reason for a short time. This is urgent, Mr Rippingill! It will be worth your while—well worth it, I assure you!'

'I'm afraid you're a low-minded person!' the painter replied. 'I really couldn't let you in. You'd pollute the studio!'

Mr Abernethy muttered something under his breath. His tormentor was wishing he could communicate with the solicitor; but, overlooked as he was from the skylight, he dared not turn his head. However, while completely at a loss for the meaning of these nocturnal adventures, he enjoyed irritating Mr Abernethy, to whom he had taken a violent dislike.

Mr Abernethy was beginning patiently again, 'Come, come, Mr Rippingill, be reasonable,' when there occurred an interruption without. The gate of the enclosure in which the studios stood slammed with a report like a cannon-shot; it possessed a very powerful recoil, which had often disconcerted nervous strangers. It greatly disconcerted Mr Abernethy, who nearly fell off the ladder. And this was not all; for a large lamp hung above the gate, and it was at once clear that by this illumination he had recognised the new-comer. His unpleasant face was convulsed with rage when he thrust it through the window again.

'Don't let her in!' he hissed. 'Whatever you do, don't let her in!' He appeared to contemplate dropping through upon the ottoman, thought better of it, and ducked down to get his head below the line of light from the window. There, it seemed, he remained, crouching on the ladder-top in the shadow. And immediately after came a peremptory tattoo on the door.

Mr Rippingill, momentarily freed from observation, hazarded a glance at the screen. 'What shall I do?' he whispered.

Mr Porson thrust out his head, looked at the skylight, and smiled broadly. He had, of course, heard everything. 'Oh, let her in!' he whispered back, and disappeared again.

The door led straight into the studio, and no sooner did Mr Rippingill open it than a lady marched resolutely past him, without a word, to the middle of the floor, where she stood looking about her through a pair of long-handled glasses. 'What a mess!' she exclaimed.

She was a very large woman, perhaps six feet high, and of mature age. She wore black alpaca and quantities of crape, and blew her nose defiantly with a handkerchief whose black border was fully an inch wide. Her face was pink and uncompromising, and her small eyes glittered in it like beads. 'You are Mr Rippingill?' she asked. It was, however, less a question than an assertion, and implied that if he was not Mr Rippingill he should be made sorry for it. And, barely waiting for his assent, she went on, in the same style of *oratio directa*, 'You have had an accident. Some one has been trying to get in!'

'Some one!' the painter cried. 'A regiment rather! A butcher, a baker, a candlestick-maker, a moneylender, a solicitor, a low-minded person of unspecified profession, and now, madam, yourself. Perhaps you will tell me your name and what it is I can do for you?'

It was plain that the lady was not satisfied. She peered suspiciously at him through her long-handled glasses, examined the shattered skylight, and then surveyed the whole studio again. As soon as her gaze was lowered Mr Rippingill cast a furtive glance upward, and saw the pallid face of Mr Abernethy, distorted with anger and mouthing obscene but happily inaudible remarks, flash into view for a moment. The painter winked back cheerfully. He wondered how Mr Porson felt behind the screen, and what the meaning of all this might be.

The lady in black, with a depreciatory sniff, was addressing him again. 'I am Mrs MacFie,' she announced. 'I am the sister of the late Mr Sholto Abernethy, with whom you were acquainted. I was with him during his last days, when he expressed certain wishes to me which I regard as sacred commands, uttered

from the grave, to be carried out regardless of any inconvenience to myself. I came to town from Norwood expressly to see you. I have called here twice before to-day.'

Mr Rippingill pulled his moustache and looked pleasant, convinced that if Mrs MacFie had been anywhere near her brother during his last days (which he was inclined to doubt), she had not come as a ministering angel; for, as he afterwards remarked to Mr Porson, he had never seen a more arrogant and generally poisonous specimen of her sex. Meanwhile, out of the corner of his eye, he had another glimpse of Mr Abernethy gesticulating in the skylight.

'I was charged by my brother,' continued Mrs MacFie, in her sonorous, uncompromising voice, 'to take over from you a certain picture—a small drawing in chalks representing a field of poppies—which he had left in your charge.'

'A drawing in *chalks?*' questioned Mr Rippingill dubiously.

'I am not conversant with your technical terms,' said Mrs MacFie.

'Perhaps he meant a drawing in tempera?' the painter suggested.

'Yes,' said the lady, falling into the trap; 'that was the word he used.'

Mr Rippingill could not restrain a smile. But before he could reply there broke in a shrill, frantic voice from the skylight.

'I'll give you fifty pounds for that picture, Mr Rippingill!'

Mrs MacFie looked up with a scream. 'Ronald!' she cried.

'Oh, you be quiet, Aunt Julie!' said Mr Abernethy. 'You thought you'd steal a march on me, didn't you? Well, it hasn't come off! —Fifty pounds, Mr Rippingill!'

Mr Rippingill appeared to ponder. 'Have you got the money on you?' he asked.

Ronald Abernethy was fumbling in his breast-pocket, when Mrs MacFie recovered herself. 'Nonsense!' she cried; 'this is disgraceful! Mr Rippingill, the picture is mine! Kindly hand it over at once!'

'I'm afraid that is impossible,' said the painter, 'for the picture is gone.'

'Gone!' cried Mrs MacFie.

'*Gone!*' shrieked Ronald Abernethy.

And here another voice joined in. 'Not lost, but gone before!' said Mr Porson, emerging from behind the screen with the pastel under his arm.

'Perdition!' cried Mr Abernethy, and vanished from their sight. They could hear the ladder scraping and groaning as he scrambled down.

But Mrs MacFie was made of different stuff. She turned swiftly at the lawyer's voice, glanced at the gold frame under his arm, and then looked him straight in the eye. 'I might have known it!' she said, breathing heavily.

'Good-evening, madam,' Mr Porson replied. 'A very pleasant little family reunion, is it not? What a pity you did not bring the gifted O'Shea to make it complete!'

Mrs MacFie said no more; but she looked much. She understood as well as her nephew the symptoms of defeat. In silence and with a certain dignity she walked past the two men and out of the studio; and only when she slammed the door after her did she betray the emotion she must have felt.

'She's a corker,' said Mr Porson, laughing, 'and as unscrupulous as they make them. We have had some battles before this. By the by,' he added, 'you handled them admirably, Mr Rippingill. It was a pleasure to listen!'

'You are very good,' the painter replied. 'And now perhaps you will tell me what it is all about?'

The lawyer looked at him curiously, and smiled. 'Certainly,' he replied, 'if you will first find me a duster and a pair of pincers.'

The young man, with an air of patient resignation, sought for and presently discovered these articles.

Mr Porson, sitting on the arm of the basket chair, began to pull out the nails from the back of the little picture-frame. 'Mr Abernethy,' he began, 'was my oldest friend. He was a man, as I dare say you know, of many eccentricities; but a kinder-hearted fellow never lived, which is more than can be said of the rest of the family. They were the worst type of the "unco guid"—unscrupulous humbugs, always swindling some one in the Lord's name. In the end, Sholto cut himself adrift from them altogether. There is no need to go into details, but they behaved abominably to his wife, and he never forgave them. He could be very obstinate, for all his good heart. Well, Mrs Abernethy died many years ago, and there was only the one child, Ronald, who turned out very badly indeed. I confess I do not know any young man I dislike more. To cut it short, after innumerable misdemeanours and sham penitences, he played a trick that even his father could not forgive. Sholto made him an allowance, and told him to get out of his sight. This was about two years ago—just before you came here. At that time Sholto had a house as well as his studio, but after the split he gave it up and lived here entirely. At the same time he engaged that rascal O'Shea.'

The solicitor paused while he removed the backing-board from the frame and then lifted out the sketch. 'Do you call this a good piece of work?' he asked.

'Most certainly,' said the painter. 'Mr Abernethy did excellent work in pastel, for his own amusement; as good as any I have seen in France.'

'H'm!' Mr Porson murmured thoughtfully. His eyes twinkled. 'What would you say it was worth?' he asked.

'It is almost impossible to say,' the other

replied; 'the price of a picture depends on anything you like except artistic merit. If that sketch was by Velasquez, it would be worth some hundreds of pounds. As it is by Sholto Abernethy, and as he is just dead, which is interesting and makes people talk about him, it might fetch ten or fifteen. In a year's time you will be lucky to get sixpence for it, except from conscientious relatives like your late visitors. I doubt, though, if you'll ever get much out of Mrs MacFie. She looked a hard nut. In any case, fifty pounds is ridiculous! What is the meaning of it, Mr Porson? Is the Koh-i-noor concealed in the frame?'

The lawyer chuckled. 'They seemed quite set on it, did they not?' said he. 'Well, the mystery shall be cleared up. I wonder you haven't solved it already. Though it's true you're never likely to meet such another example of pig-headed balderdash outside a novel! Did Abernethy ever give you his opinion of lawyers?'

'Often,' said the painter, smiling.

'It was a standing joke between us,' the solicitor continued, 'that while I was always running down artists (in the abstract, you understand), he was always running down lawyers. For years he wouldn't make a will, simply because it involved a legal operation. But two years ago, when he finally cast off Master Ronald, he had to make one, as he was determined to leave the young rascal no more than the allowance he was then in receipt of. I thought that was too much; but I left well alone. Now you know, of course, how Sholto prided himself on making patent toys? You have seen his performing clocks and secret drawers and double-bottomed boxes, and all the other tricks? I always thought this a great waste of time and intellect, but otherwise harmless enough. But when it came to drawing up the will, I found he had set his wits to work on *my* business! He pulled out a sheet of cardboard, and wanted to know if a will drawn up on that would be valid. I told him (with some heat) that a will drawn up on his shirt-cuff would be valid, provided it was properly witnessed. Then he explained what he wanted to do. I suppose you see it now, Mr Rippingill?'

The painter nodded. 'It's not such a bad idea, you know,' he said, looking with increased respect at the little sketch.

'It's a ridiculous, bedlamite idea!' the lawyer snorted. 'Such unbusiness-like, unprofessional, penny-novelette rubbish I never heard of before in my life! We came nearer a quarrel over it than we ever did before or since. In the end I gave in. Because he was my oldest friend, I sacrificed my professional pride, and drew up the will on his wretched piece of card. If I had not done so, either he would have made an abysmal muddle of it himself, or he would have gone to some rascally local pettifogger who would have swindled him. He was like a child in these things, although he was shrewd enough in ordinary business. The will was witnessed by a friend of his, who is now unfortunately dead, and by that wheedling humbug O'Shea. I would never have let O'Shea know that the will existed if I had realised what Abernethy meant to do with it. When it was too late, he calmly told me that as soon as he had perpetrated his piece of vandalism he was going to hang the thing up on the wall, like any other picture! He said nobody would ever think of looking for it there! Nothing would move him; he was quite *proud* of his own cleverness! Cleverness, indeed! It makes me hot to think of it!

'However, it's all over, and I'm thankful to have the wretched thing safe. I had given it up for lost. I have no doubt that Master Ronald, as well as Aunt Julie, has been here more than once to-day. You see, this is what happened. O'Shea knew all about the will. When the other witness died, he became the only interested person who did. Of course, he was interested only indirectly; he could not benefit himself, but he might turn his knowledge to account. He soon learnt enough about the family to serve his purpose, and then he waited. If he could impose on Abernethy he might get a legacy himself. But there was not time for that; and, besides, I think poor Sholto saw through him to a certain extent. Well, then this illness began. No one thought it was serious. Abernethy and O'Shea went off to Folkestone, and you went off with the precious picture. Nobody else knew where it was; even I didn't know. Sholto died, as you know, the day before yesterday, quite late. Next morning O'Shea telegraphed to Master Ronald, brought him down in a hurry in the afternoon, and for a consideration, cash down, told him where the will was. Early this morning Ronald came up to town again to see you. O'Shea, unknown to him, came up in the same train, ran off to Aunt Julie (who, of course, has not been near Folkestone), and tried the same trick on with her. She couldn't benefit directly, whatever happened to the will, but she saw fast enough that once she got hold of it she could sell it to Ronald. Oh, they're a fine, clever lot, the Abernethys! All this time I had no idea where the will was, you understand. I was going down to Folkestone this evening, intending to call at the studio first, when who should turn up at my house but O'Shea, as bold as brass! This was little more than an hour ago. One can't help admiring the rascal! Of course, he tried the same game on, but he didn't get anything out of me. It was the other way about. I frightened him so thoroughly that he let out the whole story. I jumped into a cab, feeling sure I was too late, and here I am!'

'Well,' said Mr Rippingill, after a pause,

'it's a rum story. I'm glad to have been of use. It really gave me great pleasure to assist at the discomfiture of Aunt Julie and her nephew. It has quite cheered me up.'

'Wouldn't you like to see the will?' Mr Porson asked, with a twitch of his lips. 'Of course, it is highly irregular; but the whole case is so out of the common that I think we may allow ourselves some latitude. Only, pray don't talk about it.'

'As you please,' said the painter carelessly. 'It seems a pity to destroy that sketch,' he added.

'Bosh!' cried Mr Porson, and applied the cloth with vigour. A little cloud of iridescent dust shone in the lamplight, thinned, and vanished. Another rub or two, and the paper was almost clean, showing only faint smears on its surface. In colour it was light gray, and across it perhaps a dozen lines of writing had been executed in some dull black ink with a broad pen. Mr Rippingill, bending over the lawyer's shoulder, glanced without much interest down the list of bequests: 'To the Strathpeffer Hospital,' so much; 'To the President and Trustees of the Positivist Society,' so much; 'To the Artists' Benevolent Fund,' so much; and so on. It was not a long will. But there was a codicil; and as the young painter read it his indifference vanished and his heart missed a beat. For it ran as follows: 'I desire to bequeath to my friend Humphrey Rippingill, in memory of a very enjoyable and helpful companionship, the sum of five thousand pounds (£5000).'

'It was worth reading, after all!' said Mr Porson.

THE END.

GUN-FIRING HEARD IN ENGLAND.

By CHARLES DAVISON, Sc.D., F.G.S.

SINCE the war began, and especially since the advance of last July, the sound of heavy gun-firing has often been heard in the south-eastern counties of England. Many letters on the subject have been published in the newspapers. Of course, not all the records are equally trustworthy. Some, no doubt, refer to local firing, which has often been mistaken for that of distant battles; but, when once the latter sound has been recognised, there is no difficulty in distinguishing it from the sharper, more definite reports of firing within a score or so of miles. On this account, the observations which Mr Miller Christy has described and collected in a paper lately read before the Royal Meteorological Society are of considerable value and of much interest both to physicists and others.

Mr Christy's observations were made at Chignal St James, a village about two or three miles to the north-west of Chelmsford. His house is at some height (about one hundred and fifty-five feet) above sea-level; and, as there can be little doubt that many of the sounds which he has heard come from the firing near Ypres, it is important to notice that there is no higher ground intervening between that town and Chignal St James. The distance separating the two places is about one hundred and twenty-five miles, the line joining them running roughly north-west and south-east.

Mr Christy is well known as a careful observer of natural phenomena. He notices that the nature of the sound varies considerably on different occasions. Sometimes the firing is slow and deliberate; about three to twelve shots are heard every minute, and each report is loud and distinct. Mr Christy is probably correct in attributing these sounds to British monitors bombarding the German positions on the Belgian coast, about Nieuport, Ostend, and Zeebrugge. It is difficult, however, as he realises, to be sure of this, for there is no doubt that much firing takes place off the south-east coast of England, of which no account ever reaches the newspaper press.

Of far greater interest is the sound of the firing which takes place inland. This is the sound that is heard most frequently in the south-eastern counties. It is much more rapid than the other. At times there may be only four or five shots to the minute, but occasionally the frequency rises to more than one hundred per minute. The sound is much less distinct than that of the North Sea firing, and appears to be more distant. As a rule it is quite faint; though, as Mr Christy remarks, it is easily perceptible and quite unmistakable. There is not the sharp report as of a gun fired close at hand. It resembles more closely a dull and distant thud, which one seems to feel rather than to hear. It is this appeal to the sense of feeling rather than to that of hearing that is the distinctive mark of very distant gun-firing. It is unfortunate, from a scientific point of view, that the exact source of the sound cannot be located. On some occasions the firing may be more or less concentrated within a limited region, though it often takes place simultaneously over a wide extent of the front. But, in referring most of the sounds which he has heard to the neighbourhood of Ypres, Dixmude, or Arras, it would seem that Mr Christy is adopting a view from which very few would dissent.

Last summer, however, there was a change both in the nature and in the intensity of the

reports. The sound of the fighting at Vimy on 21st May was heard with remarkable ease, but this was as nothing compared with the loud sounds heard, especially in the evenings, from 24th June to 2nd July. It was no longer the usual succession of dull thuds, but an incessant fluttering rumble, becoming at times exceedingly intense and rapid. At Pembury, near Tunbridge Wells, a lady was so upset by the noise that she had all her windows closed. Partly, perhaps, this excessive intensity may have been due to more favourable atmospheric conditions. But, considering the time at which it occurred, it must have been caused chiefly by the great bombardment of the German lines in the valley of the Somme.

Besides making his own careful observations, Mr Christy has collected and analysed those of many other observers. The area in the south-east of England over which the sounds were heard at various times is a considerable one. It includes practically the whole of the counties of Kent, Essex, Surrey, and Sussex. The sounds have been heard to the north-west of London, in Cricklewood and Hampstead, and in parts of other counties. The sounds which Mr Christy attributes to the firing near Ypres have been heard at Elmdon, in the north-west corner of Essex, about one hundred and fifty-one miles from Ypres. The sounds of last June and July were audible at a still greater distance—at Avon Castle (near Ringwood, in Hampshire) and at Stockbridge (near Winchester), both places being about two hundred miles from Albert. On 11th and 21st July, sounds, probably due to Somme firing, were heard at Wendling, in central Norfolk, about two hundred and twenty miles from Albert.

The conditions under which the sounds are heard throw much light on the power of the atmosphere to transmit sounds to great distances. One point of some importance is the height of the place of observation. The greater the height, the more readily are the sounds heard. Chignal St James, as already mentioned, is about one hundred and fifty-five feet above sea-level. Elmdon, in the north-west corner of Essex, is at a height of about four hundred feet. Again, in valleys and on low ground the sounds were rarely or never heard; nor were they often noticed in large towns or their suburbs.

The audibility of the sounds varies also throughout the year. During the spring and summer of 1915, hardly a day passed but the sounds were clearly heard; from the latter part of August to the beginning of October the observations of the sounds were infrequent; and from that time until the end of February 1916 they were hardly ever heard. The same variability was observed during the past year. From 1st May to 6th August the sounds were heard at Chignal St James nearly every day, whereas from 7th August to 11th September (the date of writing) they were almost, if not quite, inaudible.

Some of the weather conditions prevailing on the days when the sounds were heard have been studied by Mr W. Marriott, whose recent death is a great loss to the science of meteorology. One interesting point discovered by Mr Marriott is that a cloudy or overcast sky is more favourable than a clear sky to the transmission of sound. Another is that, though the direction of Ypres from Chignal St James is roughly south-east, the wind on the days in question was nearly always from between north and east, the breezes being usually light or moderate. There is, however, nothing unusual in this. At Ditcham, according to the well-known meteorologist, Captain Cave, the sounds of guns fired in the Channel are often heard far more plainly with a northerly than with a southerly wind. In such cases there is probably a southerly wind at some height above the ground, a condition of the weather that not only causes firing to be heard plainly at great distances, but also brings heavy rains of a thunderstorm type. This, as Captain Cave suggests, may perhaps account for the popular belief that the firing of guns is the cause of a heavy fall of rain.

CELANDINE, AND A SUITOR OR TWO.

By William Freeman.

EXISTENCE in Little Thurso Street is primitive, and the war has not made it less so. The street itself is so crooked that its littleness is more apparent than real, and its nearness to the Arsenal makes lodgings there almost as scarce as sunshine.

Celandine Evique came thither from a Belgian hamlet consisting of a big gray house, eleven cottages, a poplar-lined road, and a duck-pond. The gray house had been her home, and she and her mother had had the good fortune to escape unscathed the same day that an advance-patrol of the enemy had bayoneted her father on his own doorstep before burning down the building. Madame Evique had died a week or so later; but kindly hands had shepherded Celandine to England, and found her both a lodging and a situation with Sam Widgery and his wife, who kept the eating-house at the corner of Little Thurso Street and Faggs's Alley.

It was Bill Juper, making five pounds a week at the Arsenal, who first came to the conclusion that Celandine, with her delicate complexion, soft brown eyes, and wavy hair, was worthy of

more than a passing nod. Bill was a big, heavy-jawed fellow of thirty-five, successfully badged, and a living contradiction to the theory that all Cockneys are undersized and puny.

He spoke to Celandine one keen January day when she was bringing him his usual cup of what was humorously alluded to by the customers as washing-up water, and by Sam Widgery as 'cawfy.'

'Whatjer do when the shop's shut?' he demanded.

'Rest myselfs; read a little; make good the wear of my clothes. Also, go on Sundays to chapel with Madame Widgery,' said Celandine seriously.

'Too much un'ealthy dissipation,' opined the sarcastic Mr Juper. 'Ever bin to a cinema?'

'Once,' said Celandine. 'It was when I visited Brussels with my aunt Jeanne Marie.'

'What price a couple o' tip-up seats at the Gloriana 'All to-night—eight-thirty sharp?' he suggested.

Celandine, quivering with excitement, sought her patroness.

'Aw right,' said Mrs Widgery carelessly. 'But you ain't to be out later 'n ten.'

Celandine conveyed the fact to Bill with the delight of a child who has been given an unexpected holiday. And when that evening she met him at the corner, Mr Juper was conscious of a mild thrill at the trim hat, the costume that was so simple and yet indefinably lady-like, and the shy, radiant smile that greeted his 'What ho, Lady Ermyntrude!'

It was a promising beginning, marred only by Celandine's ignorance of Little Thurso Street etiquette. She insisted on paying for herself, and while she enjoyed the performance enormously, Bill's running fire of badinage fell entirely flat. She willingly accepted his arm back to the eating-house, but lightly evaded his clumsy attempt to wind up the evening's entertainment with a chaste salute. Celandine, in short, demonstrated with the utmost frankness that she did not understand even the first stages of walking-out; and Mr Juper, sitting on his bed an hour later, after a supper of bread-and-cheese and cocoa, couldn't for the life of him decide whether it was worth while teaching her or not.

He had come to the conclusion that it was, what time Mr Alfred Fysh, popularly known as the Giddy Kipper, working at a neighbouring lathe, and also a patron of Widgery's, was moved to note the exceeding whiteness and slimness of Celandine's hands. There was a touch of the genuine connoisseur about Alfred. The military authorities, to whom he had reluctantly surrendered himself at the latest possible moment, had marked his classification card B2, which meant he might, if he chose, abandon foreign service for munition-making. Alfred did choose. He disliked military discipline almost as much as he disliked the police, who are prone to be suspicious of a man who buys valuable bric-à-brac without asking questions, and then pawns it discreetly in the remoter suburbs. Alfred had spent more than one unpleasant morning in the witness-box, and those who knew him best opined that his ultimate abiding-place would be the dock.

Alfred was a tall, lean youth, with eyes that were never entirely steady, and a smile that contained the suggestion of a leer. No one had ever seen Alfred in a bad temper, or intoxicated, or badly dressed. His attitude towards life was that of a detached, rather amused philosopher. Unaware of Mr Juper's previous efforts, he began the cultivation of Celandine's friendship in his own gay and casual fashion one dinner-hour.

'Miss!' he called.

Celandine crossed to the table at which Mr Fysh was gazing with agonised intensity into a plate of tripe.

'Sair?' (Many and torturous were Celandine's attempts to grapple with a syllable eternally baffling to the foreigner.)

'Next time your esteemed boss cuts up his old bicycle-tires and labels them piggy-wiggy, you might ask him to include the valve.'

'I will, sair,' said Celandine obediently.

'Another thing,' continued Mr Fysh. 'When I go into a restrong, even if it 's only Sam Widgery's, I like to be served by some one with a proper amount of fizz and dash. You look as though you want a bottle of Mother Jemima's Blood Reviver, two-and-ninepenny size, or a beano without the option.'

'I do not under'—— began Celandine.

'I 'll put it another way. When did you last go on the giddy razzle-dazzle?'

The vertical wrinkles in Celandine's forehead deepened. 'The geedy raz'——

'When,' pursued the allegorical Mr Fysh sternly, 'did you last cast aside the dish-cloth of dull care for the frills and feathers of high-jinks?'

'I do not know,' said Celandine helplessly. She fell back on a safe and stereotyped phrase. 'But if there is anything more you want'——

'Yes,' said Alfred, 'there is. I want to bring a dash of carmine into those lily cheeks by escorting you to a little dance we 're getting up at the Grotto Club, at the corner of Campyle Street, next Tuesday. What about it?'

Still slightly dazed, Celandine, under the compelling gaze of the Giddy Kipper, once more sought Mrs Widgery.

'Seems to me,' said Mrs Widgery, 'that you 're 'avin' a pretty gay time of it lately. But the Club 's all right, and s' long as you 're back by ten sharp'——

It was a wet and windy night when Mr Fysh 'and lady' sought admittance at the rather shabby entrance of the Grotto Club. It was a tribute to Mr Fysh's astuteness that he had made himself a conspicuous member of a club

whose record to date had been absolutely blameless. The dancing was decorous in the extreme, the refreshments included nothing stronger than a decoction of ginger, while the manners of Mr Fysh himself would have done credit to a duke lately suffering from a family bereavement.

Celandine was introduced to a variety of gentlemanly youths, and up to a certain point enjoyed herself. Followed a queer and quite inexplicable reaction. She saw her surroundings, as it were, with new eyes. Intuitively she perceived that the other girls were looking at her with an amusement in which there was no real friendliness, and that the men who talked together in little groups were planning things which had no connection with gaiety or recreation. Sudden loneliness engulfed her. She went across to where Alf was standing. 'It is almost ten o'clock,' she said. 'And, thank you very much, but I would be very glad to go home now, because I am so tired.'

'Oh, all right,' said Alf. 'There were several other chaps that I wanted to introduce you to as my'—— He checked himself, as the colour rose in the girl's cheeks, and turned towards the cloakroom.

That night he dreamed that he caught and kissed Celandine so swiftly that she wasn't able to evade him. For his parting attempt in that direction, albeit better managed than Mr Juper's, had met with precisely similar success.

Several weeks passed, and then one afternoon there limped into the eating-house a short, stockily built figure in very muddied and worn khaki. Among many other impedimenta he carried a German helmet, and himself wore a flat metal one. It was a slack time, and Celandine was absorbed in the polishing of the copper urn which formed the chief ornament of Mr Widgery's counter. There was a strip of looking-glass set in the wall behind, and in this she caught a sudden reflection of the figure. She dropped the polishing-leather with a little cry, and, after a second's hesitation, shyly held out her hand. The figure in khaki gripped it.

'So—so you are home again,' said Celandine when speech of some sort became imperative.

'Home again—for keeps,' admitted the other joyously. 'I collected so many shrapnel-chips that they discharged me as a public nuisance. I came by the old *Princess Aurelia* this morning. I inquired at the Refugee Hostel, and they told me you 'd been billeted here.'

Celandine nodded. Her thoughts had leapt back to the night when she and her mother had slipped away from the still smouldering ruins of their home, and stumbled and struggled, undetected, through the cordon of drunken ruffians who surrounded the village. She recalled, as one recalls a nightmare, the interminable tramp along roads thronged with panic-stricken crowds; the détours they made to escape capture and insult; the thirst; the weariness; and, finally, their arrival at a British outpost. And the man in charge of the outpost had been one Richard Cairn, corporal, whose kindliness lit unforgettably the black horror of that time, though he could speak so little French that he could scarcely understand their thanks.

The swing-door opened, and Bill Juper came in. 'Plate o' rice, old girl,' he demanded; 'and look slippy about it.'

The corporal glanced at Bill, and then back at the girl. 'Close at eight?' he inquired gruffly.

'Half-past,' said Celandine.

'I shall be waiting outside,' said Cairn, and limped out of the shop.

''Oo 's that travellin' tinker?' demanded Mr Juper sourly, as the door closed again.

'A—a most good friend of mine,' said Celandine. 'Rice, you wish for, sair?'

'I did,' said her customer; 'but I 've altered my mind. I 'll 'ave a chat with that tin-'atted scarecrow what 's just gone, instead.'

He rose and departed. Through the window, Celandine beheld him overtake the corporal in a dozen rapid strides.

''Arf a mo', my lad'——

The corporal turned. 'Want a light?' he inquired amicably.

'No; a explanation,' said Mr Juper. 'If you 're under the impression that you 're goin' to swank round with that dressy bit o' goods in Widgery's, you can guess again. Savvy? You 're a back-number. No need to say more, is there?'

'Not that I know of,' said the corporal, unmoved. 'And as I 've a train to catch'——

He resumed his progress, leaving Mr Juper slightly dashed. The victory seemed too easy to be complete. But since he was hungry, and dinner-hours at the Arsenal were inelastic, he returned to the eating-house to have it out with Celandine. But Celandine was having her own belated dinner in the parlour behind, and Mrs Widgery was in charge.

Fate, in the person of an iron-souled foreman, kept Mr Juper working late that night, and it was nearly ten before he escaped. His steps led him naturally in the direction of the shop, long shut. A subdued light glimmered at a first-floor window, and he tried to believe that it was Celandine's. But Mrs Widgery's high-pitched voice corrected him. She was favouring her spouse with a synopsis of the evening's events.

'Comes back from a stroll with the gel,' she was saying, 'an' tells me straight out that 'e 'd asked 'er to marry 'im. Talked to me as confidential and friendly as if I was 'is future mother-in-law. An' there stood me lady, blushin' an' smilin', an' lookin' pretty enough to'——

'Eat,' said Mr Widgery inevitably.

''E seemed quite the gentleman; an' when 'e 'd give me a few more facks, I told 'im 'e could please 'isself. Which 'e 'd 'a' done anyway,' concluded Mrs Widgery with conviction. 'When

I sees a man with a square chin an' gray eyes, I don't waste time argyfyin'.'

Mr Widgery, whose chin was of the retreating type, and whose eyes were a watery blue, sighed faintly, and dropped upon his hands and knees to grovel for a missing collar-stud. And in the street below, Mr Juper, with a last malignant upward glance, went on his way.

On the following evening he met with better fortune. He also met, by accident, Mr Alfred Fysh.

'Ullo!' said Mr Juper, with an entire absence of enthusiasm. 'On the way to that there club o' yours?'

'Not this child!' said Mr Fysh frankly. 'Because, between ourselves, there's 'ealthier rondyvoos just now. Some blighter's been letting 'is tongue wag, and the cops are sniffing round.'

He might have added that the most immaculately conducted club becomes an object of suspicion when it leaks out that 50 per cent. of the members are receivers of stolen property.

'Fact is,' resumed Mr Fysh, in a second burst of candour, 'I'm thinking of taking a stroll with that little bit o' fluff that ladles out the soup at Widgery's.'

'Then you can think different,' snapped Mr Juper.

Alfred stole a sidelong glance at him and edged a little away.

'Any partic'lar impediment?'

'Yes—me,' said Mr Juper. 'It's yours truly as forbids the banns. Even if it wasn't,' he concluded viciously, 'there's another chap in the runnin'—a sandy-'aired bounder just back from the front.'

'What size?' inquired Mr Fysh. He was a man swift in collating the essential facts of a problem.

'Smallish,' said Mr Juper, 'and with a limp. There 'e is!'

They rounded the corner as a clock chimed the half-hour, and perceived ahead of them the corporal. With an elaborate air of having been wafted into the neighbourhood by the purest accident, he was strolling up and down within sight of the side-door of the eating-house. For, in spite of the many things a fluent young man can contrive to say to his beloved within a couple of hours, there was a good deal left over.

Ten minutes later he became aware of two forms converging upon him from opposite sides of the road. For the time being, and in the face of this alien danger, the rivals had agreed to sink all private differences.

'You 'anging about for that girl at Widgery's?' inquired Mr Fysh.

'I am,' said the corporal, with equal directness.

'Well, 'ook it,' advised Mr Fysh, 'before me and my mate 'urts you. I'm putting it plain because I don't want no misunderstandings. You just fade away like the flowers that bloom in the spring, tra-la! and all will be forgotten and forgiven. If you *don't*'——

'And if I don't?' echoed the corporal.

'There won't be enough of you left to bait a fish-'ook with,' interposed Mr Juper, with the simple savagery of his class.

'And when's this massacre going to begin?' asked the corporal, with admirable *savoir-faire*.

The two glanced up and down the street. It was ill-lit and misty, and, what was of greater importance, deserted. And for the moment they were beyond the radius of the eating-house windows.

'Now,' announced the Giddy Kipper, and became, on the word, actively pugilistic.

His mental record of what followed was curiously hazy. Summarised, it appeared that a thunderbolt smote him on the point of the chin, and that he instantly fell down a well of utter blackness for many, many miles. This was a pity, for he missed a good deal—Mr Juper's entrance into the arena, for instance. The faithful Bill had some knowledge of boxing; furthermore, he was half as heavy again as the corporal. That the latter should manœuvre so that the prone body of Alf was always between them struck Mr Juper as grossly unsportsman-like. They circled warily for a good many times before he saw his chance, and struck. It was a well-timed blow, and if the corporal had dodged it a tenth of a second later, it would have ended the fight there and then. As it was, Mr Juper decided to try again. He tried again with a punch that was a secret favourite, and that was meant to catch the corporal cleverly below the belt. Its only flaw was that it involved a certain amount of stooping. Swiftly the corporal side-stepped, and before Mr Juper could recover, gripped him in a highly scientific and original fashion, and sent him whirling over his shoulder across the muddy pavement into the opposite railings.

At the end of an indefinite interval Bill and Alf opened their eyes. They found themselves propped affectionately back-to-back in a cool and dark angle of the wall. A short distance away they could hear old Widgery drawing down the blinds of his premises.

'Yes, 'e's gone,' said Mr Juper, interpreting his comrade's glance down the road. 'Let's 'ave a drop o' something warm, an' talk things over.'

They rose dizzily, and made their way into the eating-house, where Mrs Widgery, under protest—for it was past closing-time—served them with two mugs of cocoa.

'Been fightin'?' she remarked severely.

'Not us,' said Mr Fysh. 'Jest been 'aving a frolic with a new-born kitten.'

'It seems to 'ave scratched pretty 'ard,' said Mrs Widgery, on whom a jest was wasted.

'It did,' said Mr Juper. 'But we're goin' to

get our own back nex' time—if we're 'ung for it.'

The plotting that followed would have done credit to a couple of Adelphi villains. Their talk, indeed, was of little else but the annihilation of the luridly adjectival interloper. Celandine—a changed-beyond-expression, thrice-adorable Celandine—may have overheard fragments of their plotting, and realised that danger threatened, for she went so far as to broach the topic one day over two plates of what Mr Fysh termed horse-tail soup.

'The corporal—my Richard,' she began, blushing so vividly at the word that Mr Juper ground his teeth—'will on Tuesday be visiting the Arsenal, where you work. He will be seeing the foreman of your workshops, and will be pleased to shake hands with you there.'

'What's that?' said Mr Fysh, with unexpected cordiality. 'Right-o! When's 'e coming?'

'He will be at the main gate at about five o'clock,' said Celandine with another blush.

'We'll be waitin',' agreed Mr Juper, inwardly marvelling at his own good fortune.

The day came, and the hour. It was one at which Alf and Bill, with many others, knocked off for fifteen minutes to partake of hot tea. This time, as prearranged, they made their way to a conveniently dark angle of the main path down which the visitor must inevitably pass. To them came a dozen or so choice spirits, well primed. Mr Cairn was to be given no second chance of escape.

At a quarter-past five they were still waiting. Beyond a car in which the chief and another officer were seated, no one passed. Finally, a prowling foreman hounded them back to work with sundry pungent comments, and the information that the chief was coming on a round of inspection.

Presently he came; with him the second officer. Bill, bending sullenly over his lathe, heard him say, 'These are the men we can best spare.'

'We shall be glad of them all, sir,' said the officer.

At the sound of his voice Mr Juper stiffened himself convulsively. His eye fell on Mr Fysh, who was giving an excellent imitation of living statuary.

The chief spoke again, in a slightly louder voice. 'This,' he said, 'is Lieutenant Cairn, who, you remember, lately gained the V.C. Unfortunately he is no longer fit for active service, but he is undertaking the training of recruits at home, and the War Office has commissioned him to go through the Arsenal with me to weed out unskilled men who are fit for garrison-duty, and so forth.'

The lieutenant, flushing at the outburst of cheering that followed, glanced casually at Mr Fysh. 'He looks a fairly fit specimen, if you could spare him,' he said.

'Easily, sir,' said the foreman heartily.

'Also'—— He turned swiftly upon the cringing Bill. 'What's your name, my man?'

Bill stuttered a reply.

'Another man we could do without,' said the foreman.

The chief and the lieutenant proceeded on their way.

'Of all the'—— began Mr Fysh, in a weak voice, as the door closed behind them.

'Meanin' you ain't 'eard,' said the foreman, with a touch of compassion. ''Ere, read this. The boss showed it me this mornin'.' He handed Bill a cutting from a paper rarely patronised by even the *élite* of Little Thurso Street.

'A romance of the war,' read Mr Juper laboriously, 'has been disclosed by the announcement of the marriage of Corporal (now Lieutenant) Cairn, V.C., with Mademoiselle Celandine Evique, only daughter of the late Count and Countess Evique, whose château was destroyed by the enemy some two years ago. Mademoiselle Evique has been living in humble circumstances in England, but steps have now been taken by the Belgian Government to secure her very considerable fortune. The lieutenant will in future be connected with recruiting-work in England.'

The cutting fluttered from Bill's nerveless fingers, and he turned helplessly to Mr Fysh. But for once that fluent gentleman was smitten absolutely dumb.

SEA-GULLS AT BLACKFRIARS.

FLASHING of outspread wings all silver-white
About the bastions and the river-wall;
Beat of strong pinions in suspended flight,
And call on hungry call.

Gray mists of winter deepen into gloom
Across a stream swift-ebbing to the sea;
And fierce gulls whirling where the dark wharves loom
Demand that food shall be.

Beside the parapet a sailor-lad,
Released for some short hours to town and kin,
Lingers to watch the sea-birds, hunger-mad,
Whom townsfolk feed a-grin.

He sees and understands. He knows the call
To all the warmth and joy towns hold in fee;
The fierce, keen hunger driving landward all
The children of the sea.

Yet, too, he knows that here is not their rest;
Below him, see, a boat forlorn and gray
Rides and subsides upon the waters' breast,
And the gulls perch and sway.

Quaint, ugly gulls, so strong and swift in flight,
The warm town calls them, but the sea is home;
Wild wastes of water and the tempest's might,
The spindrift and the foam.

F. W. SAUNDERSON.

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JIM OF JACKADDER.

By LAWRENCE B. JUPP.

CHAPTER I.

AT Gillingup, on the evening of the 29th December 1896, the position of affairs, briefly stated, was as follows. Vi'let May, aged three years and three months, had been lost in the bush since early dawn. All the able-bodied menfolk of the township were out searching for her. Molly Fitzpatrick, her mother, was running like a wild thing from shanty to tin shanty, a dishevelled, tearful Rachel, bereft of her offspring, and refusing to be comforted, what time her dissipated lord and master, 'Dan the Drunk,' sprawled full length in the shadow of a mighty red-gum, and voiced his woes garrulously to the circumambient air. Presently he grew calmer, sat erect, and blew his nose noisily without the extraneous aid of a pocket-handkerchief. An empty bottle lay within reach; he tilted it against the crimson light that filled the silent forest with fire, then flung it from him with an oath and a grunt.

'Wot's the use o' chil'ren, any'ow?' he inquired, gruffly addressing a meditative magpie that was perched upon a branch of an adjacent tree. He paused a moment, seeking inspiration; then continued, following up an unaccustomed train of thought: 'Stands to reason—though why, blessed if I know—we was all sent into this blanky old world to work: by the sweat o' 'is brow shall a man moisten his bread; and wot 's the good o' bread without a drop o' summut short to wash it down? I'd like to ask. Very well, then, stands to reason that a child oughter be a comfort to its pore, 'ard-workin', perspirin' parents; 'stead o' which, wot 'appens? Runs away in the flower o' 'er young, giddy youth, and 'ides 'erself, I say, and brings my gray 'airs —sorrowin'—grave '——

He tailed off into utter incoherence, his shock head fell back, and next minute he was snoring blissfully, quite unconscious of his surroundings. The magpie took to flight, screaming harshly, as a big, bearded man rode at a hand's-pace through the tangled undergrowth, peering this way and that down the leafy woodland vistas, swart now with swift-gathering shadows. His keen blue eyes fell upon the slack, recumbent form lying all asprawl at the foot of the tall red-gum. He reined in his horse with a savage curse, and sat there like a statue, looking down from beneath bushy brows at the father of the child the whole township was seeking high and low.

'Drunken, loafing brute!' He involuntarily raised the heavy stock-whip he carried, then lowered it again regretfully. 'Bah! Let him lie; if he never wakes to the light of another day so much the better for everybody,' he muttered in his beard, and gave his gaunt steed a touch of the spur.

Three miles from Gillingup, on a rocky rise, topped by a granite outcrop, a ragged hessian hut hugged a great gray boulder. Near by, over a handful of yellow fire, a middle-aged man in torn canvas shirt and patched moleskins squatted on his heels, pipe in mouth, watching the pale glimmer of lightning that played incessantly behind a mountainous mass of billowy white cloud piled just above the barren Woongyne Ranges. The black billy, which hung suspended by a twisted piece of wire from a primitive tripod arrangement, seemed obstinately impervious to the heat of the flickering flames. For the third time the man raised the lid with the aid of a broken twig, and for the third time he was doomed to disappointment—the water merely simpered, as it were, in irritating mockery, instead of bursting into little, dancing bubbles of mirth.

'The devil 's in the blamed thing!' said Jim of Jackadder, and went off in quest of more fuel.

There were a few forlorn-looking, ring-barked trees on the far side of the slope, and a dense mat of scrub, barbed with thorn and starred with scentless purple flowerets. Poodle, the disreputable old kangaroo-dog, who, in return for board and lodging, generously kept his master in fleas—big, powerful insects of aggressively active habits—slunk on ahead, cautiously pushing his way through the thick bush; there was occasionally an unwary wallaby feeding there about this time, when the shadows cast broad patches of shade; and a myriad restless midges spun mazily in the golden track of the descending sun. Suddenly the dog stood stock-still, limbs stiffening and every hair abristle; then broke into a furious and prolonged barking.

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'Shet up, yer ugly swine! Reckon the devil's in the old dog,' quoth Jim, by way of formula. 'Snake—or gohanna,' he added, and limped over to investigate matters.

Curled up under a flowering shrub, peacefully slumbering, lay a child, a frail mite of a girl. Her head was pillowed upon one brown arm; her thin, bare legs were criss-crossed with raw, bleeding scratches; her diminutive skirt had been torn into ugly rags by the thorny scrub; her black hair escaped in little rats' tails from beneath a battered sailor-hat; recent tears had left grimy channels on her small, freckled face. She clutched a hideous rag doll firmly by one leg; in her other hand she held a few withered bush-blossoms.

'Well, I'm jiggered!' gasped Jim of Jackadder. He pulled off his weather-beaten wideawake, gazed into it distractedly, found no consolation therein, so rolled his protruding eyes skyward. A heavy drop of warm rain plashed upon his brow. He started violently. 'Well, I'm jiggered!' he repeated with emphasis. 'If it ain't that young Vi'let May—pore Molly's kid!'

He raised the child gingerly in his strong arms, and smoothed the short skirt with a touch that was gentle, despite its surpassing awkwardness. Poodle sat back on his haunches, and regarded the strangely assorted pair with intelligent interest, until a combined attack of the swarming enemy recalled him to the stern realities of canine existence.

'There's goin' to be a storm,' said Jim aloud. 'I'll 'ump the kid as far as my shanty, and in the mornin''—— He left the sentence unfinished.

The sun had set now, and the white cloud-bank above the sombre ranges had taken an angry coppery hue. The wind died out completely, and ever and anon a menacing growl of thunder roused an echo in gully or hollow. The rain ceased as suddenly as it had begun, and the silence brooded like a live thing; only far away from the remote recesses of the forest came the dull vibration of the storm's wings—it sounded like the rush of hurrying footsteps.

Jim carried the sleeping child into the hut, and laid her gently on the canvas stretcher, littered with dingy blankets, which served him for a bed. A bob-tailed iguana, a much-pampered pet, wriggled across the earthen floor, and shot out a long black tongue derisively.

'Git to blazes, yer old rip!' said Jim, and aimed a kick at his erstwhile favourite.

The thought was uppermost in his mind that the child would be hungry when she awoke. He considered painfully a moment; then his face brightened, and he chuckled joyously.

'I'm jist as glad now I didn't sell them old goats,' he muttered. 'Stop where you are, Poodle; yer on guard. See an' be'ave yerself like a rale gen'elman fer onst.'

He took a tin pannikin from a shelf, and limped out of the hut. It was quite dark by the time he returned. A bare half-pint of milk was all he had been able to secure after a conflict which, but for an unexpected display of tenacity of purpose on the part of the human, must infallibly have ended in the signal triumph of a self-willed and opinionated goat. Jim put a match to a few chips in the empty fireplace, set the pannikin down among the flames, and, taking half a loaf of bread from an ancient kerosene-tin, applied himself to the unwonted task of making bread-and-milk.

'Yer chops off th' crust, Poodle,' he informed his familiar, who was watching the operation with slavering jaws. ''Cos why? Chil'ren o' tender years ain't got no teeth, on'y gums, Poodle; or if teeth at all, sech as they 'ave is on'y fit fer ornament, not fer gen'ral chewin' purposes, same as understood by me an' you. 'Ere, catch!'

Poodle's jaws snapped together convulsively.

The tempest had broken in full fury. Every now and then the little, tumble-down shanty was lit up by a dazzling blue glare. The cracked oil-lamp burnt feebly, as if conscious of its own limitations. The clumsy crash of the thunder and the hoarse roar of the rain soon awakened the sleeping child.

She sat up erect, her knuckles in her eyes. 'Boo, hoo! I'se f'ightened. I want my mammie. Oo—oo—ow!'

Jim of Jackadder would rather have faced a score of bellicose natives single-handed than this small atom of humanity, who, open-mouthed and lusty-lunged, contended with the tempest. He whisked the bread-and-milk off the fire, tested its temperature with a stubby forefinger, found it too hot, and said as much explosively.

'Git out o' the light, Poodle, blame yer!—alwiz in the way,' he growled vindictively. 'There, there; I'm a-comin', me darlint. See wot I got fer yer.'

He plunged an iron spoon into the smoking mess, and proffered it recklessly. A pair of eager little lips snapped at the contents like a trout at a fly, and promptly rejected the mouthful with a startling wail of anguish.

'Too infernal, eternal, cussed 'ot!' gasped the flabbergasted Jim.

For a moment panic possessed him. He ran out into the storm, and returned with a pannikin full of rain-water—returned to find Poodle greedily guzzling boiling bread-and-milk.

'Yer dirty, ugly, thievin' brute!'

For the first time in the course of an acquaintanceship of over two years' standing, he raised his heavy blucher boot and lifted his favourite clean across the room. It was a well-timed kick, not lacking in force. Poodle uplifted his voice and fled into outer darkness, yelping with surprise and pain.

'We must jest make the best o' wot the old

varmint 'as left us, me dear,' quoth Jim philosophically, and, pouring a measure of cold water into the little basin, he proceeded once again to minister to the appetite of his small guest.

Vi'let May, in no wise particular, ate with relish, greatly to her host's satisfaction. She polished the bent spoon with a slip of tongue as red as a beetroot, and ran a grubby finger round the rim of the bowl that nothing might be lost.

'Now, say grace,' she commanded, with her finger in her rosebud mouth.

Jim scratched his head, grinned uneasily, blushed like a schoolgirl, and, 'Oh Lord, may we never 'ave no call to go empty away, amen,' he said with intense seriousness. 'Can't remember nothin' else,' he added apologetically.

Vi'let May laughed adorably. 'Gimme my dolly.'

The demand was imperious. Jim groped about on all-fours on the floor, and at last produced the missing link of Vi'let May's happiness. She held it in her arms upside-down, crooned over it with little dove-like notes, and hugged the egregious counterfeit of infancy in a perfect transport of affection.

'Mummy gived me my dolly Klismas; least mummy says Daddy Klismas gived it her to give to me 'cos I'd bin' a goo' gurl.' A sudden light dawned upon her. 'Are 'oo Daddy Klismas? 'Cos if 'oo is, I ain't 'flaid to stay wiv 'oo till mummy comes to fetch me.'

'Well, yes,' admitted Jim mendaciously, 'I reck'n I'm old Daddy Christmas, me little un. You've no call to be afraid o' yer old daddy, 'ave yer, me darlint?' He took her in his arms and held her there safe and snug, while outside the angry storm still raved and shrieked strident-voiced.

'Me—not—'flaid'—there was a long pause between each of the words—'not—wiv—Daddy—Klis'—— The little dark head fell back on Jim's broad shoulder, the little eyes closed, and the little red lips drooped apart. Vi'let May had gone to sleep with her dolly tightly clasped to her small, motherly bosom.

Jim laid the child on the bed with exceeding gentleness, glanced guiltily over his shoulder, grinned sheepishly, and stooped down.

'Hallo, within there! Spare a minute, Jim Flood? It's me—Tom Drayton.'

Jim straightened up, and started as if he had been shot. His first impulse was to throw a blanket over the sleeping child; then he shrugged his shoulders, and strode to the open door, peering out into the darkness.

'That Tom Drayton? Anythin' I can do fer yer, Tom?'

The new-comer steadied his impatient horse with a firm hand. 'Molly Fitzpatrick's nipper strayed into the bush this mornin',' he said curtly. 'The township 's bin out all day lookin' fer her.' He broke off short, and shook a clenched hand at the raging heavens. 'This blasted storm! The pore kid 'll never live through the night. We've searched high and low—there isn't a one of us ain't dead-beat. You might take a look through the gullies and round about here first thing in the mornin', Jim. Not that I've much hope—I fossicked 'em pretty thoroughly myself this forenoon.'

'I will—you can trust me, Tom,' answered Jim Flood, listening intently and nervously the while for any sound of the child's awakening; 'but I allows with you there ain't much chance—specially now, arter this darned old storm.' He paused; then resumed in a thick, hesitating voice, 'Molly—meanin' Mrs Fitzpatrick—I reck'n she 'll be plaguy badly broke up over this 'ere—terrible fond she were o' that young Vi'let May; she thought the world o' the little un; and her tied to—to Dan.'

'D—n him!' The man in the saddle flamed out in sudden passion. 'I struck the scab not a couple o' hours back, away yonder, lyin' dead-drunk under a red-gum. Little he cares fer wife or child, kith or kin; so long as he has a bottle o' square-face to keep him comp'ny, the rest can go to blazes. I hope to God the lightnin' burns the blasted tree, and Dan too, the—the'—— He laughed grimly. 'Well, I guess it's no use squawkin', Jim; I must get a move on. We 'll be out ag'in first thing in the mornin'. The pore little lass can't be fer off. You 'll take the gullies as fer as Simpson's, mate?'

'Ay,' said Jim, 'I 'll take the gullies, Tom. Good-night.'

He waited until the clatter of horse's hoofs had died away down the rough, uneven track, then swung round on his heel and re-entered the single room of the shanty, where Vi'let May slept the deep sleep of childhood, her rag doll folded in a close embrace.

. . . . . .

Two months passed by, and the tragical mystery of Vi'let May's complete disappearance off the face of the earth had ceased to be the sole topic of conversation among the dwellers in the little bush township of Gillingup. It was popularly supposed that the child had been drowned in a pool of the river, but all attempts to locate the spot had signally failed.

One sultry afternoon an untimely shower of rain drove Mrs Cockshott, the minister's wife, into the local store, her advent being hailed with delight not only by Mrs Mudge, renowned as the greatest gossip within a radius of many miles, but also by Mr Meek, the storekeeper, an inoffensive, mild-mannered little man, whose name showed remarkable prescience on the part of Providence. Now Mr Meek was Mrs Mudge's most long-suffering victim.

''Afternoon, Mrs Cockshott,' began the excellent old lady briskly. 'How's your goodman's

lumbago? Has he tried messagin' it with olive-oil? The knuckles, mind you—the palms o' the hand ain't no use at all; it must be the knuckles. Like this—see.'

She laid aside her umbrella, and gave such a spirited illustration in support of her therapeutic theory that the smalls of the onlookers' backs ached in sympathy. Mr Meek, behind the counter, sniggered feebly, and tried to cover up his traces with the special brand of apologetic cough he kept in stock for use in cases of emergency, such, for instance, as the challenging by an irate customer of a twice-told account, or any other small exigency incidental to a successful business career.

'Quite well, thank you, ma'am,' said Mrs Cockshott brusquely. Mrs Mudge was her pet aversion.—'A pound of York ham, please, Mr Meek; a dozen new-laid eggs—by the by, one of the last lot was addled, so you can make it a baker's dozen this time—and a tin of the best pickled salmon.'

'Me an' Mr Meek was just talkin' when you come in,' resumed Mrs Mudge, undaunted by her rebuff.

'Really!' put in Mrs Cockshott, ironically incredulous.

Mrs Mudge was a member of an opposition sect, which Mrs Cockshott, as the minister's wife, could not possibly dream of recognising; therefore no weekly threepenny-bit was jeopardised by plain speaking.

'Yes,' continued Mrs Mudge firmly; 'we was talkin' about Jim Flood. If ever anybody had white-ants, I reck'n Jim Flood's got 'em bad. Wot d'ye say to a man his time o' life eatin' lollies—lollies by the bagful?'

'I don't see much in that to make a fuss about,' replied Mrs Cockshott curtly. 'At all events, it's better than spending his hard-earned money swilling beer, like some I could mention.'

Now, Mrs Mudge's husband had the reputation of being able and willing to consume more ale at a sitting than any two adult males in Gillingup. Also, scandalous rumour had it that Mrs Mudge herself was not entirely averse to malted liquors of sorts. The old lady regarded the minister's wife sternly. Mrs Cockshott occasionally took a little brandy for 'the spasms;' it was a clear case of the pot and the kettle.

'Lollies ain't all,' continued Mrs Mudge with a pronounced sniff.—'Wot else did you say, Mr Meek?'

'Six tins o' Nestlé's milk,' said that gentleman glibly; 'one Noah's ark, redooced in price owin' to loss o' Noah's 'ead an' fracture o' elephant's trunk; one child's sun-bonnet; one bottle o' castor-ile; an' two tins Mellin's food fer infants; 'sides which, I've seen parcels lyin' addressed to him at Mulga Station from Baxter Brothers, the big drapers in the city.'

Mrs Mudge smiled triumphantly. 'Clear as daylight—second child'ood,' she observed judicially. 'Melon's food! Noah's ark, indeed! Jim's never bin the same man since Molly Evans—Mrs Fitzpatrick as is—threw him over for that beauty of a husband o' hers. Terrible fond o' one another they was one time, to be sure. I declare I've no patience at all with the woman; but as she made her bed, so she must lay in it.'

'Eggsackly,' said Mr Meek, with decision. 'Second child'ood, no doubt, ma'am.—Good-afternoon to you, Mrs Blogg.'

Mrs Blogg, a stout, middle-aged lady with a red, determined face, entered the store breathlessly, and seated herself upon a bag of sugar.

''Ave you 'eard the news?' she asked abruptly, wasting no time on trivial greetings. Then, without pausing for reply: 'I'm struck all of a 'eap. When I 'eard it just now from Mrs Dooling you could 'a' knocked me down with a feather. I 'adn't a word to say edgeways. I just stood there in the middle o' the road and gasped—fairly gasped. If I didn't know it fer a fact I wouldn't believe it; no, not if you was to go down on your bended knees to me in the middle o' the road and vow to me on your Bible oath, believe you I—would—not!' Her voice rose to a shrill falsetto squeak.

Meanwhile Mrs Mudge exhibited aggravated symptoms of the direst wrath. You might snatch a bone from a hungry dog, and peradventure escape unharmed; but tantalise Mrs Mudge by withholding, for however brief a space, a choice morsel of gossip, and the fat was in the fire—and no mistake about it.

'Mary Blogg!' she hissed, and her mien was so threatening that Mr Meek positively quailed, 'I declare to goodness I'll shake the false teeth out o' your head if you sit there makin' mysteries out o' molehills. What was it Mrs Dooling told you?'

Mr Meek stood to attention. Mrs Cockshott feigned a genteel impassivity, but natheless pricked up her ears.

Mrs Blogg waited a moment for greater effect, then said slowly and emphatically, 'Dan Fitzpatrick ran away this very morning with Wun Li the Chinaman's wife. Wun Li caught 'em at the cross-tracks, shot Dan stone-dead, and morshally wounded 'is wife; then committed wot in 'is 'eathenish country they calls "'Arry-carrie," blowing out his own brains. None o' 'em is expected to survive. The pore wife o' the white corpse is completely prostrated.'

Mrs Mudge said not a word. Her eyes shone with enthusiasm. She snatched up her three brown-paper parcels, and literally ran out of the store, quite forgetting her umbrella.

'Gone to gossip, I make no doubt,' commented Mrs Blogg bitterly. 'Speaking for meself, I'd scorn to trade on the misfortunes of me neighbours. A pound o' butter, a tin o' French coffee, and two pounds o' Ceylon tea, if you please,

Mr Meek—they'll go into this pillar-slip; and at the same time you might let me 'ave my little account up to date, if you'll be so good, and I'll settle with you now.'

Mr Meek mopped his pale, fat face with his apron. 'Very, very sad, but business is business,' he murmured softly.

(*Continued on page 346.*)

THE IMPERIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY OF RUSSIA.

By S. J. Rapoport.

I.

MANY things which are introduced at first as ornaments and *objets de luxe* become later matters of everyday necessity and of common use. Even such common things as knives and forks and umbrellas were, no farther back than two or three centuries ago, things which were rarely met with, and only amongst the very rich classes of society.

The same may be said of public libraries. In the present age of compulsory elementary education and Carnegie endowments, libraries are a necessity. It is difficult to imagine the existence of a city or European state, even the smallest, without its municipal or national library. It was quite different a century or two ago. A library was then looked upon as a rare thing, suitable only as an ornament for a great monarch or a rich Mæcenas. In Russia, up till the end of the eighteenth century, no public library whatever was in existence. There have been several big collections of books and manuscripts owned by private persons, but they were accessible only to a very few of the owners' friends.

The Empress Catharine II. started to buy whole libraries, but only for her own use and that of the Imperial household. In 1764 she bought a big collection of 30,000 volumes belonging to Baron Johann Albrecht Korf, who, in the reign of Anna Ivanovna, became the President of the Russian Academy of Science. This collection was given by the Empress to her son, then heir-apparent, Paul (afterwards Emperor). Then she acquired the rich libraries of Voltaire, Diderot, and Prince Shcherbatoff, besides many other books, chiefly in magnificent bindings. All these purchases she kept in the Hermitage, which is now one of the largest museums in Europe, though when it was built in 1765 it was only intended as a private annex to the Winter Palace, where the Empress used to have her social gatherings and amateur theatrical performances.

And, indeed, the idea of having a big national public library in St Petersburg (as the capital of the Russian Empire was then called) in the eighteenth century could hardly have been seriously entertained, considering that there were practically no readers who could make use of such an institution. Even at present 75 per cent. of the people do not know how to read or write. In the middle of the eighteenth century the proportion of illiterate persons must have been no less than 99 per cent. of the total population; and, although St Petersburg was then the most enlightened place in Russia, and its inhabitants the best-educated, there could hardly have been enough readers to make use of a big public library. After all, in the eighteenth century the new Russian capital was still, comparatively speaking, a small city. Only towards the end of the century did its population reach the number of two hundred thousand. Of these the number who could read was certainly small, and the majority of them would be officials in the various Government departments, who had no time during the day to make use of a library. Those of the leisured aristocratic class who cared for reading and study would have private collections of their own, and would deem it beneath their social position to sit in a public room for the purpose of study. The university and school students, who now form such a great proportion of the visitors to the reading-room of the Imperial Library, could not have been numerous at that time, as there were scarcely any establishments for higher education in the Russian capital. The university, the great technical schools, and similar institutions were not founded till the nineteenth century. Hence, if the need for a great national public library were felt at all, it could only have been by a very few. It was more from ambition and by chance than on account of necessity that the Empress Catharine II. conceived the idea of establishing a public library, to be supported by the State, in St Petersburg. But although the foundation of the library was resolved on in the year 1795, it was only opened to the public nineteen years later, in 1814, and thus in 1914 it celebrated the centenary of its existence.

II.

Catharine II. conceived the idea of establishing a public library in the same spirit and under the same circumstances as did many of the ancient rulers of Rome, Greece, or Egypt. When among the spoils of their victories were found collections of books or separate manuscripts, they eagerly transported these to their own capitals, and made them the corner-stone of new 'national' libraries. Thus Sylla, after the siege of Athens, discovered an entire library in the temple of Apollo, which he carried to Rome, and so appears to have been the founder of the

first Roman public library. Catharine followed the example of Sylla; and when, in 1794, Warsaw fell after being stormed by Suvorov, the national library of the Polish kingdom (founded by the brothers Zalusky) was declared to be Russian property, and in a few months was carried away to St Petersburg.

The story of the Polish library has been told many times, but it is worth retelling, especially at present, when the resurrection of Poland is so near at hand, and when the question of its national collection of books may so soon become a subject of acute discussion.

There lived, in the middle of the eighteenth century, two brothers, the Counts Zalusky, both occupying high positions in the State. The elder, Andrei (born in 1695), was the Great Chancellor of Poland and Archbishop of Cracow; the younger, called Joseph (born in 1702), was Assistant State Secretary of Poland and Bishop of Kiev. Their family was related to King Jan Sobessky, and the two brothers were also related to King Stanislav Leshchincky, and owned much property. Being highly educated and great lovers of learning and books, they both collected, especially the younger one, a large number of books, and founded a library in Warsaw, which was opened on the 8th of August 1748. This library, which the Zaluskys kept at their own expense, was declared to be the 'crown of the capital and the universe' (*corona urbis et orbis*), the 'gem of Poland' (*gemma regni Poloniæ*). The collection consisted of more than 400,000 volumes, and many manuscripts, woodcuts, engravings, maps, &c. The copies were of great rarity. The chief part dealt with Poland, her history, geography, ethnography, language, &c.; and the rest was devoted to theology and law. The books were collected not only from convents and private libraries in Poland, but also from places abroad where Joseph Zalusky spent much time and money in search of books about Poland. He was not only an ardent collector, but a learned man, and thousands of the copies he acquired bear trace of his study and investigations. He discovered the names of anonymous authors, stated the year in which certain of the books were printed, marked the degree of rarity in a book by varying numbers of asterisks, and so on.

After the establishment of the library, they both, but more particularly Joseph, set about enriching it by the purchase of new and old books and manuscripts. But the death of Andrei in 1758, and the interest which Joseph began to take in politics after the death of his brother, adversely affected the library. Joseph Zalusky was one of the most bitter opponents of Russia in the Polish Diet, and on the night of 2nd October 1767 was, by order of the Russian ambassador in Warsaw, Prince Repnin, expelled from that city, together with some other prominent members of the Polish legislative body. They were deported to Smolensk. Afterwards Zalusky was taken to Kaluga, where he remained in exile till 1773. During his six years of forced absence from Poland the library declined very much. Many books were stolen, no new acquisitions were made, the building became dilapidated, and the collection in general fell into a state of gross neglect and disorder. The management had been left in the hands of the Order of Jesuits, which, however, had been abolished. When Joseph Zalusky returned from exile he again devoted himself to his life-work; but his days were already numbered, and he died 9th January 1774. The library then became the property of the Polish nation, and remained under the management of the Polish Ministry of Education till the fall of Warsaw.

It is curious to note that this library of Zalusky's, which was the foundation of the present Imperial Russian Library, and still forms its most important part, contained only eight books in the Russian language. One can truly say that Poland not only founded the Imperial Public Library in St Petersburg, though against its own will, but also richly endowed it—in later years as well. After the Polish insurrection of 1830, the Russian Government confiscated many more libraries belonging to Polish municipal bodies, Polish societies, and private persons. Among these were the library of the Jesuits in Polotsk, which contained a most valuable edition of *Acta Sanctorum* and 106 manuscripts of great value; the public library of Warsaw, which consisted of more than 133,000 volumes and many precious manuscripts and engravings; the library of Prince Sapega; and many others. Altogether the spoils after the insurrection in Poland in 1830 amounted to more than half-a-million volumes.

The Polish insurrection of 1862 brought in some more spoils taken from Polish churches, convents, and private houses. The Russo-Turkish war of 1828–29, and the Russo-Persian war of 1826–28, gave Russia many spoils for the Imperial Library, among them the rich collection of oriental books and manuscripts from the Ardebil Library, the birthplace of the Persian dynasty of the Sufis. According to the wish expressed by the Emperor Nicholas I., the Ardebil Library was incorporated with the Russian Imperial Library as a 'memorial to the glory of the Russian arms.' The wars with the Caucasian tribes, the expeditions to Khiva and Bokhara, again yielded rich booty in the shape of rare and exceedingly valuable manuscripts and volumes in oriental languages taken from the mosques, palaces, and private houses.

III.

At the same time the task of collecting in a more peaceful way by purchase and statutory acquisition was being undertaken. After 1810 two copies of each book printed in Russian were presented to the library. Later this was changed

to one copy only. Now large sums are spent annually in buying books printed abroad, or rare manuscripts; though, in comparison with other great national libraries, the Russian purchases seem rather small. The British Museum spends about twenty thousand pounds per annum, whereas the Imperial Public Library spends only about five thousand pounds. Many of the most valuable additions have been supplied by private donors, who have frequently given very big collections of rare and precious volumes.

In December 1913—that is, at the end of the centenary of its foundation—the library contained 2,615,374 books and pamphlets, 207,816 manuscripts, and 193,445 pieces of music, maps, engravings, photographs, &c. Altogether there were 3,016,635 copies, not counting catalogues, duplicates, placards, and other such publications, which amounted to more than 200,000.

Perhaps the most interesting and unique department in the Imperial Library is the one called Rossica, which contains books printed in foreign languages on Russia. It contains 230,000 volumes, and is almost the only example of such a department; as very few other national libraries have a separate department for foreign books on their own country.

The growth of the Imperial Russian Library is really a matter of only half-a-century, as up to 1850, when Baron (afterwards Count) Modest Korf was appointed director, it existed as a stock of badly kept books almost uncatalogued, and rarely made use of by the public. The whole sum spent on new books from 1814 to 1850 did not exceed on an average one hundred and fifty pounds a year. Baron Korf, who was at the head of the library from 1849 till the end of 1861, infused new life into it, and made it really a public library. It was he who established the Rossica department, as well as the departments for incunabula (books published before 1500), the Aldines and Elzevirs. He introduced order into the chaos which had reigned up till then in the matter of cataloguing, succeeded in obtaining larger grants for buying and binding books, increased the staff, and enlarged the building. At the same time he was very active in advertising the uses of the library among the population, so that when he left the office to his successor he had the satisfaction of knowing that whereas in 1849 the number of tickets issued to readers was eight hundred and ninety-six, and the number of books required by them about one thousand four hundred, in 1861 the numbers were respectively three thousand six hundred and fourteen and one hundred and thirty-one thousand three hundred and thirty-one.

By order of the Emperor Alexander II., the Rossica Room was called the Room of Baron Korf, and a portrait of the latter is placed over the entrance.

In 1912 the number of readers' tickets amounted to twenty-seven thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, and the number of books issued to five hundred and twenty-two thousand nine hundred and fifty-eight.

It may be of interest, also, to mention that the first woman reader did not appear till 1831. Since then the numbers have increased, but statistics of women readers are not available before 1854. In that year, out of one thousand nine hundred and eighty-eight readers, twenty-three were women, and up till 1862 their number never exceeded one hundred. Since then there has been a steady increase, owing to the greater number of women students in the educational establishments of the Russian capital. In 1912, out of twenty-seven thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine readers, seven thousand three hundred and nineteen were women.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XX.—OF AN EXPEDITION BY NIGHT.

'WHY, Mr Geoffrey, what you settin' here in the dark for?'

'Is it dark, Mrs Trapes?'

'My land! can't you see as it's too dark t' see?—an'—oh, shucks, Mr Geoffrey!'

'Certainly, Mrs Trapes! But can't you see that the whole world—my world, anyway—is full of a refulgent glory, a magic light where nothing mean or sordid can possibly be, a light that my eyes never saw till now or hoped to see, a radiance that may never fail, I hope—a—er'——

'Oh, go on, Mr Geoffrey, go on! Only, I guess I'll light the gas jest the same, if you don't mind!' Which Mrs Trapes did forthwith. 'But what was you a-doin' of all alone in the dark?'

'Glorying in life, Mrs Trapes, and praising the good God for health and strength to enjoy it and the fullness thereof.'

'"Fullness thereof," meanin' jest what, Mr Geoffrey?'

'The most beautiful thing in a beautiful world, Mrs Trapes.'

'An' that's Hermy, I s'pose. An' all that talk o' glory an' radiance an' magic light means as you've been an' spoke, I guess?'

'It does.'

'An' what did she say?'

'Nothing.'

'Nothin'?'

'Not with her lips, but'——

'Oh, her eyes, was it? Mr Geoffrey, I'll tell you what—a girl may look "yes" with her

eyes a whole week an' say "no" with her mouth jest once, an' mean "no"—when it's to a pea-nut man. Lordy-lord! what's that?' And Mrs Trapes jumped as a hand rapped softly on the door, and stared horrified to see a human head protrude itself into the room, while a voice said, 'Da signorina she out, so me come tell-a you piece-a-da-noos.'

'Why, if it ain't that blessed guinney! Go away—what d'ye want?'

Hereupon Tony flashed his white teeth, and, opening the door, bowed with his inimitable grace, grew solemn, tapped his nose, winked knowingly, and laid finger to lip mysteriously.

'My land!' said Mrs Trapes, staring. 'What's the matter with the Eyetalian ij'it now?'

'Spike—he go make-a-da-fight!' whispered Tony hoarsely.

'Eh—Arthur fightin'—where?'

'He go make-a-da-box—he drink-a-da-booze, den he walk-a—so! Den da signorina she-a cry.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, 'you mean as that b'y's off boxin' again?'

'*Si, si*, he go make-a-da-box-fight.'

'Is he over at O'Rourke's, Tony?' inquired Ravenslee, sitting upright.

'I bet-a-my-life, yes.'

'Oh, Mr Geoffrey!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, clasping bony hands, 'if they bring him home drunk like they did last time!'

'They sha'n't do that, Mrs Trapes. Don't worry; I'll go and fetch him,' said Ravenslee, getting to his feet.

'Fetch him? From O'Rourke's? Are ye crazy? You'd get half-killed, like as not. Oh, they're a bad, ugly lot down there!'

'I feel rather ugly myself,' said Ravenslee, looking around for the shabby hat; 'anyway, I'm going to see.'

'Why, then, if you're goin' t' venture among that lot, you take this with ye, Mr Geoffrey,' and she thrust the poker into his hand; 'you'll sure need it—ah, do now!' But Ravenslee laughed and set it aside. 'You'd better take it, Mr Geoffrey; fists is fists, but gimme a poker—every time! A poker ain't t' be sneezed at! What! goin'—an' empty-'anded? Mr Geoffrey, I'm surprised at you—think of Hermy!'

'That's just what I am doing.'

'Well, s'posin' they hurt you, what'll Hermy do?'

'You think she'd mind, then, though I'm—only a pea-nut man?'

'Even a pea-nut man's a feller-creatur', ain't he?—an' Hermy's 'eart is very tender, an'—oh, shucks, Mr Geoffrey, I guess you know she'd just be crazy if you was hurt bad!'

'Why, then,' said Ravenslee, smiling, and taking up the battered hat, 'I'll take great care of myself—trust me!'

'Then good-bye, Mr Geoffrey, good-bye, an'—the good Lord go with you.'

'Thank you, Mrs Trapes,' said Ravenslee, and followed Tony out upon the stair.

Upon one of the many landings the young Italian paused. 'Me put-a-you wise, Geoff; you savvy where-a to find Spike; now me go back t' my lil Pietro, yes. S'long, pal, 'n' good-a luck!'

Ravenslee hastened on downstairs, returning neighbourly nods and greetings as he went, but staying for none, and so, crossing the court, turned into the avenue.

On the corner he beheld the Spider, hard at work on his eternal chewing-gum, peak-cap drawn low, and hands in pockets. Seeing Ravenslee, he nodded and lurched forward. 'What's doin', Geoff?' he inquired.

'I'm off to O'Rourke's—coming?'

'Not much! An' say, 't ain't worth your trouble—I ain't fightin'. Nawthin' but a lot o' fifth-raters.'

'I'm going over to fetch Spike.'

'How much?' exclaimed the Spider, his square jaws immobile from sheer astonishment. 'Say, you ain't crazy, are ye—I mean, you ain't dippy or cracked in the dome, are ye? Because de kid's goin' ten rounds with Young Alf de East-side Wonder t'-night, see?'

'Not if I can help it, Spider.'

'Aw—come off, bo'! D'ye think Bud'll let him go?'

'I sha'n't ask Bud, or any one else.'

'Meanin' as you'll walk right in on Bud's tough bunch an' cop out de kid on yer lonesome—eh?'

'I shall try.'

'Then you sure are crazy; if yer dome ain't cracked yet, it's sure goin' t' be. Why, Bud 'n' his crowd'll soak you good 'n' plenty, 'n' chuck ye out again quicker 'n ye went in—they will sure, bo'—if you go.'

'I'm wondering if you'll come along and help?' said Ravenslee lazily.

'Me? Not so's you could notice it. I ain't huntin' that sort o' trouble.'

'Oh, well, if you think you'd—er—better not, I'll go alone.'

'What! yer goin', are ye?'

'Of course! You see, Spike is my friend; consequently his trouble is my trouble. Good-night, Spider; and whatever else you do, be sure to—er—take good care of yourself!' And Ravenslee smiled and turned away; but he had not gone six paces before the Spider was at his elbow.

'Say, bo',' said he, 'I don't like the way you smile, but you talk so soft an' pretty, I guess I'll jest have t' come along t' gather up what they leave o' ye.'

'Spider,' said Ravenslee, 'shake!' The Spider obeyed, somewhat shamefacedly, to be sure.

'It looks like two domes bein' cracked 'stead o' one, an' all along o' that fool kid!' Having said which, he lurched on beside Ravenslee, chewing voraciously. 'How you goin' t' work it?' he inquired suddenly.

'I don't know yet.'

'Hully chee! You've sure gotcher nerve along. There's some o' the toughest guys in little Manhattan Village at O'Rourke's dump t'-night, keepin' th' ring an' fair achin' for trouble.'

'We must dodge 'em, Spider.'

'S'pose we can't?'

'Then we must trust our luck, and I've got a hunch we shall get Spike away somehow before Mr Flowers dopes him or makes him drunk. Anyway, we'll try. The dressing-rooms are behind the annex, aren't they?'

'Know the place, do ye?'

'I've looked it over. We can get in behind the annex, can't we?'

'In?' repeated the Spider, smiling grimly. 'Oh, we'll get in all right—what gets my goat is how we're goin' t' get out again. You sure are a bird for takin' chances, Geoff.'

'Life is made up of chances, Spider, and there are two kinds of men, those who take them joyfully and those who don't.'

'Well, say, you can scratch me on the joyful business. I'm the guy as only takes chances he's paid t' take.'

'How much are you getting on this job, Spider?'

'Oh—well—I mean—say, what's th' time, bo'?'

'Five minutes after eight—why?'

'I guess de kid's in th' ring, then. There's a full card t'-night, an' he's scheduled for eight sharp, so I reckon he's fightin' now—an' good luck t' him!'

By this time they had reached that dark and quiet neighbourhood where stood O'Rourke's saloon. But to-night the big annex glared with light, and the air about it was full of a dull, hoarse, insistent clamour that swelled all at once to a chorus of discordant shrieks and frenzied cries.

'Ah!' quoth the Spider sagely, 'hark to 'em howl! That means some guy's gettin' his all right—listen to 'em; they love t' get blood for their entrance money, an' they're sure gettin' it. Some one's bein' knocked out—come on!'

It was a dark night, for there was no moon, and the stars were hidden; thus, as Ravenslee followed the Spider, he found himself stumbling over the uneven ground of a vacant lot, a lonely place beyond which lay the distant river. So they came at last to various outbuildings looming up ugly and ungainly in the dimness.

'Say, bo',' said the Spider, stopping suddenly at a small and narrow door, 'you'd best wait here an' lemme go first.'

'No; we'll go together.'

'Right-o; only, be ready to make a quick get-away!' So saying, the Spider opened the door, and, closely followed by Ravenslee, stepped into a dim-lit passage thick with the blue vapour of cigars and cigarettes. It was a long, narrow corridor, bare and uncarpeted, seeming to run the length of the building; on one hand was a row of dingy windows, and on the other were several doors, from behind which came the sound of many voices that talked and sang and swore together and at the same time—a very babel.

Now at the end of this passage was yet another door which gave upon a small room that contained a rickety sofa, a chair, and a battered desk; a kerosene-lamp suspended against the wall burned dimly; and it was into this chamber that the Spider ushered Ravenslee somewhat hastily. The Spider's eyes were very bright, and he chewed rather more fiercely than usual.

'Bo',' said he, 'this place ain't exactly a bed o' roses for a strange guy like you; ye see, this is Bud's own stampin'-ground, an' the whole bunch is here t'-night, and most of 'em are heeled. Soapy an' Bud always tote guns, I know. So I guess you'd better mark time here a bit while I chase around an' locate th' kid. If any one asks what you're doin' around here, say as you came in with me. But, bo''—and here the Spider laid an impressive hand on Ravenslee's arm—'if you should happen t' see Bud, well, don't stop to look twice, but beat it—let it be th' door or winder for yours—only, beat it!'

'Oh, why?'

'Well, I know Bud's got it in fer you; I heard him say—— Oh, well, if his gun should go off—accidental-like, this place ain't exactly Broadway or Fifth Av'noo, bo'—see?'

'I see!' nodded Ravenslee.

'Hold on!' said Spider, and crossing to the window, he unlatched it stealthily and lifted it high. 'If I ain't back inside ten minutes, bo', nip out through here an' hike—wait for me at the lamp-post across the lot over there—it'll be safer. D'ye get me?'

'I do!' nodded Ravenslee.

'I guess you'd be less of a fool if you was to get out now an' wait—outside!' Spider suggested.

Ravenslee shook his head. 'I'll wait here,' said he; 'there are times when I can be as big a fool as the next, Spider, and this is one of them.'

'That's so!' nodded the Spider, and, chewing viciously, he turned and was gone, to be hailed a few minutes later in uproarious greeting by many discordant voices which died slowly to a droning hum, above which came sounds more distant, shouts and cheers from the auditorium.

Left alone, Ravenslee looked about him, and then espied a newspaper that lay upon the desk,

and idly taking it up, his gaze was attracted by these words, printed in large block letters:

'NOTORIOUS CRIMINAL RUN TO EARTH. JACOB HEINE THE GUN-MAN ARRESTED IN JERSEY CITY.'

Below in small type he read this:

Jacob Heine, believed to be the perpetrator of several mysterious shooting affrays, and member of a dangerous West-side gang, was arrested to-day.'

Now, the light being dim, Ravenslee drew closer to the lamp, and, standing thus against the light, his face was in shadow; also his long figure was silhouetted upon the opposite wall, plain to be seen by any one opening the door. Suddenly, as he stood thus, head bent above the paper, this door opened and M'Ginnis entered; he also held a paper, and now he spoke without troubling to lift his scowling gaze from the printed column he was scanning: 'That you, Lefty? Here 's a hell of a mix-up—that dog-gone fool Heine 's got himself pinched—and in Jersey City, too! I told him t' stay around here till things was quiet! It 's goin' t' be a hell of a job t' fix things for him over there—'t ain't like N' York. But we got t' fix things for him or chance him squealin' on th' rest of us; but what beats me is '——

M'Ginnis's teeth clicked together and the paper tore suddenly between his hands as, glancing up at last, he beheld two keen, gray eyes that watched him, and a mouth, grim and close-lipped, that curled in the smile Spider didn't like.

For a long, tense moment they stood motionless, eye to eye; then, reaching behind him, M'Ginnis locked the door, and, drawing out the key, thrust it into his pocket.

'So—I got ye at last—have I?' said he slowly.

'And I 've got you,' said Ravenslee pleasantly; 'we seem to have got each other, don't we?'

'See here, you,' said M'Ginnis, his massive shoulders squared, his big chin viciously outthrust, 'you 're goin' t' leave Mulligan's, see?'

'Am I?' said Ravenslee, lounging upon a corner of the battered desk.

'You sure are,' nodded M'Ginnis; 'Hell's Kitchen ain't big enough for you an' me, I guess—you 're goin' because I say so, an' you 're goin' t'-night!'

'You surprise me!' said Ravenslee sleepily.

'You 're goin' t' quit Hell's Kitchen for good, and—you ain't comin' back!'

'You amaze me!' and Ravenslee yawned behind his hand.

'An' now you 're goin' t' listen why an' wherefore—if you can keep awake a minute!'

'I 'll try, Mr Flowers; I 'll try.'

M'Ginnis thrust clenched hands into his pockets and surveyed Ravenslee with scornful eyes—his lounging figure and stooping shoulders, his long white hands, and general listless air.

'God!' he exclaimed, 'that she should trouble t' look twice at such a nancy-boy!' and he spat loud and contemptuously.

'Almost think you 're trying to be rude, Mr Flowers.'

'Aw—I couldn't be to a—thing like you! An' see here—me name 's M'Ginnis!'

'But, then,' sighed Ravenslee, 'I prefer to call you Flowers—a fair name for a foul thing.'

M'Ginnis made a swift step forward, and halted, hard-breathing and menacing. 'How much?' he demanded.

'A fair name for a foul thing, Mr Flowers,' repeated Ravenslee, glancing up at him under slumberous, drooping lids; 'anyway, Flowers you will remain!' As they stared again eye to eye, M'Ginnis edged nearer and nearer, head thrust forward, until Ravenslee could see the cords that writhed and swelled in his big throat, and he hitched forward a languid shoulder. 'Don't come any nearer, Flowers,' said he, 'and don't stick out your jaw like that; don't do it; I might be tempted to try to—er—hit it!'

'What—you?' said M'Ginnis, and laughed hoarsely, while Ravenslee yawned again.

'An' now, Mr Butt-in, if you 're still awake, listen here. I guess it 's about time you stopped foolin' around Hermy Chesterton, an' you 're goin' t' quit—see!' Ravenslee's eyes flashed suddenly, then drooped as M'Ginnis continued, 'So you 're goin' t' sit down right here, an' you 're goin' t' write a nice little note of farewell, an' you 're goin' t' tell her as you love her, an' leave her because I say so—see? Ah!' he cried, suddenly hoarse and anger-choked, 'd' ye think I 'll let Hermy look at a thing like you—do ye—do ye?' And he waited.

Ravenslee sat utterly still, and when at last he spoke his voice sounded even more gentle than before: 'My good Flowers, there is just one thing you shall not do, and that is, speak her name in my hearing—you 're not fit to, and, Mr Flowers, I 'll not permit it.'

'Is that so?' snarled M'Ginnis. 'Well, then, listen some more. I know as you 're always hangin' around her flat, an' if Hermy don't care about losin' her good name '——

Even as Ravenslee's long arm shot out M'Ginnis side-stepped the blow, and Ravenslee found himself staring into the muzzle of a revolver.

'Ah, I thought so!' he breathed, and shrank away.

'Kind of alters things, don't it?' inquired M'Ginnis, hoarse and jeering. 'Well, if you don't want it to go off, sit down an' write Hermy as pretty a little note as you can. No; shut that window first.'

Silent and speechless, Ravenslee crossed to the window and drew down the sash, in doing

which he noticed a dark something that crouched beneath the sill.

'An' now,' said M'Ginnis, leaning against a corner of the desk, 'sit down here, nice an' close, an' write that letter—there's pen an' ink an' paper—an' quick about it, or, by'—— M'Ginnis sprang up and turned as the glass of the window splintered to fragments—and, almost with the crash, Ravenslee leapt—a fierce twist, a vicious wrench, and the deadly weapon had changed hands.

'Lucky it didn't go off,' said Ravenslee, smiling grimly at the revolver he held; 'others might have heard, and, Mr Flowers, I want to be alone with you just a little longer. Of course, I might shoot you for the murderous beast you are, or I might walk you over to the nearest police depot for the crook I think you are; but—oh, well, of late I've been yearning to get my hands on you, and so'—— Ravenslee turned and pitched the revolver through the broken window. But, almost as the weapon left his hand, M'Ginnis was upon him, and, reeling from the blow, Ravenslee staggered blindly across the room till stayed by the wall, and sank there, crouched and groaning, his face hidden in his hands.

With a cry hoarse and fierce, M'Ginnis followed and stooped, eager to make an end—stooped to be met by two fierce hands, sure hands and strong that grasped his silken neckerchief as this crouching figure rose suddenly erect. So for a wild, panting moment they grappled, swaying grimly to and fro, while ever the silken neckerchief was twisted tighter and tighter. Choking now, M'Ginnis felt fingers on his naked throat, iron fingers that clutched cruelly, and in this painful grip was whirled, choking, against the wall, and thence borne down and down. And now M'Ginnis, lying helpless across his opponent's knee, stared up into a face pale but grimly joyous, lips that curled back from gnashing white teeth—eyes that glared merciless. So Ravenslee bent M'Ginnis back across his knee and choked him there awhile, then suddenly relaxed his hold and let M'Ginnis sink, choking, to the floor.

'A little—rough, Mr Flowers,' he panted, 'a trifle—rough with you—I fear—but I want you—to know that you—shall not utter—her name—in my presence. Now the key—I prefer door to window. The key, Mr Flowers—ah, here it is!' So saying, Ravenslee stood upright, and, wiping blood and sweat from him with his sleeve, turned to the door. 'One other thing, Mr Flowers; have the goodness to take off your neckerchief next time, or I—may strangle you outright.'

Half-way down the passage Ravenslee turned to see Murder close on his heels; once he smote, and twice, but nothing might stay that bull-like rush, and, locked in a desperate clinch, he was borne back and back, their trampling lost in the universal din about them, as reeling, staggering, they crashed out through wrecked and splintered door, and, still locked together, were swallowed in the night beyond.

(*Continued on page 340.*)

WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES.

By JOHN BURNS, W.S.

A FEW months ago we emphasised the attractiveness of these Government securities as investments or savings funds for people of all classes. Within the short interval which has elapsed since that article appeared great changes have taken place. The 6 Per Cent. Exchequer Bonds have been withdrawn. So have the 5½ Per Cent. Treasury Bills; but indeed the latter, being for not less than £1000, did not appeal to people of moderate means. Most important of all, the new War Loan has been issued and successfully floated. We have purposely refrained from saying anything more on the subject of War Savings Certificates till after the closing of the lists of applications for the new loan. That stage being successfully passed, it is fitting to refer again briefly to the distinctive position and value of the War Savings Certificates and their relation to the loan.

The first thing to be made clear is that the War Savings Certificates are still on sale on exactly the old terms. There has been some misunderstanding on this head owing to the withdrawal of War Expenditure Certificates, a confusingly similar name applicable to a totally different thing. The War Savings Certificates still provide a five years' savings fund from the date of purchase, rolling up at £5, 3s. per cent. compound interest, compounded half-yearly, and free of income-tax in the strictest sense of these words. Pay 15s. 6d., and five years later you draw £1. The 15s. 6d. may be paid up by instalments if the purchasing investor is unable to provide it in one sum. That is a valuable concession to many people, but the great majority of our readers will no doubt multiply, rather than divide, that modest sum. The maximum allowable is 500 times 15s. 6d., which is £387, 10s.

The next thing is that there is really no competition between the War Savings Certificates and the new War Loan. Let us look at it briefly from the points of view both of a wealthy man or woman and of a man or woman of limited resources.

To the wealthy investor the immunity from

income-tax and super-tax is a great attraction, with a normal rate of 5s. per £1 on all income, and super-tax, reaching to 3s. 6d. per £1, on incomes over £2500, but charged only on people who have more than £3000 a year, and with little prospect of relief in view of the gigantic war liabilities, which will not cease with hostilities. The certificates and the 4 per cent. issue of the loan both give to the wealthy man this valued immunity from income-tax. The certificates apply this tax relief to both ordinary income-tax and super-tax, but to only £387, 10s. of capital, and for only five years, but coupled with a net yield of over 5 per cent. compound interest. The 4 Per Cent. War Loan applies the relief to ordinary income-tax only and not to super-tax, but without any capital limit, and for twelve years, but with a net yield of only 4 per cent., even if the investor is not liable for super-tax. No doubt the wealthy investor would prefer that the War Savings Certificates were for twelve instead of five years, just as he would prefer that the limit were £3875 rather than £387, 10s. For that matter, so he would prefer that the free yield of the War Loan were 4½ per cent. rather than 4 per cent., and free from, instead of subject to, super-tax. But he must take things as they are offered, and not many offers are so attractive as that of these certificates. The limit of amount is, so far, under the investor's own control by investing up to the £387, 10s., not only for himself, but also for his wife, and for each of his children. The point, however, is as to any suggested collision with the War Loan. To this the answer is that, however much he may have subscribed to that issue, whether from patriotic motives, or because he wished not to miss a good thing, or for both reasons combined, that has no bearing at all on the wisdom of his taking as much as he is allowed to have of the certificates, which have virtues of their own, and to him as a wealthy man more than to others. These virtues are not tarnished by the soundness and worth of the larger issue.

Next as to the investor of more restricted financial power. And for the sake of brevity we pass at once to the case of the man or woman who pays no income-tax. That may be either because the total income does not exceed £130, or because it is equalled or exceeded by the various abatements for scale, children, life insurance, &c. So long as the 6 Per Cent. Exchequer Bonds, especially those of the Post-Office issue, were on sale, it was perhaps a little difficult to maintain the pecuniary advantage of the War Savings Certificates over these bonds for investors of the class whose case is now being considered. When a person is not in any event liable for income-tax, it follows that any advocacy of the value of an investment on the ground that the income from it enjoys immunity from income-tax is apt to bring a rejoinder, the essence of which, politely enveloped, is, 'Thank you for nothing.' The Exchequer Bonds paid a rate of interest higher by fully three-quarters per cent. than the certificates, and though they were for only three years as against the five years of the War Savings Certificates, the investor received his interest half-yearly instead of having to wait till final maturity. But then this last fact, so far from telling against the certificates, goes all the other way. Their essential nature is expressed by the word 'savings' in their title. The objects are the encouragement of thrift and its utilisation for the purposes of the war. This quality is essential to the winning of the war. It is intended to be exhibited, not only in the first putting away of the 15s. 6d. or larger sums, but also in the weekly and yearly self-restraint which allows the investor to let his money lie fructifying day and night for the five years continuously. No other investment does this. Nor can it in any other way be done on anything like the same terms. So far as any possible competition from the 6 Per Cent. Exchequer Bonds is concerned, the above is wasteful and ridiculous excess of argument, for these bonds have ceased to be issued. But it is useful to restate the above considerations, for they inculcate the head and front of the case for these certificates.

If the small investor is so circumstanced that the actual paying of his or her way requires a yearly return in cash from all the family resources, then no doubt War Savings Certificates must be regretfully renounced. The War Loan is then, as between the two, a necessity of the situation. That, however, comes not from a competition of their financial values, but from the personal position of the investor. Such cases do exist; but thrift tells for much, and under its influence there will not be so many cases as one might imagine where the peculiar benefits of the War Savings Certificates cannot be enjoyed to some extent.

Both issues—the loan and the certificates—are great. It is their crowning recommendation that, so far from its being a case of how happy the investor could be with either were t'other cheap and charming investment away, he will, on the contrary, be happy with either, but happier still with both. He can divide his available resources and score on both flanks. The War Loan gives him a high rate of interest and a steady income. The War Savings Certificates give him a glorified savings-bank, exemplifying the value of thrift, the prudence of eliminating the remotest possibility of shrinkage of capital at any date, a rate of interest nearly double that of the ordinary savings-bank, and the principle of accumulation by compound interest after the manner of the savings-bank book, but going two better by the higher rate and by accumulating not once but twice a year. To all this is

added a strong inducement not to upset the scheme by any idea of withdrawal during the five years, while yet the way of escape is provided for emergencies of necessity. So that it really comes to this, that it is wisdom to have subscribed for or to buy War Loan, but positive folly to neglect the War Savings Certificates.

A FAMOUS SEA-FIGHT IN THE LAST GREAT WAR.

By Commander LORD TEIGNMOUTH, R.N.

THE following very graphic description of a naval action which took place over a hundred years ago off the Gulf of Salonica—where the warships of the Allies are now very much in evidence—will serve to show the different conditions under which naval warfare was conducted in the last great naval war, as compared with those confronting our seamen at the present time.

By way of preface, it may be well to explain that, in consequence of an entangling treaty with Russia, Great Britain, finding herself, in 1806, at war with the Porte, Lord Collingwood, who commanded in the Mediterranean, despatched the thirty-eight-gun frigate *Seahorse* to protect British interests in the Ægean. This vessel was commanded by Captain John Stewart, a member of that gallant band of young and enterprising frigate-captains of whom Collingwood wrote: 'It is really astonishing: these youths think that nothing is beyond their enterprise, and they seldom fail of success;' adding significantly: 'This activity and zeal in these gallant young men keep up my spirits, and make me equal to bear the disagreeables that happen from the contentions of some other ships.' And in right loyal spirit did Captain Stewart justify the trust of his chief on the present occasion. For more than a year he cruised amongst the islands of the Archipelago, driving off the Ionian privateers, whose crews had been living at free quarters and committing the most shameful depredations—like the modern Huns—on the unfortunate inhabitants, and exercising a sort of protectorate over the entire Archipelago. 'Every one of the islands,' he wrote to a friend, 'groaned under their lash, and until they (the privateers) were driven away it was impossible to re-establish or protect private property.'

Another, and especially important, object of Captain Stewart's mission was to protect the islanders from the ravages of their Turkish Agas—who fled at his approach; and, further, to encourage the extensive trade carried on with Malta, which island, in fact, derived its chief supplies from the Archipelago.

Captain Stewart was but thirty-four years of age when entrusted by Lord Collingwood with this highly important mission. The able manner in which he fulfilled it drew from Sir Robert Adair, the British Plenipotentiary sent out to arrange terms of peace with the Porte, the following eulogium: 'The conduct of Captain Stewart has been most judicious. Steadily adhering to the conciliatory system with which he had set out, his disinterestedness was never shaken, even by the temptation of advantages fairly within his reach; but he regarded his instructions to capture and distress the Ottoman trade rather as a means of bringing a mistaken enemy to his senses than as a source of emolument to himself. He strictly enforced two conditions on the Turks as the price of his forbearance—the one, that they should collect no revenue in the Greek islands; the other, that no Turkish ship of war should appear in those seas. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that the Greeks regarded him rather as their protector than their enemy, and that, as such, they should venerate him to this hour.'

It must be understood that the jurisdiction of the Porte then extended not only over the whole of Greece, but throughout the islands of the Archipelago and the Ægean Sea, with the exception of the Cyclades, which, though paying tribute to the Porte, had never been subjected to a Turkish occupation. The civil administration throughout the islands was entrusted by the Porte to the Primates, or chief magistrates—elected by the Greek inhabitants from amongst themselves—who collected the revenue and carried on the government.

The circumstances which led up to actual hostilities between Great Britain and the Porte at this juncture are thus stated by Sir Robert Adair: 'With every disposition to give a marked character of mildness to the hostilities which the two nations, so long friendly, were now compelled to exercise against each other, he (Captain Stewart) found it impossible on one occasion to avoid inflicting upon the Turkish marine one of those severe lessons which every naval state in hostility with us has been doomed to experience in its turn. It happened that, under a pretence of destroying pirates, the captain-pasha thought fit to send a squadron of frigates into the Ægean Sea, in contravention of the compact already mentioned. Information of this having reached Captain Stewart, he remonstrated with the Turkish commodore upon his proceedings; and on being made acquainted by that officer with the purpose for which he had been sent out, Captain Stewart readily offered to take that service upon himself, provided the Turkish squadron would return to port; but

he told him, at the same time, that if he remained there, he must attack him. The Turk, scarcely thinking his adversary in earnest, and relying upon his immense superiority—his own ship mounting fifty-two guns and his consort thirty-four guns, while the *Seahorse* had but thirty-eight in all—preferred the risk of an engagement.'

Captain Stewart, in challenging so vastly superior an enemy to battle, incurred a very grave responsibility; and in a letter written subsequently to a friend, he thus explained his position: 'I felt my situation critical. I was alone, and could not get assistance for some time. If I were driven out of the Archipelago, the whole of the islands would be instantly overrun by the Turks, and our influence and character suffer in consequence. As I knew that whatever the Turkish force was, it would certainly be much superior to my own, I devised in my head most of the cases likely to arise, and determined, if the disparity of force was not excessive, to attack them, and, if they were under sail, to do so at night.'

Captain Stewart's conception of an enemy's force which 'was not excessive' may be gathered from what he confided to his friend: 'I was walking the deck with much anxiety, when, at half-past six (P.M.), a large frigate, with fifteen ports on a side, was observed coming through the passage between Schohilo (Skopelos) and Kilidroni. Then followed a smaller ship, with thirteen ports a side, and then a galley. This seemed within my compass. I knew my crew to be brave, active men, well practised at manœuvring. They made sail with indescribable alacrity; we stood towards the Turks, and purposely kept from engaging them until dark, when I judged we should have a greater advantage in manœuvring.'*

In the sequel, Captain Stewart's decision to fight justified the high opinion of his judgment entertained by Lord Collingwood, who had thus written of him: 'No officer is higher in my estimation than Captain Stewart, because I have experienced his ability and judgment wherever he was employed, and know that he is suited to the most important services.'

Captain Stewart's official report of the encounter is brief and to the point, after the manner of those days. A detailed and very graphic narrative of the affair, compiled by an officer of the *Seahorse*, is, however, fortunately extant, in the form of a stained and faded 'cutting' from a north of England newspaper, preserved by a member of Captain Stewart's family, residing at that time in Abbey Yard, Carlisle. It is reproduced here verbatim.

THE 'OLD HORSES' IN THEIR ELEMENT.

On the 1st of July 1808, H.M.S. *Seahorse*, thirty-eight guns, Captain John Stewart, was lying in the beautiful harbour of St George, in the island of Syra, whither we had gone to complete the frigate's water, when a small Lemnian 'mistique,' of two guns and thirty-five as savage-looking rascals as ever formed part of a pirate's crew, ran under our stern, and asked permission to communicate some important intelligence; a boat from the frigate soon brought the two chiefs of this small but fierce and lawless band. After a long conference in the cabin, our excellent captain ordered the hands to be turned up, and in his own brief and energetic manner informed the officers and crew that 'the pirate had seen a Turkish squadron of two fifty-gun frigates, one of thirty, and a galley the day before, off the north end of Lemnos; that the disparity of force, compared with that of our single ship, was great, but that, well trained as the "old horses" were, he had no doubt of our success, even should we encounter them altogether,' and he concluded by asking 'whether we should try such fearful odds.' The reply was three rattling cheers, and up anchor; the commander and three of the pirates remaining, at their own request, on board.

The following days were passed in seeking for the 'circumcised dogs,' preparing the ship for the anticipated struggle, and exercising the crew in the various duties a long action would call on them to perform. In the evening of the third day we spoke a fine Hydriot polacre of twenty guns, who had been chased the previous day by a portion of the Turkish squadron (one of the large ships had been sent to Lemnos); she offered to stay by and take part with us, and her offer was accepted.

On the 5th, at 5.30 P.M., we saw, to our great joy, the commodore's ship coming round the east end of Scopulo, followed by the thirty-gun ship and a galley; they were directly to windward. On perceiving us they shortened to easy sail, and bore down in open order. When within about three miles, the wind shifted in a heavy squall, giving us the 'weather-gage,' which was taken immediate advantage of by Captain Stewart, who steered for the large frigate. At 9.10 P.M. we ranged up under his lee quarter and gave him our double-shotted broadside, at the distance of about ten fathoms. Its weight (for every shot told) evidently bothered our opponent, and he returned a hasty, ill-directed fire, the greater part of his shot passing harmlessly ahead. The row had now fairly begun, and we lay at the good Nelsonian distance of about half pistol-shot, unrigging him from the quarter-deck and forecastle, and giving ample occupation to Azrael in transporting the souls of

*The enemy's force was as follows: *Badere Zaffer*, Captain Scanderli Kichuc Alli, a very fine frigate of the largest dimensions; she carried fifty-two long brass guns, twenty-four-pounders, on the main-deck, except two, which were forty-two-pounders, and twelve-pounders on the quarter-deck and forecastle. The other ship was the *Aho Fezan*, Captain Daragardi Alli, carrying twenty-four guns, thirteen-pounders, and two mortars.

many of the followers of Mahomet to the foot of Al Sirat's Arch,* liberated from their fleshly prisons by the hulling activity of our main-deckers.

Prosperously, however, as we thought ourselves to be proceeding (or, as Brother Jonathan would say, 'progressing'), our allies thought otherwise; the boasting Hydriot started off under all the canvas he could muster, and the pirates, who had chosen their station in the launch on the booms, and had at first been tolerably active with their long 'tophaikes,' became very fidgety, and prepared for bolting. By this time (10.25) we had relieved our opponent from all further occasion to call his sail-trimmers, the larboard yard-arm of his foresail being the only rag left to interest him, and he very properly bore up to keep steerage-way. The small frigate having for some time galled us considerably with her raking shot, we took this opportunity of throwing all aback, closed with her, and three broadsides sufficed to silence her guns; the explosion of some powder under the forecastle set her on fire forward, and we made sail to get out of her way and rejoin our first opponent. Before we had succeeded in the latter object, the captain of the mizzen-top hailed the quarter-deck, and exclaimed, 'The little frigate has given three rolls and gone to h—l, sir!' A marine on the larboard quarter also reported having seen her go down, and this was the last time mortal eyes beheld the *Apo Fezan* or her crew of about three hundred men.

The dismantled state of the enemy enabled us now to work round him like a 'cooper round a cask,' until 11.20 P.M., when, as we were in stays ahead (having just raked him with one broadside, and ready to give him the other), he shot away our mizzen-mast; the ship missed stays, and the Turk, collecting between three and four hundred men in his fore-rigging, bowsprit, and forecastle, boldly attempted to board. Our two divisions of boarders were placed in the main-chains, about the gangway, and in front of the marines on the quarter-deck; behind the marines' bayonets were the sail-trimmers, forming thus a phalanx seven deep of pikes, tomahawks, bayonets, and cutlasses; our foremost quarter-deck thirty-two-pounders had each eight hundred musket-balls, and the whole broadside was ready (and reserved) with round and grape. The infidels came on shouting and uttering dreadful yells, to which perhaps the midnight hour added a few horrors; at all events, the combination proved quite too much for our Lemnian friends, who crawled into the deepest recess of the cable-tiers, and remained there; indeed, some few of the best of the 'old horses' were struck with a momentary panic, which, but for the coolness of the officers, would probably have spread—for the mutual cessation of fire and a profound silence, broken only by the occasional yell of the barbarians, had in it something very appalling. But the men were reminded that they had pledged themselves either to conquer or go down with the bunting flying, that the Turks gave no quarter, and that the issue of the battle depended on their repulsing this attack, when we might in turn become assailants, and speedily terminate the fight. At length, just before his bowsprit-end reached the after-main swifter, he got all that we could give him—grape, canister, musket-balls, rockets, and all, with three good British cheers at the tail of them. At such a distance, and a flanking fire directed against, literally, a bee-like cluster of men, the carnage is more easily conceived than described; suffice it to say that no son of Mahomet polluted our quarter-deck with his footstep, though a few did attempt it, and were piked and thrown overboard. Some turns of a hawser were got over her bowsprit-end and round her capstan; but they parted. Our mizzen-mast being gone, we had nothing aft to lash him to; and amidst the groans and shrieks of the wounded and dying, she dropped astern.

From this time to the end of the action, I cannot do better than make an extract from the ship's log: '11.45 P.M. recommenced action; enemy making off before the wind. Midnight, moderate and fine, alongside the Turk. At 1.15 A.M. the enemy's fire having totally ceased, though we could get no answer from him, and she being a complete wreck, hauled off; cleared the decks, spliced the mainbrace, and went to quarters again, keeping the Turk awake by a shot now and then. At daylight, the enemy hoisted her colours; we bore up, and passing under the stern, gave her a raking broadside, which she returned with her stern guns, and struck her colours at 5.30 A.M. Sent the first-lieutenant, who took possession of the *Badere Zaffer*, mounting fifty-two long brass guns, forty-two-pounders, twenty-four-pounders, and twelve-pounders, commanded by Scanderli Kichuc Alli; had on board at the commencement of the action nearly seven hundred men, of whom two hundred and four were killed and one hundred and seventy-six wounded. *Seahorse* went into action with two hundred and eighty-six men, of whom five were killed and ten wounded.'

The scene of slaughter on board was dreadful; her only surgeon (a French renegade) was in a state of helpless intoxication, and the only attempts he had made in his profession were stopping up some of the holes made in the wretched Turks by plugs of lint. More than seventy were lying dead on her gun-decks, and the cable-tiers and storerooms were full of the desperately wounded and dying; her first *chiaous* (lieutenant) had seven musket and grape shots in him. Four days after, we landed these *mal-*

* The bridge over which all must pass who enter the Mohammedan paradise. It is no wider than the edge of a razor; hence those burdened by sin are sure to fall off, and are dashed into hell, which it crosses.—*The Century Dictionary of Names.*

heureux on the island of Miconi or Mykoni, the greater part of their wounds undressed, and the thermometer at eighty degrees.

The little Arab who commanded, on being brought on board and asked for his sword, had no idea of the necessity of surrendering it; indeed he had, immediately after his colours were struck, dressed himself entirely in white (meant, perhaps, as a kind of flag of truce), and said he had lost his sword. Having obtained permission to return to his ship for his effects, and being, in the confusion of the moment, unguarded, he got one of the fighting-lanterns (which was still alight), and, accompanied by two of his lieutenants, had reached the magazine passage, then not secured, and over ankle-deep in gunpowder, when, just as he was in the act of taking the candle from the lantern, the schoolmaster, who had come on board the prize from curiosity, and happened, providentially, to be on the lower-deck, immediately, on seeing the danger, knocked down the Arab, doused his glim, and saved us from the otherwise inevitable destruction of one, if not of both, frigates. He was, of course, removed forthwith to the British frigate. As he spoke Italian fluently, Captain Stewart rebuked him severely in that language for his breach of the laws of honour and of war, to which he listened with unmoved patience. When the speaker ceased, the little tiger bent forward his head, and pointing to his neck, said, 'Take it; it is yours. Don't hesitate; for had the fortune of war been mine, I would have had your head off two hours ago. I only did my duty in attempting to blow my ship up, and I curse my own stupidity for not succeeding.' His officers declared that during the action he had put seventeen of his own men to death with his own hand in attempting to keep them at their quarters. His activity and contempt of danger were conspicuous to us even in a night-action; and many a deliberate aim was taken at him. But notwithstanding the carnage all round, he was unharmed, and seemed to bear a charmed life. They were as brave as the noble animal their figure-head represented, which was carefully covered over with canvas before they struck, that, as they said, 'the king of beasts and birds' (the eagle which supported their poop-lantern) 'should not witness the triumph of infidels over true-believers.'

The prize, with great difficulty, was brought into Myconi, or Mykoni, and after a refit, to Malta, eventually reaching England, where she was sold, as unsuitable for the British service. Not even her figure-head was retained as a memorial of as gallant a fight as adorns Britain's annals.

The sole remaining link with the memorable events above described are, first, a gold medal, presented to Captain Stewart 'as a mark of his Majesty's gracious approbation of the skill and gallantry that had been displayed on the 5th of July 1808;' second, the jade handle of the sword, so grudgingly surrendered by the 'little tiger' who commanded the prize, and whose life—which the Turks would have deprived him of for having lost his ship to an inferior enemy—was saved through Captain Stewart's intercession. Besides these, there is a very handsome gold medal, presented to Captain Stewart by the captain-pasha in acknowledgment, it is understood, of his humane treatment of the prisoners,* all of whom, as soon as possible after the action, were given their liberty, and sent to Smyrna or Constantinople, in ships provisioned from the *Seahorse*. Of a subsequent visit to Constantinople, Captain Stewart wrote to a friend: 'I was honoured with marked civility by the Turks, which, as I had almost the whole conduct of the war against them, I attribute to my having personally well treated all their countrymen whom I had taken.'

These three mementoes are now amongst the most treasured possessions of the present writer. They serve as a reminder of the high sense of duty and readiness to accept responsibility which distinguished our young captains during the last great naval war, as well as of the spirit of daring by which they built up the maritime supremacy of Great Britain one hundred years ago. And it was the same lofty sense of duty and the same spirit of daring that recently induced Sir Christopher Craddock to accept battle off Coronel, and Sir David Beatty to hold the German fleet off Jutland bank.

MAY.

'Little, little breezes
Dancing through the air,
Have you seen my mistress
Straying anywhere?'

'Who may be your mistress?
Many a maid we've met
Since we came a-dancing
When the bright sun set.'

'Who may be my mistress?
She has eyes of blue,
And her feet so tender
Gleam with fairy dew.

'She has hair like sunshine,
Fingers like a rose
Scatt'ring showers of sweetness
Everywhere she goes.'

'Ah, then we have met her
Not so far away;
Look! Why, there she's coming!
Lovely scented May!'

EDITH L. ELIAS.

* Family records are silent on the subject. As Captain Stewart rendered great services to Sir Robert Adair during the subsequent peace negotiations with the Porte, and was invited to a war council of the Turkish Ministers, to advise with reference to a proposed attack on Sebastopolis, the medal may have been awarded for his services to the Porte.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

AN arresting thought is expressed in the introductory chapter that Mr James M. Beck, once Assistant Attorney-General of the United States, has written for the new international edition of his book, *War and Humanity*. Mr Beck is one of the thousands of strong, honest Americans who distinguish good from bad and speak their minds with full force, as, without any fetters of high and responsible office about them, they may do with impunity. 'For nearly two years past,' says this eminent American jurist, 'the German Government has refused to disavow the *Lusitania* crime. By its note of 31st January 1917, it has, indeed, avowed it anew. The United States should, at the council of nations, demand that the Kaiser, who caused the *Lusitania* to be sunk, shall for that crime forfeit his crown.' Here is the sound of a friendly voice, the message of a mind that believes that right shall utterly prevail, and that the wicked shall be punished according to their deserts. That is indeed a fine idealism. To balance well the punishment with the fault is a tremendous object; rarely is it achieved. It is difficult to appraise the evil, and justice sees not when the scales are held. It is also the erratic disposition of man to bear down with vengeance upon the offender in a trifling thing, and to shrink from the responsibility of inflicting any super-punishment upon the perpetrator of the most revolting crimes, the promoter of the most appalling disasters to humanity. A poor man, honest in his way, hungry, starving, tortured by circumstances in the old days of peace and plenty, falls from grace and yields to the temptation of stealing a loaf of plain bread, which he eagerly devours. Upon him the majesty of the law presses down with consciousness of right and duty and the exercise of wisdom, and, with a homily addressed to him, the miserable wretch who in his poor fashion applied unwillingly the warrior's maxim that necessity knows no law, goes to prison for a month with hard labour. Yet, despite the hopefulness of the American lawyer, I doubt if the Kaiser will be given a month with hard labour or any such punishment as we should inflict upon a man who stole bread when he was starving. A part of the explanation is, of course, that there are crimes too great for punishment. Simple man stands back appalled at the insensibility of a creature in human form who can pile horror and destruction upon the whole of mankind, remorselessly, enthusiastically, appealing to his God and praising Him; and this simple man concludes that he himself is unfitted to judge and attempt to punish such an abnormality, that no earthly punishment can be adequate, and that the sinner who has surely exceeded all the monstrosities of history must be left to the last tribunal, while as to the present world he may go. There is the feeling also that, with it all, this creature, with his strange cunning, his amazing mendacity, his cant, his callousness, and his utter oblivion to the value of human life and the hurt of human suffering, is not merely abnormal, but is literally, most positively, mad; in which event, according to human way, his case at most is one for detention, the chief wonder being that he should be at large, that men should be such fools as to let him lead.

* * *

If he has the slightest sensibility, the Kaiser has already one punishment in his lifetime that must hurt terribly and incessantly. There has always been a certain strength about the uttermost villains of history, something indefinable which, in spite of the student, commanded a special respect. For all the slaughter that he ordained, Napoleon was a man who had still in him some love for his own kind, some respect for God's creation. We cannot imagine Napoleon ordering the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Even if he arranged the assassination of the Duc d'Enghien, we cannot conceive such a man giving instructions for the shooting of Nurse Cavell. He was too great for that; his spirit was too fine. He had magnificent dreams, which he realised if only for a while; and he came to success through genius and not through mere massacre. But the mummer of Berlin, this very cheap showman who had his white horse ready that he might ride into Nancy like a great conqueror of old, will be little thought of in days to come, while Bonaparte will always be remembered and discussed. Mark how small is the figure he makes even to-day. Hindenburg has overshadowed the degenerate Hohenzollern; his fancy speeches and proclamations no longer create any effect. They

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are put in out-of-the-way corners of even German newspapers. People care little now for the Kaiser one way or the other. They know him. He is little more than a melancholy failure, a poor, mad creature who had the delusion that he could make guns and soldiers enough to murder the world and take possession of it, and that then for all time he would be looked upon as the mighty conqueror, the lord of war, and would oust the famous Corsican from the chief place in the history of modern times. Beyond all things that was the Kaiser's ambition, that he should have the thrilling pages in history for himself, and it mattered little if he were condemned and hated, provided his figure were there in full size.

* * *

It will not be. We see now, from his dwindling presence, how he will go out. He is of no account. It is true that he has done appalling evil, but just in the way of a mad dog, and he should not have been allowed. The assassin who takes the life of the chief of a state does not thereby render himself famous for ever. So it is with the Kaiser, for he will be forgotten. There will be remembered his name and one or two small things; but of his character and his accomplishments it will merely be reflected in passing that he was a degenerate and was mad, and so no more. He is to be pitied. Above all, he is to be treated with contempt, and that is what history will do with him, for he enters the grand pageant of events as a miserable hare-brained impostor, thoroughly out of harmony with all the colour and boldness of character that stamps the great. He jars in the community of history. He is so small. What the others conceived to do with grand schemes, by the exercise of subtle ability and powers, he attempted by mere destruction on the most colossal scale. It was such a little way of being emperor. There is nothing else by which to remember him. Therefore by people of the present and by posterity he will simply be regarded with contempt, with the most utter contempt that humanity ever bestowed on any being. His horrors will inspire no wonder, no marvelling. We shall not step back from him as from Attila or Nero. History will turn its back upon this intruder as a company of gentlemen turn their backs upon a scoundrel who has unwittingly gained admission among them. He knows it now, that even his monstrosity has failed to impress, that even in German history he becomes smaller than an ant in comparison with the blood-and-iron Bismarck, that the soldiers whom before the war he sent to pass their time in the shadows of retirement because in some point of etiquette they had offended him, are now so mighty in Germany that he is as nothing to them, and that he dare speak no word of remonstrance to one of them—Hindenburg. So has the Kaiser fallen; he lives his failure. Even if Germany won the war he would be just the same failure, for he is discovered. In the contempt that is cast upon him is his punishment. It is difficult to imagine what else will be done to him. It matters little, except as a warning to other mad rulers. Mr Beck thinks he should be deprived of his crown. Is that a punishment? Such is our servility to old traditions, to the conservative view of kings, to the old doctrine that they are in touch with the Deity, that we may even now be capable of thinking that it is a tremendous thing to take away the crown from this miserable Hohenzollern, that this, indeed, as Mr Beck suggests, would be adequate punishment for the sinking of the *Lusitania*, for the murder of Nurse Cavell, and for the countless crimes this maniac has perpetrated. We are invited to believe that if humanity can screw up its courage to the extent of depriving him of his crown, humanity will have done well, bravely, nobly. The millions of the salt of the earth who have given their lives for its purification will have been avenged by this! The glorious dead are to have honour done to their memory by this mere dethronement! It is absurd. If left to itself the democracy could doubtless do something better, even though the futility of attempting to make the punishment fit the crime is clearly perceived. The democracy distrusts this gentle consideration of the felon ruler. In this fearful war truth is being poured upon a world of shams like molten metal from the ladles of heaven, and this protection of the criminal king is an anachronism that makes the people uneasy and uncertain of the future. They know he will be protected. There are some among us who have shouted out that the criminal Hohenzollerns should be strung up on the gallows; but the common man knows of islands with palaces upon them, with courts and retinues of servants, with every conceivable form of luxury and unlimited money for the purchase of every desire, and the common man is not always easy in this thought. He must for his peace of mind fall back upon reflection of the horrors of punishment by contempt, the contempt of the whole world such as has never been bestowed on a living thing before.

* * *

Posterity, then, we may safely assume, will never discuss the Kaiser as it will discuss Napoleon, and discussion is what William chiefly wished of posterity. He will be a nine-days' wonder, and nothing more. So, if there is to be any character-studying and telling of typical stories, it must be done quickly, for already their popularity wanes. We tire of William. He was better once. As a boy and a young man he seemed to have some fair spirit in him; but in later years continual thinking of his grandfather, of Germania, and of the clicking of soldiers' heels, and his endeavour to associate such things and himself as well with some new scheme of

German religion, clearly drove him mad. All who have Kaiser tales to tell seem in a hurry to tell them now, because they fear that their time is short, and that these stories will not mellow like wine. It is curious to find, among the many and varied volumes on the Kaiser that I have read of late, how very rarely indeed does he make a good imperial figure, even when the narrator is endeavouring to put him forward with some impressiveness. On the other hand, there are so many stories of a different kind. Mr Edward Legge, who often states modern historical circumstances with a good authority, repeats to us now in a new book a story one seems to remember faintly from many years ago, that King Edward once knocked the Kaiser down! Let us hope he did. King Edward, we know, was the best of gentlemen; we know that he and the Kaiser hated each other, and one would like to think that he showed his contempt for his nephew in some more British and practical manner than that by which kings generally exhibit such feelings. It is said that during one of William's visits to Windsor the Kaiser and King Edward had an altercation resulting from something said by the former. So exasperated was the King by his nephew's grossly insulting words that, losing all control over himself, he sprang to his feet and knocked the Kaiser down. There is nothing inherently improbable, says Mr Legge, in this story. It is unlikely that any one would have taken the trouble to invent it, or could have imagined it at a time when the Kaiser was so frequently visiting England (often uninvited); when, moreover, he was being obsequiously flattered by public and Press. 'It was openly talked about in London,' says this author, 'and the marvel is that, to the best of my knowledge, it never got into print; neither did the numerous instances of the Emperor's insolence to King Edward.' Among many other stories and statements that Mr Legge sets down about the Kaiser, he quotes in facsimile a letter that William wrote to an English friend in 1889 soon after he had ascended the throne, in which he said: 'What a long time has passed since we were able to spend our afternoons together on the Havel or on the veranda of the little villa! I often wish those old times back again. What a succession of joys and sorrows have passed over our family! It is indeed a fact hardly ever heard of to lose one's grandfather and father within the space of a few months. What men! And here am I suddenly placed by Providence on the mightiest throne of the world to be the guardian of the European peace. It is indeed enough to make any one pause and breathe; and yet what a splendid task for me to work night and day to administer to the wants and wishes of my people, and to think that the magnificent Army obeys my commands!' Something has happened since then. All have not found it possible to treat this man—so deeply endowed with a sense of his own supreme mightiness, and yet without the loftiness and real dignity to carry it well—with the precise consideration that seemed to be demanded from humility. There was Cecil Rhodes, who knew what empires were. He went to see the Kaiser once, and was treated to the usual wearying enumeration of the wonders of the German army, navy, and other forces. After a time Cecil Rhodes looked at the clock, and, holding out his hand, said simply, 'Well, good-bye! I've got to go now, as I have some people coming to dinner'! It appears that the Kaiser's motto is, '*Rast ich, so rost ich*,' meaning, 'If I rest, I rust.' Those who have entered his study have noticed a large placard enjoining upon all and sundry the observance of these recommendations: 'Be strong in grief. Do not wish for that which you cannot obtain, or for that which is not worth the trouble of getting. Be satisfied with what you have got. Seek the best of everything. Take the pleasures of Nature and Humanity as they are. In your hours of bitterness repose your confidence in some good person. Devote yourself with all your heart and strength to what you do for others, even if you get no thanks. He who is distrustful deceives others and injures himself. It is our duty to consider every man good until he has proved himself to be the contrary. Those who observe these rules and practise them will be happier, freer, and prouder, and their lives will be always pleasant.'

* * *

Shortly before the war broke out Prince Leopold of Bavaria paid a private visit to the Kaiser. The Prince had a great appetite, drank red wine extensively, smoked strong cigars incessantly, and sat up half the night playing poker with officers of the Prussian Guard, or with any members of the Imperial household who were willing to gamble heavily with him, the result being that he lost about five hundred pounds. He was not the kind of guest the Kaiser liked, and, also, his respect for the All-Highest was not of that fineness that would recommend him. In the exuberance of good spirits, induced by deep draughts of Rhenish wine, he would joke with the Emperor in a manner that placed his Majesty in a rather ludicrous position before his entourage, and there was nothing that roused the Kaiser's anger so much as the fact that he was being laughed at. One night at dinner the Prince suddenly burst out laughing without any apparent reason. The Kaiser looked at him severely; whereupon the Prince at once apologised, saying, 'I have seen the point of that jest your Majesty told me this morning, and I could not help laughing.' The Kaiser was furious, and not the less so because the company could not restrain its laughter, knowing so well how deeply hidden

the points of the Kaiser's jests sometimes are. On the last night of his visit the Prince proposed the health of his host. He did not make a speech; he simply stood up and said, 'I have the honour to propose the health of your Majesty, and may God confound all your enemies.' When he sat down he said to an elderly officer sitting next to him, 'For his Majesty will never be able to do so himself.' He had but the poorest opinion of the Supreme War Lord's qualities as general. The above is a story that I have seen in a very interesting and in some ways remarkable book written by Miss Edith Keen, who had seven years' experience at the Prussian court in the capacity of companion to the Princess Margarethe of Prussia, and was there up to the time of the opening of the war and for a few weeks afterwards, having some difficulty in getting back to England. The book, entitled *Seven Years at the Prussian Court*, is written with great intelligence and reasonableness, and apart from its mere anecdotal side, in which it is strong, it gives us engrossing information concerning certain aspects of the German spying system, and of things that happened in Germany just before the war began and immediately afterwards. Among the Kaiser tales, it is stated that the All-Highest frequently went to play tennis at the Crown Prince's palace, and when a lady at the Imperial court was asked if it would be contrary to etiquette to win a set from the Emperor, the answer was, 'No; but it would be contrary to reason; only a mad person would do such a thing.' Miss Keen was in the service of the Princess Leopold of Prussia, the mother of the Princess Margarethe, and sister of the German Empress, and it appears that the first-named princess was in the habit of paying frequent visits to England incognito, when the companion sometimes accompanied her. Miss Keen has little doubt now that the Princess Leopold was engaged in spying operations. She used to stay at a first-class hotel when in London; but when she went to seaside places like Littlehampton and Exmouth she made curious arrangements with a view to preserving secrecy about herself, staying in third-rate lodgings with some attendant, while her suite were put up at the best hotel in the place. Once her identity was discovered through an accident, and, in a fury, she declared that the consequences might be serious. The Princess and her entourage made a curious spectacle when they were all gathered together on the sands at Littlehampton. She would be attired in one of her oldest gowns; with her would be the Fraülein von Stromberg and the Baroness Knesebeck, in their smartest dresses; and about them would be grouped a crowd of men-servants and maids. 'On one occasion,' says the narrator, 'I heard some people discussing us when we were all out on the sands at Littlehampton. The conclusion they arrived at was that we were a theatrical party. I wonder what they would have thought if they had known that the leading lady was a sister of the German Empress, and nearly related by marriage to King George.' Yes, one may wonder. All this was happening under our very noses. The Princess was a good cyclist, and as by court rules she was not allowed to cycle in Germany except in the private royal parks, she did as much of it as possible in England, and 'would do fifty or sixty miles a day without being in the least fatigued at the end of it.' And no doubt it was very useful to her. She had a strong dislike to sleeping on strange beds, and one of her curious habits was to carry her own about with her, bedclothes and all, wherever she went. This was a very interesting woman, but no doubt it will be some time before we see her on the sands of Littlehampton again.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXI.—HOW M'GINNIS THREATENED, AND—WENT.

THUS the Spider, crouching in the dark beneath a certain broken window, with Spike beside him, was presently aware of the sickening sounds of furious struggling close at hand, and of a hoarse, panting voice that cursed in fierce triumph—a voice that ended all at once in a ghastly strangling choke; and, recognising this voice, the Spider hunched his great shoulders and bore Spike to a certain remote spot where stood a solitary lamp-post. Here he waited, calm-eyed and chewing placidly, one arm about the fretful Spike.

And presently Ravenslee joined them; the shabby hat was gone, and there was a smear of blood upon his cheek; also, he laboured in his breathing, but his eyes were joyous.

'Bo', what about Bud?'

'Oh, he 's lying around somewhere.'

'Hully chee! d' ye mean'——

'He tried gouging first, but I expected that; then he tried to throttle me, but I throttled a little harder. He 's an ugly customer, as you said; but'—Ravenslee laughed and glanced at his bloody knuckles—'I don't think he 'll be keen to rough it with me again just yet.'

'Bo', I guess you can be pretty ugly too. Say, when you laugh that way I feel—kind o' sorry for Bud.'

'Why, what 's wrong with Spike?'

'Dunno. I guess they 've been slingin' dope into him. And he 's copped it pretty bad from Young Alf, too. Look at that eye!'

'Spike!' said Ravenslee, shaking him—'Spike,

what is it? Buck up, old fellow!' But Spike only stared dazedly and moaned.

'It's dope all right,' nodded the Spider, 'or else Bud's mixed th' drinks on him.'

'Damn him!' said Ravenslee softly, 'I wish I'd throttled a little harder.'

'I guess you give Bud all he needs for the present,' said Spider grimly; 'anyway, I'm goin' t' see. The kid ain't hurt none. Get him home t' bed an' he'll be all right. S'long, Geoff.'

'Good-night, Spider, and—thank you. Oh, by the way, who's Heine?'

'Heine's a Deutscher, Geoff. Heine's about as clean as dirt an' as straight as a corkscrew. Why, he'd shoot his own mother if ye paid him, like he did—— But say, what d' you know about him, anyway?'

'Well, for one thing, I know he's been arrested in Jersey City.'

'Heine! Pinched? Say, bo', whatcher givin' us—who says so?'

'Bud, and'——

But the Spider, waiting for no more, had turned about and was running back across the open lot.

'Mr Geoffrey, prayer is a wonderful prop to a anxious 'eart!' said Mrs Trapes, leaning over the banisters to greet him as he ascended. 'Mr Geoffrey, my 'ands has been lifted in prayer for ye this night as so did me behoove, an' 'ere you are safe back with—that b'y. A prayer prayed proper, an' prayed by them as ain't plaguin' the Lord constant about their souls an' other diseases, is always dooly regarded. Yes, sir, a occasional petition is always heard an' worketh wonders, as the—— My land, Mr Geoffrey, look at yer face!'

'I know, Mrs Trapes. Has she come in yet?'

'Not yet. An' glad I am. You're all bleedin'. Stoop yer 'ead a bit—there!' and very tenderly she stanched the cut below the curly hair with an apron clean and spotless as usual. 'An' the b'y—lord, what's come to 'im?'

'A black eye—two, I'm afraid. Anyhow, I'll look after him and get him into bed before she comes. Can you keep her away till I've done so?'

'I'll try. Poor lad!' she sighed, touching Spike's drooping head with bony fingers; 'if she wasn't 'is sister I'd be sorry for 'im!'

So Ravenslee took Spike in hand, bathing his bruised and battered features, and setting ice-water to his puffy lips, which the lad gulped thirstily. Thereafter he revived quickly, but grew only the more morose and sulky.

'All right,' he muttered, 'I'll go t' bed; only—leave me—see?'

'Can't I help you?'

'No; you lemme alone. Oh, I know—you think I'm soused, but I ain't; I—I'm not drunk, I tell ye. I wish I was. I ain't no kid, so lemme alone; an' I ain't drunk. What if me legs is shaky? So 'u'd yours be if you'd got—what I got. It was dat last swing t' de jaw as done me; but I ain't drunk, 'n' I ain't a kid t' be undressed,—so chase ye'self an' lemme alone!'

'All right, Spike—only, get to bed, like a good chap, before your sister comes.'

'You leave my sister alone; she ain't that kind; an' she ain't for you, anyway.'

'That will do, Arthur. Get into bed! I'll give you five minutes!' So saying, Ravenslee turned away; but as he closed the door his quick ear detected the clink of glass, and, turning, he saw Spike draw a small flask from his pocket.

'Give me that stuff, old fellow.'

'Oh, you can't con me! I ain't a kid, so you lemme alone!' and Spike raised the flask to his lips; but in that instant it was snatched away. Spike staggered back to the wall and leaned there, passing his hand to and fro across his brow as though dazed, then stumbled out into the room beyond.

'Gimme it, Geoff! gimme it!' he panted. 'You won't keep it—no, bo'. Bud slipped it to me after I came to. Gimme it, Geoff. I want t' forget—so be a sport an' give it me—you will, won't ye?'

Ravenslee shook his head; whereat the boy broke out more passionately, 'Oh, don't ye see, Geoff—can't ye understand? I—I was knocked out t'-night—I took th' count! I—I'm done for; I had me chance an' I didn't make good! I—didn't—make good!' As he spoke the lad hid his bruised face within his hands, while great sobs shook him.

'Why, Spike—why, Arthur, old chap, never mind.'

'Gimme th' bottle, Geoff! Be a pal an' gimme th' stuff. I want t' forget!'

'This wouldn't help you.'

'Give it me, d'ye hear—I want it. I'll have it, anyway—I 'll'—— Spike's voice failed, and, cowering back, he sank into a chair at sight of her who stood within the doorway so very silent and pale of lip.

'Ah, don't, Hermy—don't look at me like that,' he whispered; 'your eyes hurt me! I ain't drunk—this time!'

'Oh boy!' she sighed; 'oh boy—after all your promises!'

Spike rose with hands stretched out appealingly; but, even so, he swayed slightly, and, seeing this, she shivered.

'Is it th' fightin' you mean, Hermy? Why, I did it all for you, Hermy—all for you. I wanted t' be a champion, 'cause all champions are rich. I wanted t' make you a real lady—t' take you away from Mulligan's; but now—I'm only—a "has-been." I've lost me chance. Oh Hermy, I'm done for. I—oh Geoff, I—think I'll go to bed.'

So Ravenslee set down the flask, and, clasping an arm about Spike's swaying form, led him from the room, while Hermione stood rigid and watched them go. But when the door had closed

behind them she bowed her head upon her hands and sobbed miserably, until, spying the half-emptied flask through her tears, she sprang forward, and, snatching it from the table, dashed it passionately to the floor.

'Oh dear God of Heaven!' she whispered, sinking to her knees, 'not that way—oh, save him from that—keep him from treading that path!' With head bowed upon her folded hands she knelt thus awhile, until a sound in the passage aroused her, and, rising to her feet, she turned and confronted Bud M'Ginnis.

He stood upon the threshold, and though his glowing, eager eyes dwelt yearningly upon her beauty, he made no motion to enter the room. Upon one cheek the skin was torn and grazed from nose to ear, and upon his powerful throat were vivid marks that showed fierce and red, and these seemed to worry him, for even while he stared upon her loveliness his hand stole up to his neck, and he touched these glowing blotches gently with his fingers.

'God, Hermy,' said he at last, 'you get more beautiful every day!' She was silent; but, reading the fierce scorn in her eyes, he laughed softly and leaned nearer. 'Some day, Hermy, you'll be all mine! Oh, I can wait; there's others, an' you're worth waitin' for, I guess. But some day you'll come t' me—you shall—you must! Meantime, there's others, but some day it'll be you, an' you only—when you're my wife. Ah, marry me, Hermy; I could give you all you want, an' there'd never be any one else for me—then!'

Her eyes still met his unflinchingly, only she drew away from his nearness, shivering a little; seeing which, he frowned and clenched one hand—the other had wandered up to his throat again.

'Won't ye speak t' me?' he demanded savagely; then, shrugging his great shoulders, he continued in gentler tones, 'I ain't here t' quarrel, Hermy; I only come t' see if th' kid got home all right.'

Hermione's firm, red lips remained tight-closed.

'Did he?'

Hermione slowly inclined her head.

'Say now, Hermy,' he went on, and his voice grew almost wheedling, 'there was a guy here the other night—a stranger, I guess; one o' these tired, sleepy guys; one o' the reg'lar soft-talkin' nancy-boys—who is he?' Hermione only sighed wearily, whereat his voice grew hoarse with passion, and he questioned her fiercely. 'Who is he, eh—who is he? What was he doin' around here, anyway? Well, can't ye talk? Can't ye speak?'

Hermione only looked at him, and before those calm, fearless eyes he burned in a wild yet impotent rage.

'Won't talk, hey?' he questioned between grinding teeth. 'Well, now, see here, Hermy, if you let this guy come any love-business with you behind me back it'll be his finish, an' he can blame you for it! An' see here again—watch out for young Arthur. Oh!' he cried, seeing her flinch, 'you think you've got that kid tied to ye, you think you've got him, I guess; but you ain't! I've got him—right here!' and, holding out his hand, M'Ginnis slowly clenched it into a fist. 'I've got th' kid, see—an' he's goin' th' way I want him—he's got to, see?'

'Ah!' she cried, her scorn and fearless pride shattered to trembling pleading at last—'oh, what do you mean—oh, what do you mean?'

'I mean as I want ye, an' I'm goin' to have ye!' he answered. 'I mean that instead of "no" you're goin' t' give me "yes"—for th' kid's sake!'

'What do you—mean?' she said again between quivering lips, her eyes full of a growing terror.

'Mean?' he continued relentlessly, viewing her trembling loveliness with hungry eyes. 'Well—that's what I mean!' and he pointed to the broken flask upon the floor. 'If you want t' see it in his face more an' more, if you want t' smell it in his breath—say "no!" If you want t' see his hands begin t' shake, if you want t' hear his foot come stumblin' up th' stair—say "no!" I guess you remember what it's like—you've seen it all before. Well, if ye want Arthur t' grow into what his drunken father was before him, say "no!"'

'Go away!' she moaned; 'go away!'

'Oh, I'll go, but first I'll tell you this.'

'I think not, Mr Flowers—no, I'm sure you won't!' Ravenslee's voice was soft and pleasant, as usual; but before the burning ferocity of his eyes, the merciless line of that grim, implacable mouth, before all the hush and deadly purpose of him, the loud hectoring of M'Ginnis seemed a thing of no account. Beholding this pale, set face, Hermione, sighing deep, shrank away; even M'Ginnis blenched as, very slowly, Ravenslee approached him, speaking softly the while.

'Get out, Mr Flowers; get out! Don't say another word—no, not one, if only because of that dog-gone fool Heine! Now go, or, so help me God, this time I'll kill you!'

Hermione leaned her shaking body against the table. And yet, could it be fear that had waked this new glory in her eyes, had brought this glowing colour to her cheek, had made her sweet breath pant and hurry so? Fear?

M'Ginnis stood rigid, watching Ravenslee advance. Suddenly he tried to speak, yet uttered no word; he raised a fumbling hand to his bruised and swollen throat, striving again for speech, but choked instead; and, uttering a sound hoarse and inarticulate, he swung upon his heel and strode blindly away. Then Ravenslee turned—turned to find Hermione sunk down beside the table, her burning face hidden between her arms, her betraying eyes fast shut.

'You are tired,' he said gently; 'that infernal—er—I should say Mr Flowers—and other unpleasant things have upset you, haven't they?'

Hermione made a motion of assent, and Ravenslee continued, softer than before, 'I wanted you to make up your mind to come away to-night; but—I can't ask you now—can I? It—it wouldn't be—er—the thing, would it?'

Hermione didn't answer or lift her head, and, stooping above her, he saw how she was trembling; but her eyes were still fast shut.

'You—you're not afraid—of me, are you. Hermione?'

'No.'

'And you're not—crying, are you?'

'No.'

'Then I'd—better go, hadn't I? To Mrs Trapes, and supper—stewed beef, I think, with—er—carrots and onions.'

Her head was still bowed, and his tone was so light, his voice so lazy, how was she to know that his hands were quivering, or see how the passion of his yearning was shaking him, fighting for utterance against his iron will? How was she to know anything of all this until, swiftly, lightly, he stooped and kissed the shining glory of her hair? In a while she raised her head; but then she was alone.

CHAPTER XXII.—TELLS OF AN EARLY MORNING VISIT AND A WARNING.

RAVENSLEE dreamed that he was in a wood—with Hermione, of course. She came to him, through the leafy twilight, all aglow with youth and love, eager to give herself to his embrace. And from her eyes love looked at him unashamed; love touched him in her soft caressing hands, came to him in the passionate caress of her scarlet mouth; love cradled him in the clasp of her white arms. And the sun, peeping down inquisitively through the leaves, showed all the beauty of her, and made a rippling splendour of her hair. But now the woodpecker began tap-tapping soft and insistent somewhere out of sight, a small noise, yet disturbing, that followed them wheresoever they went. Thus they wandered, close entwined, and ever the wood grew darker until they came at last to a mighty tree whose sombre, far-flung branches shut out the kindly sun. And, lo! within this gloom the woodpecker was before them—a most persistent bird this, tap-tapping louder than ever—whereat Hermione, seized of sudden terror, struggled in his embrace, and, pointing upward, cried aloud and was gone from him. Then, looking where she had pointed, he beheld no woodpecker, but the hated face of Bud M'Ginnis.

Ravenslee blinked drowsily at the wall where purple roses bloomed, at the fly-blown text in the tarnished frame with its noble legend,

'LOVE ONE ANOTHER,'

and sighed. But in his waking ears was the tap of the woodpecker loud and persistent as ever! Wherefore he started, stared, sat up suddenly, and, glancing towards the window, beheld a large cap and a pair of shoulders he thought he recognised. 'Why, Spider!' he exclaimed, 'what the'——

'Sufferin' Mike!' sighed the Spider plaintively, 'here I've been knockin' at your all-fired winder—knockin' an' knockin', an' here you've been snorin' an' snorin'.'

'No! did I snore, Spider?'

'Bo', you sure are a bird for snorin'.'

'Confound it!' said Ravenslee, frowning, 'I must break myself of it.'

'Thinkin' o' gettin' married, bo'?'

'Married? What the'——

'She'll soon get useter it, I guess—they all do!' said the unabashed Spider. 'Anyway, if you didn't snore exactly, you sure had a strangle-hold on the snooze-business all right. Here's me crawled out o' me downy little cot t' put ye wise t' Bud's little game, an' here's you diggin' into the feathers t' beat th' band!'

'But the window was open; why didn't you come in right away?'

'Not much, bo'; I ain't the kind o' fool as makes a habit o' wakin' your kind out o' their beauty-sleep sudden; no more I ain't a guy as takes liberties in strange bedrooms—see?'

'Well, come in, Spider. Sit on the bed; I haven't a chair to offer. By the way, I have to thank you'——

'Whaffor?'

'Breaking that window.'

'Oh, I guess it wasn't a bad wheeze.'

'It gave me the chance I wanted, Spider.'

'Which you sure gripped with both mitts, bo'!'

'Now have a cigar—in that coat pocket.'

'Not me, Geoff! Smoke's bad for the wind; that's why I've took t' gum.' Saying which, the Spider proceeded to take out and open a packet of that necessary adjunct, and, having posted it into his mouth piece by piece, fell to grim mastication.

'Bo',' said he suddenly, 'you come away without your roof last night.'

'Eh?' said Ravenslee, blinking drowsily. 'My what?'

'Your lid, bo'.'

'You mean my old hat?'

'That's what I'm tryin' t' tell you; an' say, that sure is the hardest bean-cover I ever spotted; made of iron, is it? Where'd you find it?'

'At some dim and distant day it originated in England, I believe.'

'Well, that lid would turn a pole-axe, sure; that's why I brought it back. It's out on the fire-escape now.'

'Very kind of you, Spider; but'——

'Bo', you're goin' t' need that hat an' a soot o' tin underwear from now on, unless—well, unless you pack yer trunk an' clear out o' Hell's Kitchen on th' jump.'

'Why so?'

'Well, you certainly handed Bud a whole lot more 'n he 's ever had before, an' it 's a full house to a pair o' dooces he ain't lookin' for no more from you just yet. But then Bud ain't no pet lamb, nor yet a peace conference, an' it 's four aces to a bum-flush he means t' get back at ye some way—an' get ye good!'

'Oh!' said Ravenslee, yawning.

'And, oh, some more!' nodded the Spider. 'It 's sure comin' t' you. When I got back las' night, there 's Bud settin' against th' wall lookin' like an exhibit from the Morgue, fightin' for breath t' cuss you with. 'N' say, you sure had done him up some, which I wasn't nowise sad or peeved about—no, sir! Me an' Bud 's never been what you might call real kittenish an' playful together. But it seems you ain't only soaked an' throttled him good an' plenty, but he 's gone an' let out t' you about that guy Heine, an' consequently you 've gotter be kept from openin' yer mouth—see? Consequently, it 's you for a sudden an' hasty hike.'

'Oh!' Ravenslee said again.

'Twice,' nodded the Spider, 'with a F an' a L thrown in—that 's what you 'll be, Geoff, if you try t' buck Bud an' th' gang. So here I've shinnied up yer fire-escape to put ye wise an' lend a hand to make yer swift getaway.'

(*Continued on page 358.*)

CHEMISTRY AND THE WAR.

By F. ROWLINSON.

The study of chemistry is so closely bound up with success in industry, war, and the arrestment of disease that it is essential to a wealthy, healthy, and peaceful nation.—SIR WILLIAM RAMSAY.

MUCH has been said about the lack of intelligent appreciation on the part of our legislators, military authorities, and manufacturers of the supreme importance of scientific knowledge and method. Much more might be said; but this is not a time for recrimination—rather is it an occasion to indicate and to emphasise the manifold activities of the trained chemist in connection with the war. Handicapped by the conservatism of our capitalists, impeded by the estrangement between science and commerce, the chemical branch of technology has striven hard, and until recently vainly, for a recognition of its services to the country. The army, the navy, the civil population—the whole nation, in short—owe a debt of consideration to the chemists possessed of the requisite knowledge and creative skill successfully to combat a nation whose undivided attention has been given to the advancement of this branch of industrial science. From coal, from oil, from cotton, from wood, the patient chemist extracts materials which serve him as sources of the modern explosives, of beautiful dyes, of delicate flavourings, and of pain-destroying drugs to ease the sick and the wounded. The Government has now come to recognise the absolute dependence of our military, naval, and industrial resources upon the chemist; and now more use of chemical advice is being made by them than has hitherto been conceived possible.

In 1856 Sir William H. Perkin, an Englishman, then only a youth of eighteen, patented a process for the production of a mauve dye from aniline. This discovery was the foundation of one of the most famous industries of the world—the coal-tar derivative industry. Year by year it has become more important and more profitable; and the industry, founded by an Englishman, and first established in England, is now carried on principally in Germany. Our manufacturers were too careless or short-sighted even to trouble to maintain the start given to them—a start in itself worth millions of pounds. Furthermore, Germany, eager for war and spoiling for world power, seized upon, encouraged, and perfected an industry which was unique in being highly profitable in peace and of vital importance in time of war. Germany realised that the coal-tar industry is the basis of synthetic chemistry, and that the whole future of chemistry is comprised in synthesis. Coal, heated in a closed retort, yields gas, tar, and coke. Coke is used in millions of tons in connection with metallurgical processes, particularly in the manufacture of iron and steel. The distillation of the tar yields light and heavy oils. These, together with benzol extracted from the gas, form the foundations of the derivative industry. They yield anthracene, naphthalene, benzene, toluene, phenol, the sources respectively of alizarin, synthetic indigo, the aniline dyes, and, of vital importance nowadays, the high explosives. From a dozen direct derivatives we get perhaps a hundred intermediate products. To the final manufactured articles there is practically no limit. At the outbreak of the war there were no less than one thousand individual coal-tar colours, each a definite chemical compound and not a mixture. Of the fine chemicals used in photography and medicine there were almost as many. We have mentioned toluene and phenol as examples of coal-tar products used to make high explosives. By the action of various acids upon these two, T.N.T. and lyddite respectively are made. Benzol, besides its use as a source of benzene and toluene, has become a formidable rival as a cheaper substitute for petrol, and the benzol industry in this country has increased at an incredible speed within the last few years.

Ammonia salts are also coal distillation products indispensable to alkali manufacturers and to farmers.

The raw materials for the production of propellants, a second class of explosives used in the war, are derived from the soapworks, from cotton, and from wood. Glycerine, cotton, and acetone (a distillation product of wood, as benzol is of coal) are manufactured, under the supervision of the explosives chemist, into nitroglycerine and gun-cotton, and finally into gelignite, cordite, and dynamite. It is terribly exacting work, this of the explosives chemist. A false step, a hasty movement, a careless gesture even, and irreparable damage to life and property is wrought. It is no work for fools; the chemist takes his life into his hands when he investigates the mighty forces latent in materials of the most innocent nature. Both disruptant and propellent explosives are 'nitro' compounds, and need for their manufacture sulphuric and nitric acids. These same acids are also required in the coal-tar derivative industry. In this fact lies at once the secret of Germany's preparedness for war and the difficulty of successfully establishing the coal-tar dye industry in this country until the end of the war. Thus Germany will have ample opportunities for 'dumping' before we make our belated efforts. Steps must be taken to prevent this 'dumping;' but that is a matter for our legislators rather than our chemists. Thanks to the British navy, the beds of Chile, the chief source of nitrates, are always open to us and closed to our enemies; no shortage of nitric acid can be feared. Thanks, too, to the flourishing alkali and heavy chemical industries of the Widnes and Birmingham districts, we shall always have abundance of sulphuric acid. Mention of the alkali industry suggests the utilisation of the vast chlorine industry dependent upon the salt deposits of Cheshire for the manufacture of asphyxiating gases for use at the front.

Having dealt at length upon the coal-tar industry and its bearing upon the manufacture of explosives, we may now consider the application of chemical knowledge to the manufacture of other munitions of war.

In metallurgy the influence of the chemist is becoming more and more marked. Iron and steel, not to speak of the other metals, must be systematically tested at every stage of their manufacture in order to withstand the tremendous strains put upon them. None but perfect materials can be used. This careful watching and testing requires the services of specially trained metallurgical chemists; and, despite the utmost efforts of Krupp, Britain is in this respect inferior to no other country. An illustration suffices. Of the many different microscopic varieties and compounds existing in iron and steel, all, without exception, have been discovered and defined by the metallurgists of Sheffield and our other great iron centres. Within the last few years new steel alloys have been discovered, and these have given us what are practically new metals, so much do they excel ordinary steels. In the contest between the projectile and armour these alloys have been of great utility. Metallurgical chemists are now giving their attention to electrical methods of manufacture. Aluminium is perhaps the best example of the successful application of electrolysis to metallurgy. Steel and iron of the finest quality are now made in increasing quantities wherever electrical power is cheap. Electrical methods are firmly established for the manufacture of bleach, soda, carborundum, and many other chemicals; and electro-metallurgy bids fair to become one of the most important branches of electro-chemistry.

To multiply instances of the successful application of chemical technology to industries connected with the manufacture of munitions would be tedious. Sufficient has been said to indicate the dependence of the art of fighting on the science of chemistry. There are further applications, not so intimately connected with the war, but yet of great importance to the welfare of the nation. The extraordinary conditions imposed by the war have only emphasised a problem which would, sooner or later, have become insistent—that is, the problem of our food-supply. Chemistry has already come to the aid of the agriculturist by endeavouring to supply artificially defects of the soil. Bacterial change of nitrogenous animal refuse into nitrates available for the delicate assimilation of the plant is a long and tedious process, fascinating perhaps to the student, but wasteful in the eyes of the busy farmer. For this slow natural fertilisation of the soil a more rapid artificial one may be substituted. Nitrates from Chile and sulphate of ammonia from the gas and coke industries supply the requisite nitrogen by tons. Phosphates, another necessity to the plant, are supplied as basic slag, bone-meal, and superphosphate. Chemistry has already done this much for our food-supply; but what of the future? Nitrates from South America are now approaching exhaustion; ammonia will become scarcer and scarcer as our coal-supplies give out. And yet the cry will be all the time for more food! We have around us in the air an inexhaustible stock of nitrogen, but in an unavailable form. The problem of how to make it available is being even now attacked, and, to some extent, solved. Nitrolime, *Kalkstickstoff*, and other fertilisers are being made from the air. By passing air through a whirling electric arc, a portion, never exceeding a small percentage, burns, forming nitric acid, which may be utilised either for explosives or for agricultural purposes. The process is coming into use wherever water-power is cheap and electricity may be generated at low cost. Norway, in particular, is developing

this process, which, although wasteful, has a very bright future. Once given a method by which all the nitrogen of the air may be fixed in an economical manner, the food-supply of the world need cause us little worry. Intensive modes of cultivation will become general. One acre will yield the produce of two or three as things are now. Completely synthetic plant-foods are an industrial possibility. Synthetic animal foods will not be far distant. Calves' milk artificially made was exhibited at the last Royal Agricultural Show, and found favour. The future of chemistry is bound up in synthesis. When we can reproduce in our laboratories the infinite complexity of nature's products, chemistry will have achieved its aim.

In the near future a trade war with our enemies will be waged. Let us examine the position and rôle of chemistry in this 'after-war.' Britain has no equal in the production of 'heavy' chemicals, but with 'fine' chemicals she is at present utterly behindhand. The prevailing shortage of drugs, organic acids and their salts, and coal-tar derivatives indicates the extent to which we have been relying upon enemy countries for such things. But steps are already being taken to promote this most important branch of chemical industry, so that at the end of the war we may hope to start upon more equal terms. Simultaneously with the development of the synthetic products industry will come the growth of many dependent industries, notably the contact process of sulphuric acid manufacture. Glass, too, for ordinary, for chemical, and for optical use has hitherto been chiefly a foreign industry. There is no reason why Britain should not produce a glass quite equal to any foreign product, provided that the commercial enterprise and capital are forthcoming. After all, the formulæ of Jena and such glasses are now known to our chemists.

In the trades and industries indicated above, much experimental research will be necessary and much money must be spent before we shall be as proficient as our rivals. What is needed immediately is more technical education, more sympathy between capital and student. After some training at college and a technical university, the average student comes out into the world, and is given a situation in some badly equipped works 'laboratory,' usually a converted office or disused outbuilding, with purely makeshift apparatus. Here all ambition, all originality, all inclination for research are stifled under the humdrum monotony of routine work at forty shillings per week. Most works have a chemist on sufferance only; his work is unappreciated by, and therefore useless to, the departmental managers. Of the three chief branches of industrial chemistry, analytical, manufacturing, and research, only the second is recognised and paid in a fitting manner. The principal reason for this lack of encouragement is that the other two are not productive; a week's, a month's, or even a year's work in the case of the research chemist is perhaps represented by a few figures only. The manufacturing chemist can show for his efforts a concrete and visible result. Hence only this branch gets the recognition it deserves. The work of the analytical and research chemists must have dignity added to it, and must be popularly recognised as one of the professions.

When we have a better understanding between our capitalists, legislators, manufacturers, and students, together with a spirit of co-operation between the works and the university, we may hope to bring about the union of science and industry. The country will then be prepared and ready for combat against all comers, be they military foes, trade rivals, or deadly diseases.

JIM OF JACKADDER.

CHAPTER II.

IT was April, the month of the first rains, and the country-side was green with the tender living green of early autumn in Australia. One fine Sunday afternoon Jim Flood harnessed his shaggy bush-pony between the shafts of a ramshackle old trap, and prepared to set out for the township. It was his custom on such occasions to leave Vi'let May shut up in the hut in the safe keeping of the watchful Poodle. The dog had developed a rare fidelity, and his devotion to the child was marked, although his affection did not prevent him from stealing her bread-and-butter whenever a favourable opportunity offered.

To-day Jim carefully trod out the glowing embers of the fire, and set Poodle on guard; then he kissed Vi'let May loudly and demonstratively. 'Be a good little gel till daddy comes back,' he urged.

'Oo! oo!—'oo fevvers tickle,' remonstrated Vi'let May, making a grab at the obnoxious whiskers with one small hand.

Jim laughed uproariously. 'Feathers! Bless the child! Don't git inter no mischief, me darlint; an' don't go huggin' the old dog, 'cos o' them narsty biters. I must remember to git some soft soap at the store nex' time I goes in of a week-day. Good-bye, my pretty.'

'Dood-bye,' said Vi'let May, laying violent hands on the tail of the faithful Poodle. 'Me likes lollies.'

'You're a young smoodger; that's wot you

are,' quoth Jim with a grin. 'No lollies to-day, pet, 'cos why—it 's Sunday, an' the store 's shut. —Take care o' the little lassie, Poodle.'

Poodle tried hard to wag his tail by way of response, but, alas! it was in chancery.

Jim drove direct to the tin shanty where Mrs Fitzpatrick dwelt alone. She earned a scanty livelihood by scouring the garments of the charitably disposed of Gillingup, who, pitying the widow's forlorn condition, were moved to throw her a crust in the shape of their soiled clothing.

'Though the pore woman 's had dirty linen enough of her own to wash in her day, goodness knows!' said the caustic Mrs Mudge, whose own laundry would have represented the smallest item of her weekly expenditure had she not 'washed' at home. Indeed, the old lady had 'no time' for philanthropy, also no inclination, as she hesitated not to affirm.

It cost Jim of Jackadder considerable mental effort to make up his mind to any definite course of action; before all things, he was a recluse, and naturally, as such, a perfect stickler for stagnation. He had been over three months now trying to persuade himself to restore the lost Vi'let May to her rightful custodian. To-day, however, the light of resolve was in his dull-blue eye, and lest that resolve should become suddenly weakened, he urged forward his shaggy pony to the utmost limit of its endurance.

Mrs Fitzpatrick was at home; she was just brewing herself a nice, strong cup of tea, a woman's panacea for all ills, when Jim knocked at the door.

'Lor', Mr Flood,' she said, her tired, bleached face colouring painfully; 'it 's quite an age since I seen yer! Won't yer come inside an' sit down?'

Jim entered the close, untidy little room. He held his battered wideawake hat firmly clutched in both hands. He saw nothing of the squalor and dirt of the establishment; he had eyes only for the woman he had once loved —whom he still loved, for Jim of Jackadder was slow to change; there was nothing volatile about him.

'Moll, my gel,' he murmured, scorning preliminaries, 'I 've come to arst yer if yer 'll marry me. I know it ain't long since pore Dan went away with all flesh; but it 's no use denyin' of it, lass, 'e weren't a good 'usband to yer, and I—I come to offer myself, Moll—to see if I can't do betterer by yer. I ain't doin' too bad now. Will yer 'ave me, Molly? This is fer the second time o' arstin',' he concluded, with some hazy recollection of banns and Sunday mornings in the old church at home, far away across the seas.

If Mrs Fitzpatrick had been at all genteelly constituted she would probably have hidden her face in her hands, and murmured something half-audible concerning the extreme suddenness of the proposal. As it was, she merely sighed and said, 'I believe you 're a real good man, Jim. I could wish now things 'ad fallen out otherwise than they did; but it 's no use grumblin'. To tell the truth, I 've 'ad a fair sickener o' men an' marriage. I reck'n I 'll run in single 'arness fer the rest o' the road, be it long or short. If on'y my little Vi' had 'a' lived things might 'a' bin so different.'

Jim's jaw set firmly. All the obstinacy of his nature—and it was considerable, both in quantity and quality—asserted itself. Mrs Fitzpatrick sobbed quietly into her apron. She was less demonstrative than of yore, Jim thought; even her grief was subdued.

'Afore you give me "no" fer a back answer,' he remarked decisively, 'I 'd like you to drive out along o' me to my old shanty. There 's a—there 's a little summut—a—a—trifle—yes, a val'able trifle' (he was so pleased with this phrase that he repeated it)—'a val'able trifle—out yonder wot ought be rights to be yers; then, when you see it, I 'll take "yes" or "no" from you, same as yer 'eart an' conscience may dictate. I give yer my gospel word on it, Moll.'

Mrs Fitzpatrick gazed upon him in genuine astonishment. He had not the appearance of a man who had been drinking.

'I 've got the old 'orse an' trap waitin' outside,' continued Jim thickly. 'Wot d' yer say, lass; shall we drive over to my place?'

Mrs Fitzpatrick hesitated; then, without another word, rose, put on her hat at a small cracked mirror that hung against the wall, and signified her assent to the proposition by a brief nod of the head.

The drive was accomplished in silence. They met nobody by the way. If only the excellent Mrs Mudge could have seen them thus seated together in the same trap! Jim betrayed the agitation of his feelings by whistling beneath his breath and belabouring the pony until the dust flew in clouds from that luckless animal's matted coat.

On arriving at the hessian hut he helped Mrs Fitzpatrick to alight, and, throwing wide the door, said, 'Walk right in, Moll, my gel. I 'll be with yer in two ticks.'

She stood shivering apprehensively upon the threshold. Poodle dashed out, baying 'deep-mouthed welcome.' For the second time in their acquaintanceship, Jim lifted his hob-nailed blucher, and the dog fled, howling, into the scrub.

'Mammy! Mammy!'

The conscience-stricken Jim stood upon one leg and screwed his forefingers into his ears. 'She 's cryin',' he muttered distractedly. 'I know the pore woman 's cryin'. Lord, 'ow the womenfolk do take to tears, to be sure—like ducks to water!'

Suddenly he flung his hat far from him, thrust his hands desperately into his moleskins,

and strode straight into the hut. Mrs Fitzpatrick was down on the floor, her arms about Vi'let May, sobbing and laughing in an ecstasy of mingled feelings.

'Glad she didn't see fit to faint or do nothink more fool'ardy than cry,' remarked the stolid Jim aloud.

Mrs Fitzpatrick sprang to her feet and wheeled round upon him, her eyes ablaze. ''Ow could you dare? 'Ow dared you, Jim Flood?' she cried, stamping her foot angrily.

'Daddy, lemme feel in 'oo's pocket.—Dis my daddy, mammy,' announced Vi'let May, twisting free of her mother's detaining hold, and making direct for Jim.

Jim gripped convulsively at his beard. 'Know it weren't a right thing to do, Moll, me gel,' he said huskily—'quite contrariways; but it 's God's truth I couldn't make up me mind to part with the little un. D—n it, woman! you had Dan—fer what 'e was worth—you 'ad 'er, the little lass, fer three long years. Wot more could you arst? Are you to 'ave all the good things, an' me starve my blamed soul out—back 'ere, with nothink to care fer but a thievish old dog an' a blanky bob-tail gohanna? S'elp me, 'eaven, the thing don't balance! And I loved yer all along, Molly,' he added, and dropped his shock head.

'Daddy 's clyin' like mammy!' lisped Vi'let May gleefully. 'Pore daddy—pore mammy!'

Jim looked up, abashed. 'Well, wot 's it to be, lass—peace or war? Will yer give me my answer now?' he said hoarsely.

Mrs Fitzpatrick laughed, a happy, rippling little laugh, which came curiously from the pinched lips of the prematurely aged, haggard-featured woman. 'I reck'n you got yer answer, Jim,' she said softly. 'Vi 's settled it fer us, orright. We 'll just 'ave to share 'er between us, I s'pose.'

Jim of Jackadder took Molly in his arms and kissed her full on the mouth.

THE END.

KIEFF, THE CAPITAL OF THE COSSACKS.

MOST travellers who have visited Russia in peace or war know something of the gloomy city of Petrograd and the more splendid fortress of Moscow, but few have occasion to see Kieff, the ancient capital of the Cossacks, and in many respects the most attractive city in the Russian dominions. Neither of its greater rivals can compare with it for beauty. Kieff has what they lack. It has perspective. The river that flows past the churches of Moscow is an insignificant stream, and even the majesty of the Neva, frozen or otherwise, is lost by those who see it from the quays of Petrograd, while to the rest of a city that never rises above river-level it is invisible. From the heights of Kieff, on the other hand, the silvery course of the rolling Dnieper may be traced for miles in either direction; and the first view from the train of the monastery, its domes all burnished gold in the morning sun, is the most stately of its kind in all the Russias, and has few equals, and no superior, in Europe.

Kieff is a sacred city. Its monastery is a Holy of Holies. Not only were some of its greatest treasures removed into Asia for safety in the dark hour when the enemy seemed certain to break through the devoted line of its defenders, but every arrangement was made to defend its walls to the last man, and then to fire it, affording Mackensen the spectacle that Napoleon looked on from the Sparrow Hills a century before. Fortunately such extreme measures were not called for. The roar of German guns will never be heard in the Krestatik; the treasure is safe; and the only evidence of war in this beautiful little city is a great increase of business, a continual coming and going of officers and men, and the requisitioning of every palace for the merciful work of the *Krasny Krest*, or Red Cross. Indeed, its proximity to the front has brought new prosperity to this city of the Ukraine, which a few years ago languished in a state of torpor that suggested the Turkish meaning of its name. All that is changed. The Krestatik, its main street, which descends from the Merchants' Garden at much the same gradient as the Cannebière at Marseilles, is thronged at all hours of the day and at most hours of the night. The garden itself was packed all the summer with officers and their ladies, dining, promenading, listening to the sad music of Chopin and Tschaikowsky on a magnificent string orchestra. The hospitals, alas! are full also, and hundreds of Sisters of Mercy hurry to and fro on their errand of comfort.

Yet Kieff is not down-hearted. Having survived its one hour of panic, it has braced itself to face further sacrifice in the calm certainty that Right will prevail over Might. Situated so near the firing-line, it has become a base depot for all war material; and it even has its museum of souvenirs from the trenches, the modern machinery of murder of the latest German pattern being displayed side by side with ancient yataghans and scimitars that recall the more gallant warfare of other days, when the Mongol swarmed across the Dniester and overthrew the Cossack defenders for a spell, making himself master of the sanctuary till once more evicted by the faithful. Although so near the battle zone, Kieff kept its head far more successfully than either Petrograd or Moscow. The price of clothing and provisions never before rose to such fabulous

figures, and it was always possible to procure necessaries that had long since become unobtainable farther north. Those whose war service took them through Kieff should be grateful for the memory of a very beautiful old city that lies out of bounds for the average peace-time tourist. After the grim horror of the fighting zone, it was a rest for body and soul to tarry a few days in those hilly streets, and to recall, in the unbroken peace of the monastery, those far-off days when the Cossacks, now a splendid contribution to the fighting forces of Russia, lived under their own Hetman and were to all intents and purposes a nation unto themselves.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

NEW TREATMENT FOR BATTLEFIELD BURNS.

MARVELLOUS cures of men horribly burnt on the battlefield have been effected at a special hospital near Paris, to which the worst of these cases are sent. The treatment, which was invented by a French doctor, consists in spraying the burnt flesh with a mixture of paraffin and resin made liquid by heating it to a temperature of 160° F. A waxlike coating is formed, over which thin strips of cotton are laid, and painted with the hot mixture. This treatment is said to give ease very quickly, the pain disappearing entirely in about twenty-four hours. So effective is the sealing of the wounds in every way that the flesh soon grows again, with a covering of new skin, and very few traces of the burns are discernible after recovery.

TIDAL POWER AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR DEAR COAL.

Owing to the high price of coal in Ireland at the present time, considerable interest is being taken in the practicability of utilising the water-power running to waste in many Irish rivers. In a paper read recently before the Association of Municipal Authorities in Ireland, the author, Mr J. P. M'Andrew, estimated that fifty thousand horse-power could be recovered for eight months in the year, and twenty thousand to forty thousand during the dry season. The most interesting Irish power scheme, however, is the utilisation of the tide into and out of Strangford Lough, as proposed by Mr Alfred W. Brown. This sheet of water has an area at low tide of about twenty square miles, while the entrance to the sea is only a quarter of a mile across in places, and could easily be dammed. It is obvious that an enormous amount of power is running to waste in this entrance, through which a huge volume of water passes four times in every twenty-four hours. Now, if a dam was built and turbines and electric generators were installed, when the tide had fallen, say, six feet in the sea, while the Lough was still at high-tide level, the water could be run through the turbines and thus produce electricity. This operation could go on for, roughly, six hours, or until the tide rose far enough to reduce the fall to below working limits. Possibly as much as one hundred thousand horse-power might be obtained in this way for twelve hours out of the twenty-four. Power in this intermittent form, however, can never be utilised to the best advantage; but by splitting up the Lough into several reservoirs it is quite possible to obtain it continuously. The electricity generated could easily be transmitted to Belfast, where it would be used for industrial purposes. Practically all the coal used in Ireland has to be imported from Great Britain; consequently the price is always high, and in view of the shortage of shipping which must prevail for years after the war, this tidal power scheme is worthy of careful consideration.

SUBSTITUTES FOR RUBBER BICYCLE-TIRES IN GERMANY.

The scarcity of rubber and the partial commandeering of rubber bicycle-tires have caused a number of other kinds of tires to appear on the German market, says the *Scientific American*. One of these is made of closely coiled steel-wire, with the ends welded together. This device, although it runs fairly well from the cyclist's point of view, cuts into the road surfaces, and is noisy in action. Wooden tires, made either in one piece or of a sectional design, are quite common, and they appear to give satisfaction, although the addition, in some types, of shock-absorbing springs on the fork would seem to indicate rather severe vibration. One form of wooden tire has its outer surface covered with strips of leather, while steel springs are introduced between the tire and the wheel-rim. The outfit includes shock-absorbing springs on the forks to minimise the vibration. The nearest approach to a rubber tire consists of two parts, the inner one being a cloth tube filled with a preparation resembling rubber, while the outer cover is of canvas. This type is sold at about fifty shillings, but its life is short. For durability at a low cost the sectional wood tires, at about six shillings each, are said to be the best. Evidently the 'pneumatic' is in no danger of losing its laurels owing to war inventions.

WAR CAUSES A RETURN TO WOODEN SHIPBUILDING.

One very remarkable development caused by the war is a return to the building of wooden ships, owing to the scarcity and the high price of steel, and the hope that wooden vessels will not so readily sink if struck by a torpedo or a

mine. This movement is very marked in the United States, where a great many wooden vessels are under construction with carrying capacities up to four thousand tons. Not only can wooden ships be built in about half the time taken for the construction of steel vessels, but their cost at the present time is also only about half. It must be remembered that on the Pacific coast of the United States, where many of these vessels are being built, there are unlimited supplies of timber close to the shipyards. This is a very important point, as enormous quantities are required, and much of it must be in the form of very large balks. For instance, squared timbers two feet each way by one hundred feet in length are by no means uncommon. Owing to this fact a return to the building of wooden ships is unlikely to take place in this country, as most of the timber would have to be imported, and the cost would probably be as high as for steel. In Scandinavia, however, where timber is plentiful, wooden ships are now being built in large numbers. Almost all of these vessels are sailing-ships, with oil-engines for propelling them in calms or against adverse winds. It is between fifty and sixty years since large wooden vessels ceased to be built in this country, the British battleship *Howe*, of four thousand two hundred and forty-five tons burden, completed in 1860, being one of the last.

THE CULTIVATION OF SPONGES.

Sooner or later all industries for the collection of wild products are in danger of extinction owing to the exhaustion of the supplies, and when this is threatened efforts are made to breed or grow the products artificially. This development has taken place in both the fur and the oyster industries, which were originally dependent upon natural sources of supply. Recently a similar development has come about in the sponge-fisheries, and sponges are now grown in beds on much the same lines as oysters are cultivated. Live sponges can be cut up into a number of 'slips,' to use a horticultural term, which will grow into full-sized sponges. The growth of sponges is, however, rather slow, and the cuttings have to be planted out for some three years before they are fit for the market. Certain conditions have also to be maintained to ensure success, and these include the absence of sand, protection from some kinds of fish, and a bed to which fresh water from rivers does not penetrate under any circumstances. Then, of course, the water must be shallow enough to allow of the sponges being easily dredged for the market when full-grown. For planting out, a full-sized sponge is cut into ten parts, each of which is attached to a concrete disc ten inches across by two inches thick, aluminium wire being used to make the connection. This process was originated by Dr H. F. Moore of the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and it is being carried out on a large scale by an Englishman, Mr Charles W. Chase, whose company expects to market some two million sponges a year, once its beds are fully stocked.

AEROPLANES FOR INDIAN MAILS AND PASSENGERS.

In a lecture recently delivered in Delhi, Lord Montagu of Beaulieu stated his conviction that the mails between Britain and India, together with a certain number of passengers, would be carried by aeroplanes within the next ten years. By going straight from point to point, the present shortest route, *viâ* Brindisi or Marseilles, would be reduced by some fourteen hundred miles, and it should be possible to carry the Indian mails to London in thirty-six hours. Passengers would require certain hours during the day for rest; consequently the passenger service would be rather slower, fifty-nine hours being suggested between Peshawar and London. Another route indicated by the lecturer started at Karachi, and touched at Basra, Alexandria, Malta, Gibraltar, and Land's End, either the sea or British territory being passed over throughout. This route is naturally longer, and the passage would take about five days. Mail services might be run continuously, the direction at night being indicated by lighthouses, while the landing-places would be suitably lit up. One of the most interesting forecasts made by Lord Montagu was that the passenger fares would eventually be less than those now charged by the shipping companies.

HOW TO IMPROVE OUR CANALS.

The popular notion about British canals is that they would now be carrying a large and remunerative traffic if the railway companies had not bought them up and practically closed them down many years ago. This view is by no means correct, as a reference to the report of the Royal Commission on Canals and Inland Waterways will at once show. It is true that before railways came in, canals did a flourishing business in competition with road-traffic, as water-carriage was the less costly, at any rate for heavy goods and large consignments. Our canals, as at present constructed, never could have successfully competed with railways, except for traffic between wharves on the canal-banks and for comparatively short distances. As a matter of fact, canals in the Birmingham to Wolverhampton district do carry a large amount of traffic under these conditions at rates which compare favourably with those charged by the railway companies; moreover, much of that canal system is owned and kept in working order by a railway company. The traffic is, however, almost entirely local, the amount passing between the Midlands and the coast being practically negligible. What Midland manufacturers want is cheap water-carriage to the seaports, where their goods can be shipped

to all parts of the world. At present they are handicapped when compared with their Continental rivals by high railway rates, and this feature will be still more important in future owing to the keen fight British firms will have to make for their share of the export trade to countries such as China and South America. Existing canals are much too small to allow of low rates for transport, which can only be realised when comparatively large boats are used. French canals will accommodate boats carrying three hundred tons each, whereas only one-tenth of that load (thirty tons) can be passed over the British canal systems. The French Government spent many millions upon canals, and we shall have to do the same unless we wish to see some of our richest inland industrial districts deserted owing to high railway rates to the seaports. Our canals will have to be reconstructed after the war to take barges of at least three hundred tons, and these craft must be propelled by oil-engines instead of being drawn by the old-fashioned horse. In the meantime some improvements are being made with a view to easing the congestion of traffic on the railways, but these developments are only justified by the peculiar conditions, and no adequate financial return can be expected.

ECONOMIC ORNITHOLOGY.

At a time like this, when it is imperative to husband all our available food-resources, a report issued by the Board of Agriculture as to the diet of certain birds is of special interest and importance. So far back as 1908 a committee was appointed by the British Association for the Advancement of Science to ascertain experimentally what foods were most largely consumed by the starling, the chaffinch, and the rook respectively, with a view to determining the doubtful question as to which were the farmer's friends, and which were his enemies. The work of investigation, which was conducted in co-operation with the Board of Agriculture, was carried out at two stations, the University of Manchester and the Agricultural College at Wye. Only adult birds were dealt with, and the investigators regret the absence of records of the food of nestlings, 'a very important point in deciding whether any particular bird is harmful or beneficial to the agriculturist and horticulturist.' Of the four hundred and eighty-six starlings examined at Manchester, injurious insects, largely weevils and leather-jackets, were found in the crops of three hundred and sixty-five, and thus, though a fair proportion of grain was also found, these birds had rendered valuable service to the farmer. 'The starling, if not too abundant, must certainly be regarded as a friend of the agriculturist.' From the seven hundred and forty-eight birds examined at Wye, the observers came to the conclusion that starlings are 'undoubtedly most beneficial, on account of the great number of destructive insects and snails that they devour,' while the grain taken was 'in such small quantities as almost to be negligible.' The three hundred and fifty-seven chaffinches inspected at Manchester showed that these birds take large quantities of some of the most troublesome weed seeds, such as chickweed, dock, hawkweed, and knotgrass; but that the proportion of seeds of value is 'surprisingly small in view of the general impression prevailing as to the destructive habits of the chaffinch.' From the five hundred and twenty-seven birds dissected at Wye, the investigators found it 'extremely difficult to form any judgment regarding the economic status of the chaffinch,' but from the food contents discovered they were inclined to look upon the harm it did as being balanced by the good. With regard to the rook, the observers at the northern station do not express themselves so decidedly as their colleagues in the south. The three hundred and thirty-two birds dealt with at Manchester merely led the examiners to say that the percentage of animal food taken from April to September is large, and that it is made up mainly of injurious insects (mostly wireworms and leather-jackets), but that during the rest of the year the percentage of grain is high. On the other hand, as a result of their examination of two hundred and seventy-seven birds, the Wye investigators decided that adult rooks, at least, do more harm than good, as the number of injurious insects they destroy in summer does not compensate for the large amount of grain they consume during the rest of the year. Of other common British birds, it has long been known that the wood-pigeon is almost wholly harmful to agricultural interests, as it devours large quantities of grain, and only rarely eats injurious insects; while the ubiquitous sparrow, except during the breeding season, when it feeds its young exclusively on an insect diet, is to be regarded as one of the farmer's worst enemies.

A NEW ANTISEPTIC.

Widespread interest has been aroused by the report addressed to the Medical Research Committee by a small group of specialists in bacteriology attached to the Bland-Sutton Institute of Pathology in connection with the Middlesex Hospital. In their report, recently published in the *British Medical Journal*, the investigators bring forward weighty considerations which make them believe that in the yellow colouring matter known as flavine an antiseptic has been discovered which is greatly superior to those in general use. It has long been recognised that the employment of ordinary antiseptics is attended by certain grave disadvantages, which may be thus briefly summarised. (1) While destroying disease germs, and thus fulfilling the purpose for which they are intended, they have unfortunately a harmful influence on the bodily tissues

with which they come in contact, and thus tend to retard healing. (2) When mixed with blood-serum, as they must be when applied to a wound, they lose much of their power as germ-destroyers, for the serum itself absorbs a large part of their substance, and leaves only a small portion free to act upon the germs. (3) They arrest the work of the phagocytes or leucocytes, those natural germ-eaters found in the blood, which would otherwise take an important share in the destruction of morbid matter. (4) Even though they act satisfactorily upon the surfaces with which they come into immediate contact, ordinary antiseptics, by their lack of penetrating power, cannot reach the deeper-seated structures. None of these serious disadvantages attends the use of flavine. Its value as a germ-destroyer is increased rather than diminished in the presence of blood-serum; when diluted to the proper working strength it has no harmful effect upon the bodily tissues, nor does it interfere with the beneficent work of the phagocytes; and by its greater penetrative power it reaches deep-seated structures which are never reached by the antiseptics commonly in use. As the conclusions arrived at by the investigators have been confirmed by the results obtained in general hospital practice and in the treatment of wounded soldiers, it would appear that means have only to be found of manufacturing the new antiseptic at a reasonable cost to ensure its general adoption. It is satisfactory to know that arrangements have already been made for its commercial production on an extended scale.

THE APPETITE OF SOLDIERS IN TRAINING.

The prescribed weekly rations of bread and meat for our soldiers in training, if properly prepared and secured to each individual, would appear to be sufficient to meet the needs of the average man at ordinary times. But under certain conditions they may prove insufficient fully to satisfy the cravings of the embryo soldier. A young man accustomed for some years to a sedentary or semi-sedentary occupation, when suddenly called upon to undergo a hard physical training in the open air, is apt to have for a time a quite abnormal appetite. His frame is in many cases being rapidly developed; he is, for the time being, in the position of a growing boy, who needs food not only to repair the waste that is continually going on in the bodily tissues, but also to allow of the growth of new tissue. Hence the soldier, during his time of training, not infrequently develops an appetite far surpassing all his previous records in that direction. Then is the time that he longs most for parcels of food from home or from kind friends, not only to give a pleasant variety to his necessarily somewhat monotonous diet, but also fully to appease the pangs of hunger. This phase naturally passes off when exercise has fully developed the frame, and the fully trained soldier possesses, as a rule, but the normal, healthy appetite of the man who spends his days in vigorous exercise in the open air.

DON'TS IN NURSING INFLUENZA.

The worth of a book is not always to be measured by its price, and the small brochure published under the above title is likely to prove of much greater value to the purchaser than the threepenny-piece which it costs. Written by an experienced nurse, Miss Rachel Neuman, it warns both patient and nurse of 'the things they ought not to do,' and of the grave dangers attending the neglect of proper precautions in all influenza cases. With good reason it draws special attention to the risks that are often unwittingly run in the early and the convalescent stages. But this little book by no means confines itself to negative precepts. It explains in considerable detail how to relieve the symptoms usually attendant upon an attack of *La grippe*, how the comfort of the patient may be best promoted, and how he should be fed at each stage of the illness. Even the most experienced of home-nurses will find much valuable information in the recipes and the full instructions for the preparation of invalid-dishes given in this useful little manual.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

THE COMING OF DAWN.

Dawn stepped from out her bath of mist and dew,
And trod the eastern hills, whereon there blew
A faint, cold, faltering wind whose rising power
Whispered that mystic Night drew near his hour.
Softly she stole on silver-sandalled feet
Between the sleeping flowers. So tensely sweet
An incense was the perfume of her breath
That tired Night swooned in ecstasy to death.

Then was Earth's stillest moment. From below,
Impatient, eager, watched the sun to know
When he might flaunt his banner o'er the skies—
Yet waited still, and found in Dawn's gray eyes
No signal. Wistful seemed they, sad and wide,
While sweet compassion in her bosom cried—
So, pausing, leaned she on the waning moon,
Fearing to wake the weary world too soon.

MAY WALPOLE-SMITH.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible. ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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A QUIET WEEK-END.

By Arthur O. Cooke.

CHAPTER I.

ONE may get on quite well with boys, and even feel enthusiasm in the cultivation of their minds, yet bear composedly a temporary absence from their company. It was, therefore, entirely without regret that, at midday on a certain Friday in November, I dismissed the class in English literature over which I presided at a private school in western London, knowing I should not meet it again until the following Tuesday. For Monday was the mid-term holiday. I thus had three clear days and more before me, and this extra relaxation coincided with an invitation from my friend James Dare.

Had I, on that November afternoon, been gifted with the doubtful benefit of second-sight, I should most certainly have felt less happy than I did when, settled comfortably in a corner seat, I felt the afternoon express from Paddington glide smoothly from beneath the station roof and gather speed upon its western way.

In happy ignorance I laid some newspapers beside me, took up one to wile me through the ugly suburbs of West London, soon to lay it down as first the autumn-tinted woods, and then the silver windings of the Thames, competed for my gaze.

I had not seen James Dare for eighteen months, and had not even heard from him till a few days before, when I had found his invitation in a letter at my club. We had last met quite unexpectedly in Paris on an afternoon in spring, had dined together with entire satisfaction and at small expense at a snug restaurant within the Palais Royal; had dined as well, Dare justly said, as any man need wish to dine who was not king or millionaire. Dare left that evening for Marseilles upon a journey to the East; on pleasure, so he said. But I knew Dare, and felt that 'pleasure' might, from him, mean many things—important business, very likely danger, almost certainly adventure of some kind.

We had met casually for the first time some years before, had liked each other, and had grown into fast friends. Dare liked me, he was good enough—and frank enough—to say, because I was a first-rate listener and possessed an open and receptive mind. His rather saturnine and sombre personality, though it might not appeal to every taste, pleased mine. Moreover, he was a most instructive companion. He had read largely, travelled widely, often in strange company, and was a master of much curious lore of many kinds. Now, added to my pleasurable anticipations, was the curiosity to see in what conditions he had 'settled down.'

I could with difficulty picture Dare as settling down, yet those were his own words. During his recent absence, as I have already said, I had received no word of him. And now his silence had been broken from an unexpected quarter. He had, he wrote, been settled for some months in Wiltshire, and he asked me to come down and spend a quiet week-end there.

The heading of his letter told me little. 'Pool Farm, Staple Junction, R.S.O.,' it read. Was he in lodgings, or had he himself, impelled by some strange freak, turned farmer? No, I could not picture Dare a Wiltshire agriculturist. There was but little use in speculating; I must wait and see.

It was just dusk as we ran into Staple Junction, and I saw Dare standing on the platform as my carriage passed. Though very short, not more than five feet four or five, he was a man whom it was easy to pick out amid a crowd; broad-browed, thin-faced, clean-shaven, with a sallow, parchment-coloured skin and long, fair, waving hair. He was perhaps five-and-forty—something older than myself. I saw that he still had his trick of standing, seemingly half-musing, with his right hand at his chin. His pale-blue eyes, too, glanced from beneath half-lowered lids in the old way. He evidently saw me, though he made no sign of recognition; for he followed down the platform, coming straight to my compartment door. He pressed my hand as I descended, but still hardly spoke.

I gave my bag and suit-case to a porter, and Dare led the way outside. There a spring-cart was standing, and in this the porter placed my luggage.

'I didn't think it quite worth while to bring the car,' Dare said; 'I know that you like walking. It is a dry evening, and the place is barely more than half a mile away. A neigh-

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bour happened to be sending to the station, and his cart will bring your bags.'

So we exchanged the well-lit station for the twilight roads. Staple is but a junction only, with no dwelling but the station-master's cottage near at hand. Soon the road we were following darkened further, having thick plantations on each side.

'I'm very glad to see you once more,' said Dare when we were fairly on our way. 'Whether or not I am justified in asking you down at the present moment is another matter, for I'm extremely busy.'

'You mustn't let me interrupt you,' I said, not offended by the somewhat doubtful wording of my welcome. I knew Dare.

'I sha'n't,' he answered with decision. 'I'm at work all day; at night I feel the need of talking of my work. Now, you are a suitable victim, for more than one reason. In the first place, I know your tongue won't wag. That is important, for what I am doing just now is—decidedly private.'

This information did not greatly surprise me. I knew that my friend was a master of more than one branch of science, and especially of chemistry. To those who looked but casually upon Dare's way of life, he might well seem to be completely idle, wandering here and there at will. But I was well aware, though he had never told me in so many words, that he was frequently consulted by distinguished men, and even by the Government. In time of war it was thus not surprising that he should announce himself as being employed on secret and important work.

'Yes,' he went on, 'at night I want to review to myself and to an attentive listener the work of the past day. Now, without flattery, you are particularly receptive. Having no specially absorbing hobby of your own, you can display—for I do not believe that it is mere polite assumption on your part—a keen and intelligent interest in the hobbies or the work of other people. I should imagine, indeed I feel certain, that the interest you show is temporary only—purely fleeting. That does not matter, for it serves my purpose. You are not offended?'

'Not in the least,' I said.

At the same time, I felt that his description of me was too true to be altogether palatable. He was quite right—had touched with an unerring finger on a trait of weakness in my character. My interest in the work or play of others was quite genuine, even enthusiastic—for the time. What sciences, what languages, had I not made up my mind that I would study, only to abandon the idea within a week! What plans had I not formed, what books had I not meant to write! Books never written, plans not destined to be carried out. And I should doubtless form such plans and make such resolutions yet again.

'You are not farming, then?' I said.

'Not I,' Dare answered; 'although, mind you, in the present crisis few men are more usefully employed than those who make two blades of grass grow where one grew before. The farmer is just now about the most important man we have. No, I'm not farming; and the place I rent is not a farm. It was; but all the land except a small orchard has been lately added to another holding, and most of the buildings also. I rent the house, with some of the immediately adjacent buildings. It is secluded—which, you know, is to my taste; and it is also cheap.'

Thus talking, we passed through a little village, and a quarter of a mile beyond it reached Pool Farm. So far as I could judge in the darkness, it was of no small antiquity; perhaps Georgian, even Jacobean. One wall rose up directly from the path beside the road, as did a lofty garden wall, through which we entered a small flower-garden by a wooden door. Behind the house, adjoining it, was a considerable range of buildings, and beyond these were more buildings and a rickyard full of stacks.

Dare opened the garden door and the house door with a latchkey, and first led me to a snugly curtained dining-room, where dinner was already partly laid; then to a comfortable bedroom, where I found my belongings. The house was very quiet; there was hardly any sign of life.

I knew Dare was in many ways eccentric, but reflected with some satisfaction that I had not noticed any of his whims invade the regions of gastronomy. Nor was I to be disappointed now. He gave me a good dinner, excellently served, with absolutely first-rate claret and some choice old port. The service was performed by the most silent-footed man I think I ever saw, who seemed to take his orders from Dare's eyes. When coffee had been brought I chanced to comment upon this.

'He takes his orders from my eyes, or sometimes from the movement of my lips, because he has to,' Dare replied; 'the man is deaf and dumb. But I can talk to him on my fingers, while elaborate instructions I most generally write down.'

I made some exclamation of surprise.

'Yes; and, like others similarly afflicted, he is of great intelligence—and also faithful, I believe. He has a good place here, is glad to have it, and will not imperil it by gossiping. His sister does the cooking and the housework—also deaf and dumb.'

In due time pipes were lighted, and we drew our chairs up to the fire in a room across the stone-flagged hall. Dare had just moved across the room to get some matches, and was sitting down, when suddenly he checked himself and looked at me.

'Let's see; you're fond of animals, I think?'

'Oh yes, I like them well enough,' I said

rather indifferently, for the question seemed *à propos* of nothing.

Dare checked himself again; he had been going towards the door. 'My dear fellow, I hope you are not one of those people who will say with a smug face that they are "fond of animals in their right place"!'

'Well, I don't know,' I answered; 'in a way, I may be of that mind myself. I like a good horse in the stable, a handsome group of cattle in the field, and a dog as a companion for a walk or on the hearth-rug at one's feet. Have you a dog? By all means, have him in.'

Dare smiled a curious smile.

'No, I've no dog; but there's a little pussy-cat that we'll have in, if you don't mind.'

He crossed the hall. I heard him open some door which I could not see; then he emitted a low and very penetrating whistle, and came back into the room.

For a few seconds nothing happened. Then I heard a sound as of the rush of soft, swift, heavy steps along what seemed a passage. Swiftly came the rush of the soft footsteps in the hall, and then there bounded in Dare's 'little pussy-cat.'

'Never surprise the British public, my boy; they don't like it.' Such, I believe, was the advice once given to a fellow-writer by the late James Payn. I think I share the British public's prejudice, especially when surprise assumes the form which Dare now sprang on me. His little pussy-cat was a superb black leopard, evidently fully grown! For the first moment of its entering the great creature fawned on Dare, purred loudly, rubbed its neck against his hand and knees; then, as it caught sight of me, its manner changed. With flattened ears and lashing tail it uttered a low growl, and crouched as if about to spring.

'Don't move; and, above all things, don't look frightened. Keep your eyes on hers,' said Dare in his cool, level voice. 'Nothing excites these creatures more than any agitation shown by people near.—Down, then, Bagheera; quiet, little girl; lie down!'

He enforced these commands with a smart box on the ear, and the brute slowly sank upon the floor beside him, still with her green and scintillating eyes on me, and still with angry twitchings of her tail.

'Just shut the door, if you don't mind,' said Dare, his hand still on her neck.

I did so, repressing a strong inclination to shut myself outside and parley through the key-hole for the restoration of the leopard to her proper quarters. I really felt much nearer anger than I had ever yet felt with Dare. Was I a lion-tamer, that I should thus find myself, without a moment's warning, called to pass an evening in a wild beast's den?

However, I braced myself to meet the ordeal of the creature's company, and came back to my seat. Dare soothed the leopard till she deigned to tolerate my presence. She prowled about the room a little, coming every now and then to Dare to be caressed and stroked; and presently she stretched herself at ease upon the rug before the fire.

'What on earth possessed you to adopt such a beast as a pet, Dare,' I asked; 'and where did you get it? I have never seen so dark a one before, and always thought that Kipling must have been romancing when he paints Bagheera in his *Jungle Tales*.'

'Oh no; black leopards do exist, as you can see. I got Bagheera at a London wild-beast dealer's; happened to be in his place one day, saw her, and took a fancy to her on the spot. Why, I can really hardly say. But is she not a splendid brute?'

She certainly was. The creature lay stretched on her side at our feet—or, rather, at Dare's feet—the tip of her tail gently switching, and her great paws curling and uncurling lazily. Head, back, sides, and tail were practically coal-black, though I saw the groups of leopard spots which showed like silk on velvet in the flickering fire-light. If Dare but spoke to her, or touched her shining coat, the roar of her contented purring filled the quiet room.

'So you are busy?' I said presently.

'Extremely busy, and on very pressing work.'

'For Government?'

'For Government. I'll tell you what I'm doing, or, rather, trying to do. I've not entirely succeeded, but I think I'm on the track. It is a question of those poisonous and asphyxiating gases that the Germans use.'

'What is your game? Retaliation by like agents, or a nullification of their effects?'

'Oh, the latter; we are already retaliating in like manner, or shall do so soon. No, I am dealing especially with the means of counteracting'—here Dare spoke a word of many syllables which I will not attempt to spell—'that particular gas, or, rather, blend of gases, which was discovered a few years ago by an old professor of chemistry at Heidelberg. I was in Heidelberg just then, and knew him pretty well.

'He was rather a visionary old soul, engrossed in his own work, as every scientist should be. Moreover, he was never satisfied. He discovered this blend of gases, which is one of the most deadly that our men have had to face. It acts especially on the'—— And here again Dare gave me copious details, wholly technical and almost entirely polysyllabic. 'Having discovered and perfected this, he forthwith turned his mind towards the discovery of some counteracting power; something, especially, which, even in the open air, would suddenly reduce the poisonous blend to its first harmless elements—for they are harmless taken separately.

'He did all this purely with a scientific aim; of any interest in the possible results of his

inventions, I believe that he had practically none. Had he discovered the dispersive, we may call it, which he sought, he would then have proceeded searching for an anti-antidote, and so on in an endless chain.'

'Then I gather that he did not discover the antidote—or dispersive.'

'No; for he died when he believed himself quite near success.'

'Poisoned by his own gases?' I inquired.

'A less appropriate end. He was run over by a carriage in the street.'

'And his incompleted discoveries perished with him?'

'No—fortunately not. So far as he had carried them, they passed to me.'

'I see; you worked together, you and he.'

'We had done so in certain other matters; not in that. The old man—if you don't mind, I think that I won't give his name—did not like his friends to know of his discoveries till they were complete. But I had gleaned some notion of the work that he was busy with, and how far it had gone. I frequently worked with him in his laboratory, and we had many things in common.

'We had just left the place together, and had parted to take opposite directions, when the accident occurred. I ran to him at once, and had him carried back into his rooms; but he died in a few minutes without recovering consciousness. When I left half-an-hour later I possessed full data of his work so far as it had gone.'

'You mean you—— No, of course; I beg your pardon, Dare.'

'Precisely,' went on Dare, with his composure absolutely unruffled. 'I appropriated, or, if you prefer it—for why use a long word when a shorter one will do?—I *stole* the papers bearing on the work. You think the act a crime?'

I murmured something vague, which I believe was, 'Not at all.'

'In life,' said Dare, 'and more especially in really serious matters, one must take broad views. I ask you to consider the matter calmly, not from a lawyer's point of view, or that of our most excellent policeman who is just now passing down the road outside Here was a man who had discovered—you might say created, if you like—a most terrible agent of torture and destruction, as both you and I have lived to see, and thousands of poor fellows have unfortunately lived to feel. The German Government—the War Office—had been placed by the inventor in possession of this hellish thing; that much I chanced to know. The inventor goes a step further. He tries to discover, was indeed far advanced on the road to discovering, an effective counteractive to his first invention's diabolical effects. The German minister of war would probably become possessor of that too. With what result? To place in German hands, and in their hands alone, the secret of nullifying to a great extent the frightful effects of the gases. Possession of that secret would bestow on them a fearful power in the case of war. And, mark you, I knew well that war with Britain was to come some day; one couldn't live in Germany with open eyes and not know that. Oh yes, I know that politicians did so, as you say; but politicians usually see only what will fit into their own theories.

'Well,' Dare continued, 'what would you have done? Would you have left those papers, of incomparable value, to fall into German hands, or taken them, that Britain might make use of them when need arose? I took them—stole them, if you like—and I should do the same again. I rather think that even *murder* would have been well justified in such a case.'

(*Continued on page 378.*)

FROM FLINT TO STEEL.

IN THE SOMME VALLEYS.

By Edwin L. Arnold.

OUR soldiers in France have, at the moment, other things to think of than remote predecessors in the art of war. Were it otherwise, they might well meditate on the fact that under their feet, embedded in the gravels of the Somme valley, lie the oldest implements of combat known to humanity—the battered spear and axe-heads of men who fought for forgotten causes in the very dimmest vistas of the past. Between the flint axes of palæolithic man and the 'Jack Johnsons,' or giant shells, of to-day twenty or thirty thousand years have intervened; and what a vista they represent of struggle, of a terrible progress in the science of destruction, quite outstripping reason or the ability of our kind to set up a tribunal which all men might respect and obey!

It was fifty years ago that an unassuming French surgeon, searching amongst the gravel quarries of the Somme, noticed some nodules of worked flint, dug from the solid material, of such unusual form that even the workmen handled them with curiosity and speculated on their origin. M. Boucher de Perthes, the ex-doctor in question, went further. He collected all the flints he could get, with many others at later

dates, and meditated upon them at home. In a few months the result of his reflections was given to an incredulous world in the announcement that these flints showed human workmanship, and set back the first appearance of man in western Europe for an immense period.

Up to that time the calculations of Bishop Ussher, placing the commencement of our story at six thousand years ago, had been generally accepted; the Frenchman's theory, at a stroke of the pen, pre-dated the beginning of the narrative twenty thousand or thirty thousand years at the very least. It was not surprising, under the circumstances, that he found little acceptance and few disciples. All kinds of ingenious criticisms were urged against the soundness of his conclusions. One sceptic had the temerity to declare the implements were merely natural forms of broken stone, an idea untenable when M. Boucher de Perthes's collections were practically examined. Another savant suggested that if actually the result of human handicraft, they might have fallen into the ancient river gravels from upper and far more modern strata. Monsieur de Perthes met this objection by inviting the doubter to dig an axe-head or two from the pits, and satisfy himself personally as to whether they were not embedded in virgin and unfissured gravel.

For ten years he was a prophet without honour in any country; but at the end of that time Sir Joseph Prestwich, Sir John Evans, and the late Lord Avebury visited the Somme valley, unearthing implements for themselves, and with their acknowledgments of the genuineness of the finds a new science arose. Flint arrow-heads and axes had been actually known for a long while previously. Both were considered by scientists as merely early British weapons; while in popular tradition the former were called elf-shafts, and the latter thunderbolts, or, in Scotland, purgatory-hammers—that is, the objects with which the dead knocked for admittance at the doors of the nether world. But the ancient, and still active, Somme battlefields revolutionised our views of palæontology. In the half-century which has since elapsed, our horizon has immensely extended beyond the limits which the French surgeon indicated to us. From Boucher de Perthes's river-drift men we have followed the traces of their ancestors backwards to an antiquity that even he never dreamed of. The drift men's weapons, or stone implements of daily utility, were enshrined in the now high and dry beaches of still existing streams. But we have found other implements in the disjointed beds of great rivers that no longer exist in any form, rivers whose courses ran over the tops of present-day mountains, and drained the valleys not only of another age, but of a completely different European geography. No man ventures to say how old our oldest implements are, but there is no reason why a million years should not have passed since some of them were fashioned by human hands.

In the other direction, descending from the river-drift folk to historic times, the path of our knowledge has gradually broadened and brightened until, in comparison with the shadowy palæolithic man on the dawn of the past, the neolithic man of only ten thousand or twelve thousand years ago seems a quite ordinary and familiar individual. The latter's handicraft in stone is scattered in profusion all over the world, and, with many other remains which he has left, we can patch together his daily life with some approach to accuracy. We see him at first a nomad wandering in small parties over the uplands and along the shores of his ancient world, living by hunting and fishing, or, on the coast, largely on mollusca, whose discarded shells still indicate by vast mounds his seaside resorts. Later on he began to grow corn, and domesticated animals, the dog and the cow being his greatest acquisitions in this direction. For the protection of the cows he enclosed scores of hill-tops, while miles of wolf-banks along the Surrey hillsides even to-day show the constant war he waged with beasts of prey. Cattle in the south of England, if left to themselves, still have a tendency to go to the uplands at sunset, and thus avoid the traditional terrors of the wolf-haunted hollows.

Then, from somewhere, probably from the East, came invaders who had a knowledge of metals—copper at first, then bronze, then iron—and they overran and absorbed the users of simple stone. It was a gradual revolution, flint and bronze being used together for a long period. Indeed, the Stone Age in this country may be said to have lasted down to the time when Irish kerns shot flint-tipped arrows against the soldiers of Queen Elizabeth. It continued until a few years ago amongst many native races of the Pacific, and so little was metal understood by the aborigines of Australia a generation since that when they first saw long iron nails they took them to be some kind of very hard wood, and planted them in their gardens in the hope that they might sprout. But gradually metal conquered, and the immensity of the flint implement industry, a million years more or less of an art that seems to us now so barbarous and insufficient, died away. The latest workers in it were by no means the most skilful. The collector notes with interest in his cabinets that as bronze and iron in turn gained the ascendency, the skill of the flint-flaker became debased. His products had come to be called for only by the poor and nomadic; he could not turn out work as good as his predecessor ten thousand years previously.

Indeed, it was our friends of the Somme gravels who were the master craftsmen. Not only did they make the finest weapons, but they possessed artistic instincts in other directions,

which disappeared as completely in the time of their descendants as the glories of ancient Greece were lost in the days of her humiliation. Everything they left in the open, save their stone weapons, has perished; but on the roofs of French caverns are still to be seen drawings, tinted in red or black pigment, of the animals they knew best, characterised throughout by remarkable vigour. They wore many kinds of ornaments, and the hard stalagmite floors of the same caves have preserved for us carvings in bone or ivory of unexpected excellence. Whether the palæolithic men of twenty thousand years ago died out, or whether they became merged in later races, is not certain; but under the feet of contending armies to-day the implements of chase and warfare they left for later generations to discover unquestionably attest the immensity of the human story and the unalterableness of its essential characteristics.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By JEFFERY FARNOL.

CHAPTER XXII.—*continued.*

RAVENSLEE sighed and settled his head more comfortably on his pillow. 'You think I ought to go, Spider?'

'I don't think—I know! Your number's up, Geoff—it's you against th' field; an', bo', they're some field!'

'You think there's real danger, then?' inquired Ravenslee, staring up at the fly-blown text with shining eyes.

'As real as—death, bo'!'

'Not so long ago I regarded Death as my best friend.'

'How much?' demanded the Spider, suspending mastication.

'Nothing, Spider; a mere passing thought.'

'Well, I'm tellin' ye they'll get ye sure—it'll be th' water or a forty-four bullet, or a black-jack or a knife; but you'll get it one way or another.'

'Sounds cheering!'

'An' it ain't over-pleasant t' be sand-bagged.'

'No, Spider.'

'Nor t' feel a lead-pipe wrapped round th' back o' yer bean?'

'No, indeed, Spider.'

'Nor yet t' feel a stiletta diggin' between yer shoulders or over yer collar-bone?'

'Worst of all, Spider.'

'Well, you'd best pack yer little trunk an' fade away, bo'!'

Ravenslee sat up suddenly and looked at the Spider with eyes very bright and wide. 'Not for all the gangs that ever ganged!' said he softly.

'Eh!' exclaimed the Spider, staring; 'what's yer game?'

'I'm going to try to buck this gang clean out of existence.'

'You are, eh?'

'I am.'

'Bo',' sighed the Spider, shaking his head, 'you ain't a ordinary fool—you're a damned fool!'

'And you're going to help me, Spider!'

'Not me, bo'—not me. I'm only just an ordinary fool!'

'Well, we'll let it go at that,' said Ravenslee, and, lying back, he yawned again.

'Don't do that, bo'—don't do that!' exclaimed the Spider. 'I'm thinkin' what you'll look like after you've been floatin' around in th' river—a week, say. You'd best get out o' Hell's Kitchen, bo'—don't stop to ask where to, but—go there.'

'My Spider,' said Ravenslee, shaking his head, 'in Hell's Kitchen I should have to leave all that makes life worth while, so—I shall stay, of course, and chance the—er—river and things.'

'Well, I guess it's your trouble,' said the Spider, 'not mine.'

'But I want it to be yours too, Spider. You see, I'm counting on you to help me smash this gang.'

'Bo', it looks like you're goin' t' do a hell o' a lot o' countin'—an' then some more—before you count me in on this fool game. Say'—he paused to stare at Ravenslee, keen-eyed and with jaws clamped rigid—'you ain't a fly-cop—one o' those sleuthy gum-shoe men, are ye?'

'No.'

'Well, you ain't one o' those fool amateur guys doin' the dare-devil detective act like you read about in th' magazines, are ye?'

'No more than you are one of those dirty gang-loafers you hear about round O'Rourke's, and that's why you're going to help me root 'em out.'

'Sufferin' Pete!' sighed the Spider, 'here I keep tellin' you I ain't on in this act, an' here you keep on ringin' me in frequent all the same.'

'Because you are a man, Spider Conolly, and white all through, and because to smash up this gang is going to be man's work.'

'Well, it sure ain't no job for Sophy the Satin-skinned Show-girl, nor yet for two nice quiet little fellers like you an' me.'

'We sha'n't be quite alone, Spider.'

'That's some comfortin', anyway!'

'There will be Joe Madden, for one.'

'Joe Mad'—— The Spider very nearly bolted his wad of chewing-gum; then he rose and stood staring at Ravenslee very round of eye. 'So you know Joe Madden, the best all-round champion that ever happened, eh?'

'I box with him every day.'

'Hully chee!' exclaimed the Spider, and chewed fervently in silent astonishment. Suddenly he lifted his head and stood as one that hearkens to distant sounds, and, crossing stealthily to the window, climbed out.

'What 's the matter?'

'Mother Trapes, bo'—she 's just rollin' out o' th' feathers, an' she 's quite enough for me—always has me fazed to a frazzle. If she caught me here it 'u'd be th' gimlet-eye for mine—so here 's where I fade away.'

'Anyway, come and have tea here with me to-night, Spider, unless you think I am—er—too dangerous to visit just now on account of M'Ginnis.'

'Dangerous?' repeated the Spider, scowling. 'Bo', when I get a call t' free food with a guy like you, danger gets lost in th' shuffle an' forgotten. I 'll be there. Now here 's your bean-cover—catch! S' long!' And, nodding, Spider promptly vanished down the fire-escape.

CHAPTER XXIII.—CHIEFLY CONCERNING A LETTER.

'SUNDAY!' said Mrs Trapes sententiously. 'Sunday is a holy day to some folks, an' a holiday for other folks, but t' folks like me an' Hermy it sure ain't no day o' rest an' gladness—like the hymn-book says.'

'Isn't it?' said Ravenslee, pushing away his coffee-cup, and glancing toward the loud-ticking clock upon the sideboard.

'It sure ain't!' nodded Mrs Trapes, quick to note the look. 'Hermy an' me ain't much given to Sunday observance, Mr Geoffrey. Ye see, there 's always meals t' be cooked an' washin'-up t' be done, an' clo'es t' be mended p'r'aps. I 've darned many a 'eart-felt prayer into a wore-out pair o' stockin's before now, an' offered up many a petition t' the throne o' grace with my scrubbin'-brush sloshin' over the floor. Anyway, Hermy 'n' me ain't never had much time for church-goin' or prayer-meetin's or mindin' our souls in our best frocks an' bonnets—no, sir! We jest have t' get on with our work—sewin' an' cookin' an' washin'—mindin' the welfare o' other folks' bodies. So, while them as has time an' inclination sing their praises t' the Lord on their knees, Hermy an' me take out our praises in work, an' have t' leave our souls t' God. An', oh, well, I guess He 'll take care o' 'em all right, don't ye think?'

'I certainly do!' nodded Ravenslee.

'O' course, my soul ain't all it should be—a bit stained here an' there, p'r'aps—a bit th' worse for wear, Mr Geoffrey; but Hermy's—well, there, I guess it 's jest as sweet as a flower still, an' white—ah, as white as that tablecloth. An' talkin' about her soul, what about her body, Mr Geoffrey?'

Ravenslee started. 'Her body?' said he, staring. 'Well, since you ask, I should say it is like her soul—very sweet and white and'——

'Sure!' nodded Mrs Trapes; 'but, bein' only flesh an' blood after all—bein' only miserable clay like yours an' mine, Mr Geoffrey, it 'll always need food t' nourish it, clo'es t' keep it warm, an' a roof t' shelter it. Well, if she was t' be s' mad as t' marry a pea-nut man, what about food an' clo'es an' a roof?'

'I think they could be managed, Mrs Trapes.'

'What! out o' pea-nuts?'

'No—er—the fact is, I 've given 'em up.'

Mrs Trapes sniffed. 'Ye don't say!' she remarked dryly. 'Think o' that, now!'

'The fact is, Mrs Trapes, I—well, suppose I were to confess to you that I 'm not quite so poor as I seem, what should you say?'

'Why, I should say as I knew that about three weeks ago, Mr Geoffrey.'

'Oh, did you?' said Ravenslee, staring. 'How in the world did you find out?'

'Why, Mr Geoffrey, I 'll tell ye how. I got eyes an' I got ears, an' sometimes I can see a bit with my eyes an' hear with my ears—that 's how! Oh, I 've watched ye, Mr Geoffrey, I 've watched ye careful, because—well, because I sure love Hermy, an' 't would jest break my 'eart t' see her fallin' in love with a rogue!'

'So you think—that she is—falling in love, then?' inquired Ravenslee slowly.

'Well, Hermy 's Hermy, an' she 's wrote you two letters, to me knowin'.'

'No, only one, Mrs Trapes.'

'Now, Hermy ain't the kind o' girl t' write twice to a man unless'——

'But she has only written me one letter, Mrs Trapes—the one she left with you last week.'

'Oh, well—here 's the other!' said Mrs Trapes, laying before him an envelope addressed in the handwriting he had come to know so well.

'Why didn't you give it to me before?' he inquired.

'Her orders, Mr Geoffrey.'

'Orders?'

'Orders!' nodded Mrs Trapes. 'She come in here last night an' give it me after you was gone t' bed. "Ann dear," she says, "don't let him have it till half after ten t'-morrer," she says. An' it 's nearly eleven now—so there 's yer letter!'

'But,' said Ravenslee, 'why on earth'——

'P'r'aps th' letter 'll tell you, Mr Geoffrey.

S'pose you read it while I clear away your breakfast-things!'

Hereupon Ravenslee opened the letter and read these words:

'My dear,—It would be my joy to trust myself to you utterly, to go with you to the world's end if you would have it so. Only, I'm afraid that I am not quite what you would have me. I'm afraid that I might sometimes do things that would remind you that I had been only a scrub-woman. I'm afraid that some day you might regret. Were I to answer you now I should answer you selfishly—so, please, you must give me time to think, for both our sakes. Love has never come near me before, and now I am a little afraid, for love is not little and tender and babyish, but great and strong and very fierce and masterful—that is why I am afraid of it. So I must go away from you, from the sound of your voice, the touch of your hand—to think it all out. My work will take me to Englewood to-morrow, and I want you to wait for your answer until I come back, for then I shall have decided one way or the other. But in Englewood the memory of your words will be with me still. Oh, did you mean all, quite all, you said, and did you say quite all you meant to say; did you—did you? For indeed it has seemed to me that if you really meant all you said, you might have said a little more—just a little more. This is a dreadfully long letter, and very badly expressed, I know, but I dare not read it through. But what I have written is written from my heart. Hermione.

'*P.S.*—I shall be in Englewood three whole days.'

'Will strawberry jam an' angel cake an' a bunch or so o' watercress be enough, Mr Geoffrey?'

Ravenslee sat staring down at the letter, rubbing his square, fresh-shaven chin as one very much at a loss. '"Might have said a little more—just a little more,"' he muttered, his gaze focussed upon a certain line.

'Will watercress an' angel cake an' a pot o' strawberry jam soot, Mr Geoffrey?'

'Now I wonder what the dickens she can mean?' mused Ravenslee.

'She means jest strawberry jam an' angel cake an' watercress, fer tea—fer your visitors,' said Mrs Trapes with a patient sigh.

'Visitors!' repeated Ravenslee, glancing up. 'Why, yes, they'll be here about four o'clock.'

'An' will watercress an' angel cake an'——

'Quite enough! Certainly! Admirable!' exclaimed Ravenslee. 'But what beats me,' he continued, staring down at the letter again, 'is what she can mean by writing this.'

'Not knowin' what she's wrote, I can't say.'

'Mrs Trapes, I know you are Hermione's best and staunchest friend, and lately I have ventured to hope you are mine too. As such, I want you to read this letter; see if you can explain it.'

So Mrs Trapes took the letter; and when she had read it through, folded it together with hands very gentle and reverent, and stood awhile staring out into the sunlit court. 'My land!' she said at last, her harsh voice grown almost soft, 'love's a wonderful thing, I reckon. No wonder your eyes shine so. Yes, love's a great an' wonderful thing—my land!'

'But can you explain,' said Ravenslee as he took back the letter—'can you tell me what she means by'——

'Shucks, Mr Geoffrey! That sure don't want no explainin'. When you said all you did say to her, did ye say anything about "wife" or "marriage"?'

'Why, of course I did!'

'Sure?'

'Yes—er—that is—I think so.'

'Not sure, then?'

'Well, I may have done so—I must have done so; but really I—er—forget.'

'Forget!' Mrs Trapes snorted. 'Now look-a-here, Mr Geoffrey, what d'ye want with Hermy? Is it a wife you're after, or only'——

'Mrs Trapes!' Ravenslee was upon his feet, and before the sudden glare in his eyes Mrs Trapes gaped and for once fell silent. 'Mrs Trapes,' said he, still frowning a little, 'really you—you almost made me angry.'

'My land,' said she, 'I'm kind o' glad I didn't—quite!' and her sniff was eloquent.

'You see,' he went on, glancing down at the letter again, 'I've learned to love and reverence her so much that your suggestion hurt rather.'

'Why, then, Mr Geoffrey, I'm sorry. But if your love is so big an' true as all that—if you want her t' be a wife t' you—why in the 'tarnal didn't ye speak out an' tell her so?'

'I'll go and tell her so this minute.'

'Ye can't. She's gone t' Bronx Park with that b'y, 'n' won't be back all day.'

'Damn!' exclaimed Ravenslee.

'Sure!' nodded Mrs Trapes. 'Keep on; it'll do ye good. But, anyway, what ye got t' say'll keep, I guess—ay, it'll gush out all the stronger fer bein' bottled up a day or two.'

'I can write,' he suggested.

'You can—but you won't—you'll tell her with your two lips; a woman likes it better spoke—if spoke proper. I should! With arms entwined an' eyes lookin' into eyes, an'—oh, shucks! Will angel cake an' strawberry jam'——

'They'll be ample, and—thank you, dear Mrs Trapes!'

(*Continued on page 372.*)

SCIENCE AND THE DIVINING-ROD.

By PAUL TYNER.

SCIENCE has at last passed definite sentence of death on the divining-rod, so far as the official decision of a national government can speak for science. In a special report by Mr Arthur J Ellis, of the United States Geological Survey, after a very exhaustive examination not only of the literature of the subject, but also of first-hand evidence, he arrives at the conclusion that the idea that the presence of water, or of bodies of mineral, may be detected by means of a forked twig of hazel, rowan, or peach, held between the balls of the thumbs, must be relegated to the realm of hoary but baseless superstitions.

This American Government expert insists that while there can be no question that water has frequently been found at places designated by the water-finders, or 'water-witchers,' employed for the purpose by settlers in the arid sections of the south-west—and for years they have been doing a thriving trade—the spots selected have been usually those which a keen-eyed layman would have readily picked out without the assistance of the hazel twig, or of the Y-shaped metallic rod of steel, brass, or copper, often adopted as a modern substitute.

As an instance of the fallibility of the 'water-witcher,' Mr Ellis cites the experience of a land company in New Mexico which drove several artesian wells that were to furnish a new community with water. Soon afterwards several of the wells went dry, and the company was much criticised for not having retained the services of a certain 'water-witcher,' famous in that section, before boring the wells. Had they done so, it was declared, the mistakes would have been avoided and the landowners' money saved. To meet this criticism, the land company requested the 'water-witcher' to walk blindfold over the section. In every instance the divining-rod proved undependable, the 'water-witcher' declaring that the dry wells contained water, and that the wells containing water were dry!

Some idea of the widespread interest evoked by the use of the divining-rod is suggested by the fact that attached to this official report is a bibliography of more than two hundred books on the subject, going back to Agricola, Sperlingius, and Kirchmayer. In Agricola's *De re Metallica*, early European miners are described as 'wandering hither and thither through mountainous regions,' with the divining-rods held in front of them, confident that the moment they placed their feet on a vein of ore or over it, the forked branch would turn and twist.

Not only in ancient times, but down to our own day, especially in remote districts of Spain and Italy, as in Cornwall and Wales, faith in the divining-rod was really a supernatural belief in the powers of the wizard who wielded it as a sort of magic wand. He often used strange incantations and weird gestures, invoking the aid of God, or of Satan.

Nor have we lacked respectable authorities who believed that the ancient superstition embodied at least a suggestion of scientific verity. Andrew Lang in his *Custom and Myth*, and Sir William Barrett in *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, 1897, following on Dr Mayo and Chevreul, seem inclined to believe that the so-called occult power of the divining-rod is based on scientific principles, a special phase of the universal law of attraction and repulsion being illustrated in its movement. It is suggested that as the willow or the hazel tree is observed to droop its branches over water flowing beside the bank on which it is planted, or over beds of metalliferous ore, so a branch or a twig would show the same elective affinity.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century in France, by a sort of natural evolution, the use of the divining-rod was extended from the finding of bodies of ore in the earth to the finding of buried treasure, and thence to the discovery of those guilty of witchcraft and other crimes. In 1692 a nation-wide sensation was caused by Jacques Aymer, a young peasant of Brittany, who was said to have brought a notorious criminal to confession and the bar of justice by means of the divining-rod. He was summoned to Paris, where he was showered with attentions (and fees) by fashionable men and women of the Court, and even by royalty itself. His services were for a time in brisk demand by those desiring to recover lost or stolen money, jewels, or letters. It was declared that Aymer's powers extended, indeed, to the discovery of secret enemies or rivals. He was remarkably successful in many cases, and the fame of his wonderful divining-rod spread all over Europe. At last, however, he was exposed as a clever fraud by the sceptical and learned Prince de Condé, who set a trap for him, and made it plainly appear that Jacques was simply a youth of unusual shrewdness and cunning in ferreting out hidden things—a sort of natural Sherlock Holmes, born several centuries in advance of his time.

Very similarly, our American geological expert seeks, like the Prince de Condé, to annihilate faith in the divining-rod as a means of locating underground streams or ore-veins, by attributing the occasional and even frequent successes of these metal and water finders to accurate guesses, made possible by keen and shrewd powers of observation and some local knowledge.

It may well be doubted, however, whether or not this judgment will be generally accepted as

final. There are men who to the best scientific training add long practical experience in the mining world, and who, while laughing at the idea of any 'supernatural' element in the matter, frankly declare that 'there must be something in it,' when the divining-rod is discussed. Henry J. Hoover, the famous American mining engineer, who has lately distinguished himself as the organising and administrative genius of the relief-work in Belgium and northern France, in a monograph on the subject suggests that the phenomena may be accounted for by some subtle law of magnetic attraction as yet only dimly understood, but affording a fascinating field for the scientific investigator. John H. Hammond, another American mining engineer who for years was the right-hand man of Cecil Rhodes in the management of the Rand Mines, is of much the same opinion, as, indeed, was Cecil Rhodes himself. Among mining men it is well known that several of the richest gold, silver, and copper mines in the world have been located by men of no scientific training with the aid of the divining-rod. Among these properties were the famous Callao Mines in Venezuela, the Comstock Lode in Nevada, and the Independence Mine at Cripple Creek, Colorado. The writer heard the story of the discovery of the ore-body which later became famous as 'The Independence' from the discoverer's own lips in 1898, just before he sold the property to the Rothschilds for five million pounds in cash, and after he had taken from it, in the previous five years, no less than four million pounds. At the time of the discovery he had been earning a living as a carpenter in the mines; but a strike had been declared, and the carpenters demanded an advance of a shilling a day over the three dollars (12s. 6d.) they had been receiving. Having time on his hands, and having heard much about the virtues of the divining-rod, he made for himself one of copper, and went prospecting, with the result that he located the richest 'find' in Colorado. Now it so happened that the very expert on whose report the Rothschilds afterwards purchased this property had then recently been over the whole ground, as it was said, 'with a fine-tooth comb,' and had declared that no foot of it would ever produce anything but a low-grade ore, hardly worth mining and milling.

An old friend of the writer's, Mr Walter J. Barnett, of San Francisco, had a remarkable experience of the virtues of the divining-rod. He was a lawyer in a large way of business, and several years ago came into possession (in lieu of a cash fee) of a large tract of land in southern California close to tide-water. It seemed a hopelessly barren and sandy waste. The only hope of making it productive was through irrigation, and the only hope of irrigation was through the drilling of artesian wells, for it was entirely out of the line of the big water companies that bring the melted snows down from the mountains of the coast range. Where to drill on a tract some twenty square miles in extent was a problem. 'As an experiment,' he resorted to a 'water-witcher,' and being by this time interested in the possibilities, he accompanied the 'witcher' to the place, and next morning at daybreak they started to walk across the tract in a diagonal line from north-east to south-west. In a trance-like state the 'witcher' trudged on, holding the divining-rod straight before him by its prongs, but very loosely. At noon, wilting under the pitiless sun, and worn and weary, they were about to make a stop for lunch and rest, when the 'witcher' suddenly became much agitated with the moving of the wand. 'This is the place you must dig,' he declared; 'there's no water here, but there's something just as good!'

Borings were made, and the tract was proved to contain one of the richest coal-beds on the Pacific Coast. Mr Barnett and his associates obtained handsome fortunes from the working of the collieries. Incidentally, the 'water-witcher' was handsomely rewarded. It is to be noted in this case that the 'water-witcher' was not a geologist—not even acquainted with the topography or formation of the tract of land, and that he was looking for water, not coal.

It seems to me that a more comprehensive study of the problem of the divining-rod will suggest that its solution is to be found on the psychological, rather than the physical, side—better, perhaps, through a clearer understanding of the right relations between the psychological and the physical. Some twenty years ago, a young American, Irving Bishop, astonished all Europe by feats of what he called 'mind-reading.' In London, a clever student of anatomy and physiology, named Stuart Cumberland, duplicated many of Bishop's marvellous feats by what he called 'muscle-reading.' In the light of our later knowledge of physiological psychology summed up in Havelock Ellis's phrase, 'No emotion, no muscle; no muscle, no emotion,' we can see that, like the knights in the old story of the shield which had gold on one side and silver on the other, *both* were right.

Emerson gives us more than a hint of the direction in which we may hopefully explore, if we would banish all superstition on the subject and bring the phenomena of the divining-rod into the clear light of true scientific knowledge. He tells us that in every man there exists the same sort of correspondence with outer nature as exists between thirst in the stomach and water in the spring, and that a man's success consists in the right marriage of his faculties with outer nature. So we say some men are born sailors, others born botanists, or geologists, or merchants, or doctors, or lawyers. The wand of hazel, of course, only serves as conveyer and magnifier of the *movement* of attraction between the mind, or 'nature,' of the man, and the water or metal in the earth, its first feeble

registration in the muscles of his hand being as intuitive or even instinctive as the movement of a bee or a butterfly towards the flower containing that which it seeks. While it must be admitted that these 'gifts' are more highly developed in certain men than in others, there is nothing 'supernatural' about the existence of the gift and its development by exercise.

One of the wealthiest men in southern Alabama owes his rise to affluence to just such a gift. While earning a living as a labourer in a sawmill, he discovered that he had a 'gift' for quickly telling the quantity of merchantable timber contained in a tract of forest land while walking through it. In course of time he set up a small sawmill of his own, and used his gift on a small scale. A few years ago the 'Lumber Trust' bought him out for a million dollars, and, in exchange for a contract for his exclusive services as timber prospector, agreed to pay him a salary of one hundred thousand dollars (twenty thousand pounds) a year for life. The man was of the 'poor white' class, an illiterate, and came by all his knowledge of timber and forestry *instinctively*, the instinct being developed by *use* in contact with nature.

Not all the genius in humanity blossoms in art or literature, religion or philosophy. There are Raphaels and Mozarts of the fields, the woods, and the seas.

WHITE RATS WITH PINK EYES.

By ÆSCULAPIUS.

I.

NOT only in life is a man's character apt to be viewed at close range in the navy. Sometimes it is even put up for sale by public auction after he is dead and gone. That is what it practically amounts to when his unclaimed kit comes under the hammer on board his Majesty's ships. So unyielding are the traditions of the lower-deck in this respect that popularity counts for everything. In the absence of that essential, a cloth of gold outfit would not bring as much as the threadbare remnants of a mate they liked. Such a defunct one's effects are snapped up enthusiastically at one moment, and returned as a gift the next; so that the auction assumes a sort of 'proverbial loaves and fishes' character. In the end, the items paid for resemble more the contents of a moderate-sized shop than a kit-bag which a naval rating carries on his shoulder.

II.

It fell to the lot of Lieutenant Deans, R.N.R., of H.M.S. *Alcibiades*, to carry out the Admiralty order concerning Carmelo's earthly belongings. Deans, in peace-time, circles the globe in the Blue Funnel Line; and despite the fact that he wore a flaming red beard, his messmates nicknamed him 'the Bulgarian,' on account of his bluster. This, however, was mostly 'put on;' and, indeed, if his early progenitors were Bulgars, his later ones had strayed a long way from home, for Joe Deans himself came from Wolverhampton.

The sale was held after lunch on the upper-deck of the *Alcibiades*, abaft the battery. Lieutenant Deans stood on a box in front of a raised table, which he rapped vigorously with a carpenter's mallet. Surrounding him, in various attitudes of vantage, were hundreds of able seamen, stokers, and 'daymen.' The assistant-paymaster, a writer, and Ship's Corporal Dobbin, with a scar showing on his left cheek, were in attendance; while a few commissioned officers looked on from the outskirts of the crowd.

III.

'There is no need to ask if you remember Carmelo, our late lamented ship's cook,' Deans began; 'his history is enshrined in the hearts of us all. I came in contact with Carmelo only occasionally, but the least I can say for him is that he was one of the "whitest" men I ever met.'

The ship's company, ever ready to seize on a pretext for 'skylarking,' guffawed a bit at this juncture. Carmelo was very dusky in appearance even for a Maltese.

'What in thunder do you mean, making comedy out of a serious matter?' Deans roared, scowling at them fiercely. 'I reckon you didn't act like that when you went to Carmelo, with your tails between your spindle-legs, begging him to fry your "stand-easies,"' he said, with some heat, referring to the hundred and one odds and ends, other than rations, which find their way to the galley. 'I'll warrant, too, you got the best "buttered" eggs from him you ever tasted in your life,' he went on. 'What am I offered for this cholera-belt?' he asked, taking up the first available thing at hand.

'Two bob!' an engine-room artificer said timidly.

'Two bob!' repeated Deans contemptuously. 'What are you giving us? Why, with this belt you'll be able to go on the beach in comfort.'

The men sniggered again. The *Alcibiades* was off Mudros in the then late spring of 1915. Before being allowed to land on that station, they must naturally be protected against enteric and cholera. The E.R.A. in question, being an anti-inoculationist, was not likely to leave the ship at all.

'How much am I offered?' Deans persisted. 'Let us get on with the work.'

'Five bob!' a seaman-gunner bid.

'Now you're talking,' Deans assured them. 'Bear in mind that the proceeds are going to Carmelo's invalid sister in Malta. Will any one raise the five bob?'

Eventually the thing was knocked down to a stoker at seven bob. After that the auction went swimmingly, and fifty pounds were realised. Staff-Surgeon O'Brien paid three pounds for Carmelo's 'ditty-box.'

IV.

The 'ditty-box' which came into O'Brien's possession in such a curious manner ranks among the most precious belongings of a man on the lower-deck. There is just about space enough for it in his kit-bag, and it is the only receptacle he has for stowing away under lock and key his money, letters, and other similar things. Of course, Carmelo's valuables had been sent on to his sister; but the box itself was interesting from the point of view that its former owner was something of an artist. Among other little frescoes, Carmelo had painted on the plain deal lid a floral offering to St Paul, the patron saint of Malta, with the superscription, '*In te confido.*'

Unhappily, Carmelo did not confide entirely in his patron saint; otherwise St Paul would surely have warned him, in some way or other, of the baleful consequences of card-playing. In that case Carmelo might not have been entangled in a chain of events, the first link of which was forged when Commander Daubeny sent for the master-at-arms several months before.

V.

'You sent for me, sir?' the master-at-arms, whose name was Tulliver, said on that occasion.

'Yes, I did, master-at-arms. What is this I hear about gambling going on in this ship?'

'I haven't noticed anything myself, sir,' Tulliver replied.

'Well, I got wind of it in a roundabout way, and I want it suppressed. Do you understand?'

'Yes, sir.'

'That's all, then,' the commander said; and Tulliver went for'ard to the police-office, to acquaint his subordinates with the unpleasant news.

Tulliver's assistants were Ship's Corporals Dobbin and Fogg. It so happened that during the past few days there had been a series of petty thefts on the mess-deck, and the aggressive Fogg sniffed games of chance in the air, because the two frequently go hand-in-hand aboard ship. When, therefore, the master-at-arms told his corporals what Commander Daubeny had said, Fogg exclaimed triumphantly, 'I told you so.' The easy-going Dobbin, on the other hand, accepted the situation complacently, muttering something about 'keeping a sharp eye on them in future.'

VI.

The ship's company accepted Tulliver and Dobbin in the nature of necessary evils; but Fogg they looked upon as their bitter enemy. Fogg was all for organising a sort of secret service on board for the purpose of detecting delinquency. There are always men who will 'tell tales out of school,' and Fogg wished to make use of the material which offered in this direction. The master-at-arms, however, would not countenance any such measures. Notwithstanding his chief's disapproval, Fogg thought he could secure some kudos by 'rounding up' misdoers on his own. With this end in view, he arranged for a number of his cronies to act as spies in various parts of the ship. It was their duty to play the part of casual onlookers whenever there was anything doing. In this way they might learn that an innocent-looking cribbage-board was simply a blind to cover nap, or that a quiet rubber screened banker, baccarat, or some other game which was being played for money, a settlement being effected on the spot or whenever a safe opportunity offered.

VII.

In some subtle fashion, possibly owing to the compressed life which they live, espionage is always felt at once by men on the lower-deck. A wave of uneasiness passed over the ship's company, and the buzz went round that Fogg had spies out. They retaliated by posting scouts some distance off from where any sky-larking was under way. The object of these improvised sentinels was to have the approach of an enemy signalled in some simple manner. Fogg tumbled to this manœuvre, and, urged on by the excitement of the chase, he told off some of his people to watch these scouts. Soon there was a 'barbed-wire entanglement' of spies and scouts, and listening-posts, so to speak, and men began to look upon each other with hostility, and to wonder who was friend and who was foe.

VIII.

Fogg's methods were singularly unsuccessful until one of his minions told him to look out for a 'show' in X casemate during the first dog-watch. Fogg waited till it was well after the appointed hour, and then went up on the boat-deck, immediately over the armoured chamber in question. Thrusting his head down the hood of the casemate, at a dangerously unstable angle, he made out that a game was going on, and that Carmelo sat with his back to him, exposing his 'hand.' There was silver, too, near him; but the other players were beyond Fogg's limited range of vision. Fogg was endeavouring to increase it, when he received a thumping good whack from behind that made him lose his already frail balance, and take a header down to the steel

landing below. Fogg saw stars, and for the moment became oblivious of his surroundings. When he opened his eyes again the place was empty.

IX.

Extricating himself as quickly as he could, Fogg went to the galley. By this time Carmelo had arrayed himself in his cook's cap and white apron, and his mellow voice was bursting into operatic song, for he had been a regular patron of the opera-house in Malta before joining the service.

'Come with me before the officer of the watch,' Fogg said roughly.

Carmelo obeyed.

'Will you see this petty officer caught gambling?' Fogg asked.

The officer of the watch nodded his acquiescence.

'Off cap,' Fogg said to Carmelo. He then related what he had seen.

'What have you got to say to this?' the officer of the watch asked Carmelo.

'There is nothing to be said,' the latter answered, shrugging his shoulders.

'Put his name down in the report for to-morrow morning,' the officer of the watch ordered; and Carmelo went back to his galley.

X.

A couple of hours later Fogg was tactless enough to wrangle with Carmelo over a pork-chop, which the ship's corporal claimed was not cooked sufficiently; and it ended by Carmelo throwing it in his face. Fogg promptly said, 'Come with me again to the quarter-deck.'

The watch had changed in the interval, and Lieutenant Deans was keeping the second 'dog.' They arrived at an inopportune moment. Deans stood at the starboard gangway, with his right hand in the act of saluting, and a telescope under his left arm, waiting for the quartermaster to 'pipe' a post-captain over the ship's side. Unfortunately the quartermaster's whistle was blocked, and the only sound it emitted was an inglorious wheeze. Deans was furious, and administered a verbal drubbing to the quartermaster. Then he spotted Fogg, with his face bespattered with gravy, and the offending dish in his hand.

'What's all this I see?' Deans demanded, tugging fiercely at the ends of his moustache. 'Don't stand there like a petrified ape,' he said, frowning on Fogg; 'if you're a man, bring the culprit before me, so that I may deal out rough justice to him.'

Fogg stepped up lively, with Carmelo in tow, and told Deans what had occurred.

'What's your version of the affair, Carmelo?'

'What would you have done, sir?' Carmelo began appealingly. 'After all, we're all human.'

'Not all, my lad,' Deans said pointedly, for he heartily disliked Fogg.

'He's always complaining, sir,' Carmelo went on. 'This time he abused me about his chop, after running me in for playing baccarat in the first "dog."'

'I'm sorry to hear this, Carmelo,' said Deans, who was very fond of a game himself. 'Gambling is the road to ruin.'

'He came, too, sir,' Carmelo continued, 'at a time when me and my mates were simply frantic with the work in hand. You can't imagine, sir, how difficult it is to please several hundred men. These are not the simple days of hard-tack and plum-duff, sir, and some of these people seem to think the ship's galley has all the facilities of the Piccadilly grill,' declared Carmelo, who had a cousin working there; 'and you can come along any night you please, sir, and see their bits of "stand-easy" lying all over the place. I always try to do my best, sir, and that's all I have to say. I'm willing to apologise for what I did, sir, and to supply him with another pork-chop,' he concluded, making a grimace, because he had all the easterner's dislike for that form of meat.

'I think the reparation suggested is a fair one, especially as there's a charge against Carmelo already. What do you think, now, Fogg?' Deans asked coaxingly.

'I suppose it'll be all right,' Fogg answered uneasily, wiping the grease off his face with his handkerchief, and heaving overboard the unsavoury cause of the fracas.

XI.

Carmelo found a massive young stoker waiting for him when he got back. It was his pal Struldbrug, whose head always seemed to be leering at the world in general, owing to a deformity of the neck. It was worse than usual on this occasion, because all the whispering about espionage had reacted on his peculiar temperament in a much more pronounced way than on the rest of the ship's company, many of whom contented themselves with saying, 'I'm fed up on this sort of thing.' Struldbrug, therefore, was not in a frame of mind to view Carmelo's troubles with equanimity. In fact, the news of Fogg running in his friend a second time worked him up into a towering rage, which took an unusual form. Leaving Carmelo, he went along to the stokers' mess, and snatching up his own pet tortoise, he crashed down the stoke-hold, and would have thrown the unoffending thing into the furnace had he not been prevented by one of his messmates. In the struggle, however, his hand was injured, and Staff-Surgeon O'Brien was sent for, and applied a surgical dressing.

XII.

O'Brien had another hurried call to the sick-bay late that night. Ship's Corporal Dobbin

had been stabbed, and lay on the operating-table, bleeding from a wound in the face. There was no need to ask how it was done, for the master-at-arms stood by with a sword-bayonet in his hand, the point of which was stained red.

'No doubt the scoundrel attempted the "macaroni stroke," which gets at the vital parts of the neck,' the staff-surgeon remarked, inserting a few sutures into his patient's cheek. 'What 's Dobbin's story?'

Fogg spoke up. 'Dobbin and I sling our hammocks, sir, in a sort of blind alley near the police-office. My proper billet is the outer one; but I have a cold in the head, as you know, sir,' he continued, repressing a sneeze, 'and when I complained of the draught, Dobbin let me take his billet for the night. A few minutes after midnight his moans woke me up. I was just in time to help him out of his hammock, and the weapon fell out from between the blankets. I called for assistance immediately, and we carried him in here. The bayonet was taken from the ordinary rack, but we don't know who the blighter is,' Fogg concluded, as O'Brien finished bandaging Dobbin's head, and gave instructions to Sick-Berth Steward Endewick for the night.

XIII.

In the morning the boatswain's mate piped the order to 'clear mess-deck' and 'everybody to come aft.' When the ship's company were assembled on the quarter-deck, the captain spoke to them briefly on the subject everybody had in mind.

'You all know what happened last night,' he said. 'It seems that we 've not only got to run the gauntlet of enemy mines and torpedoes, but we 're not safe in our hammocks from our own messmates. Hitting a man when he is down is bad enough,' the captain declared, 'but stabbing him in his sleep is about the most contemptible thing I 've ever come across. Now, one of your number has done it, and I expect you to find him.'

The 'disperse' was then sounded, and the men doubled off the quarter-deck. The skipper had given them his ultimatum, but complying with it seemed about as difficult of accomplishment as finding a needle in a haystack. They had so little to go on. There was no apparent reason for any one 'doing in' the good-natured Dobbin. If, as seemed more likely, it was intended to smite Fogg, every other man was his enemy.

The mess-deck, however, have a way of doing things that is all their own. Just as all these off-duty undercurrents had not been reflected in the war routine of the ship, so there was nothing now to show that any unusual machinery had been set in motion. Some kind of swift and deadly pressure was unquestionably exerted, for eight bells had scarcely struck when Master-at-Arms Tulliver announced that Stoker Struldbrug had confessed. The captain ordered him to be placed under restraint pending his trial by court-martial. Meanwhile Carmelo had been sentenced to ten days' cells for gambling.

XIV.

'Temperature in the cells fifty-eight degrees, sir,' Ship's Corporal Fogg said. The two prisoners were up for their morning inspection before the staff-surgeon, clad in thick canvas suits.

'Any complaints?' O'Brien asked mechanically.

'No, sir,' Carmelo answered.

'Yes, sir,' Struldbrug said. 'It 's too cold, sir; the teeth of the white rats with pink eyes are chattering with cold in my cell, sir. Not that I cares for them, sir; I hate white rats with pink eyes, and I hate the men who breed them. It 's myself, sir, I 'm thinking of.'

'What 's this about white rats with pink eyes?' O'Brien asked in amazement.

'Haven't you seen them, sir?' Struldbrug said, a surprised look coming over his face. 'Why, there are hundreds of them on the mess-deck. Come to my cell, sir, and I 'll show you some big ones.'

The staff-surgeon went to the cell for the purpose of dressing his hand.

'Now, do you see that one, sir, with the beak nose? He joined up a year ago.'

'Where is he?' O'Brien inquired, humouring him.

'Can't you see his ugly head peeping out from under the blanket? He 's trying to keep warm. He 's not the only one, either; it 's full of them,' Struldbrug complained, lifting up the blanket. 'There isn't room enough for me at night. Now, that one with the mole on his cheek'——

'What do you mean, talking this rot, anyway?' O'Brien demanded.

'What rot?' the man asked, with a puzzled look.

'This stuff about white rats with pink eyes.'

'Do you know, sir,' the man said earnestly, 'it 's all they 're giving me to eat!'

The staff-surgeon regarded him thoughtfully. Struldbrug sat on a stool, his arms resting on his knees, and looked up at him with a careworn expression on his face, which was inclined to one side on account of his deformity. The whites of his eyes had the yellowish tinge of a prolonged stay aboard ship.

'How old are you?' O'Brien asked.

'Twenty-three, sir.'

'Where do you come from?'

'I 'm one of a large family,' Struldbrug said, 'and my father has a farm near Heswell, Cheshire.'

'How about'—— The staff-surgeon was going to ask him for some further particulars concerning his family history, when Struldbrug interrupted him.

'Ah, I know what you're driving at,' the man said, a cunning look coming over his face. 'No, we don't keep Cheshire cats. Father hates cats of all sorts; just like I hate white rats with pink eyes.'

'Oh, dry up about white rats with pink eyes!' O'Brien muttered irritably, as he left the cell.

XV.

A few days later the *Alcibiades* was making a 'sweep' of the North Sea with several other ships, when the two prisoners were marched up on deck for their daily airing. They walked in single file, the ship's corporal being in front, and the sentry behind. Carmelo looked as if he had not a care in the world, and Struldbrug appeared to enjoy the bracing air. A torpedo-destroyer made a diversion by blowing up a German mine. The four men stopped involuntarily to watch the column of spray which the explosion threw up from the sea, when suddenly Struldbrug made a tremendous leap, and was over the rail and into the sea, and Carmelo after him, before a hand could be raised to stop them. It may be that Carmelo was overwhelmed, partly by old instincts which diving for coins in Malta harbour had developed as a boy, partly by the impetuous desire which the average man has to save life, especially that of a friend.

The sentry on watch over the life-buoys released the levers, which let them drop into the sea, and sounded the alarm of 'Man overboard!' Unfortunately there were submarines in the vicinity, the ship was zigzagging as it was, and could not be stopped. The captain, however, signalled one of the destroyers to try to pick them up. Carmelo was seen to struggle manfully with the mad Struldbrug; but the latter must have got him in a death-grapple, for the destroyer reported that when she was able to manœuvre to the spot, there was nothing to be seen.

XVI.

The officers were having tea in the ward-room of the *Alcibiades*, when Lieutenant Deans crashed in, looking very much excited.

'I have it, sir,' he said to the staff-surgeon.

'Have what?' O'Brien asked. 'The plague?'

'No; "white rats with pink eyes."'

O'Brien groaned. 'Another case for Yarmouth,' he said, alluding to the Naval Lunatic Asylum at that place.

'No fear,' Deans exclaimed, calling for a pot of tea; 'there are more urgent cases,' he declared, looking significantly at several officers. 'What I'm trying to tell you is that I've found out what Struldbrug meant when he talked about white rats with pink eyes.'

'For goodness' sake, tell us, then!' O'Brien said impatiently.

'It's nothing more than the lower-deck term for informers.'

'I must say I never thought of asking them,' the staff-surgeon said. 'So that's how Struldbrug got white rats with pink eyes on the brain!' he mused.

'Cut it out!' the first-lieutenant said in disgust; 'I'm fed up on white rats with pink eyes! After all, Carmelo and his stoker pal are well out of this cursed war.'

UTILISING FOOD WASTE.

By T. Douglas.

AT the present time, when the question of food economy is so urgent, it is worth while inquiring if better use cannot be made of the refuse from houses, hotels, clubs, and other institutions. In the country and in town suburbs the coarse parts of vegetables, peelings, and scraps of food, that would be otherwise wasted, are frequently fed to poultry, and no better way of utilising household waste could be devised; but in the centres of towns, and too often in the suburbs, everything of this description is thrown into the dust-bin, where, in hot weather, it is apt to become a dangerous nuisance.

It ought to be possible to put this valuable material to a better use, and if even a moderate proportion of it could be worked up into a suitable food for pigs and poultry, it would take the place of thousands of tons of grain and offals, and to that extent diminish the amounts of these that require to be imported.

To attract the attention of the householder, the necessary treatment would have to be simple and inexpensive, and, from the nature of the case, it would involve (1) keeping the waste separate, (2) subjecting it to concentration, and (3) the production of an article that would keep. The first requirement is obvious; the second is important, because ordinary food waste contains anything from 75 to 90 per cent. of water, and the absence of this would greatly reduce the cost of handling and carriage. The third requirement would follow on the second, because dry materials keep indefinitely.

If we inquire into what has been done in the way of drying fruits and vegetables for the market, we may obtain a clue as to the best method of treating waste. The apparatus used is usually simple, cheap, efficacious, and economical in working, and is made in all sizes to meet both the largest and the smallest requirements. Even the householder has been catered for, and

his plant consists of a series of wooden frames, or trays, about three inches deep, and of any convenient size, each tray being fitted with a wire cloth or perforated metal bottom. When in use the frames are stacked on the top of one another. One end of each wooden frame is set at an angle to provide an opening for the readier escape of the vapour from the drying. It is an apparatus that any handy man could make for himself, and the writer has obtained very satisfactory results from a home-made plant of this description. The material to be dried is placed —not too thickly—in the trays, and these are mounted on each other, on the top of the cooler part of the kitchen-range, and left there until it is dry and crisp, when it can be stored in a sack or other receptacle, and a fresh lot put on. If some of the refuse is very wet, it should be put into a strong cloth to begin with, and the cloth folded over, and twisted from each end in opposite directions, until the excess of moisture is got rid of. Besides the ordinary vegetable and fruit refuse, such things as coffee-grounds, which are rich in feeding elements, could go in; also spent tea-leaves, which are not so rich, but the writer finds that poultry eat them readily. Fish bones and trimmings could also be dried. Such an apparatus would be very useful to fishmongers, who have generally to pay something to get quit of their refuse, while, if it was dried, it would be a valuable poultry food. Many people use gas-stoves almost entirely for cooking, and if a sheet-metal frame fifteen or eighteen inches in height, and open in front, was placed on the top of the stove, the drying-trays could be mounted on this, and the space within the metal frame would be sufficient for cooking purposes, and the waste heat passing upwards would dry the refuse.

On the larger scale, the drying apparatus consists of a coke-stove, with either one or two long covered metal flues connected to it and sloping steeply upwards. The flues are divided horizontally into a lower space for the hot gases from the stove, and an upper space to hold the trays of material to be dried. The trays are put in at the bottom of the flue, and pulled upwards by a simple hoisting-gear. The trays are removed one by one at the top of the flue when the contents are dry, and fresh trays are fed in at the bottom. A two-flued plant of this kind will dry a ton of fruit per day, and no doubt it would dry as much waste.

The dried material described above could be fed to pigs, but for poultry it should be ground into a meal, and, even for pigs, it would be better if ground. Besides, the grinding would considerably reduce the bulk, and facilitate carriage and handling. While there are plenty of small hand-mills to be had, the process of grinding in this way is slow and laborious, and some other way would have to be found of dealing with it. The writer would suggest boldly that the whole business should be taken over by the municipal authorities. It would probably pay; but if it did not, it would still be of great importance from the food economy point of view at the present time.

The proposal would be that the authorities should supply every producer of food-waste with a drying apparatus, large or small, in accordance with his requirements. As the waste would be reduced in drying by at least 75 per cent., there would be a considerable saving in the dust-removing department. A municipal mill would have to be established for grinding the collected dried food-waste, and if the grinding-plant was of the disintegrator type, bones could be included in the waste, and ground together with the rest of the material, in this way improving the value of the product as a food both for pigs and poultry.

The dried material would keep good for any reasonable time, and, being readily packed and handled, would no doubt soon become a regular merchantable article.

WINDERMERE IN WAR-TIME.

I'm thinking now, this war-time,
Of the woods round Windermere;
How green and cool and deep they sleep,
And how the crags uprear
To summer skies and summer clouds
Their buttresses of gray;
And I'm wondering, wondering ever,
If I'll go again that way.

It seems like a different planet,
Like a world beyond the dead,
With no sound of shell or cannon,
And no vaguely haunting dread;
You can sit there by the hour,
And the only thing you'll hear
Are the gray reeds all together
Whisp'ring wide on Windermere.

I'm thinking still this war-time
Of the woods round Windermere;
Though I know full well my thinking
Will not bring them very near;
But I seem to see the shadows
Lying far across the lake
When the red clouds gather westward
And the owls begin to wake.

And now I see the moon rise,
And, entangled in the trees,
Far up by rocks and valleys,
Lie her argent traceries;
And all the little sprites and elves,
That sleep by day and hide,
Go sailing on their fallen leaves
Adown the golden tide.

How freshly in the evening
Smell the woods round Windermere!
How many a cagèd whisper
Wanders fluttering to the ear!
And in the mists the phantoms
Seem to rise and melt away
Of mighty men in Flanders
That do dream of it alway.

ARTHUR W. HOWLETT.

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THE BRITISH EMPIRE OF TO-DAY.

By W. V. ROBERTS.

THE assembling of the War Council of the Empire in London this year is an epoch-marking event in British history, a great stride towards that Imperial federation which has been the dream of patriots in all time. This does not mean, of course, the full realisation of Tennyson's ideal of 'The Parliament of man, the federation of the world.' But it does mean an outward and visible sign of the closer knitting together under the Crown of nearly four hundred and forty millions of people who form more than a fourth of the whole population of the globe, and who occupy over thirteen million square miles, or more than a fifth of the entire surface of the globe.

There has been nothing like this in ancient or modern annals. The Roman Empire, for example, is popularly believed to have embraced much of the then known world. But Gibbon computes that its population at the time of the Emperor Claudius numbered only about one hundred and twenty millions, or not much more than a quarter of the British Empire to-day; and he puts its area at one million six hundred thousand square miles—not half that of the Dominion of Canada. Modern comparisons suffer equally. The population of the Chinese Empire ranks next to that of the British. In the absence of a trustworthy census it is difficult to be exact, but its peoples are variously estimated at from two hundred and seventy millions to four hundred millions, crowded together in an area less than a third of that of the British Empire. In Russia the conditions are reversed, the population being estimated at one hundred and seventy-four millions, and the area in square miles at nearly nine millions. The United States of America are smaller again, the population being ninety-two millions, and the square miles about three millions. Before the war the German Empire in Europe extended to only two hundred and eight thousand seven hundred and eighty square miles, with a population of about sixty-five millions. Wherever one turns, therefore, the British Empire is, in size and numbers, without a compeer.

Another remarkable fact is found in the way in which the British Empire differs from all others in being distributed all over the world. Lord Palmerston knew something about that, and one cannot help recalling his famous sentence, 'I never could understand my latitudes and longitudes, or make out where the British Empire isn't.' Those words were spoken more than fifty years ago, and since then the development of the Empire has been profound. A few of the changes may be noted. Canada was created a Dominion under the British North America Act of 1867, nine provinces and two territories being now included in it. The establishment of the Commonwealth of Australia was proclaimed in 1901, its six constituent states being New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. The colony of New Zealand was converted into a Dominion in 1907; and in 1910 the Cape of Good Hope, Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony were constituted the Union of South Africa, with the happy result that all are so proud of to-day. These four are the great 'self-governing' dominions, and to them must be added Newfoundland, our oldest colony. John Cabot discovered it in 1497. Between that date and to-day may be traced all the changes in administration that have brought so much lustre to British rule—the development of the most complete form of self-government, combined with ever-growing loyalty to the Crown. Five Prime Ministers—Sir Robert L. Borden, Canada; Mr W. M. Hughes, Australia; General Botha, South Africa; Mr W. F. Massey, New Zealand; and Sir E. P. Morris, Newfoundland—are all members of the Privy Council, the final tribunal of appeal in the Empire; and three of them at least, Sir R. Borden, Mr Hughes, and Mr Massey, had attended meetings of the Cabinet in Downing Street before invitations to the War Council of the Empire were issued.

In India also there has been progress. It was Lord Palmerston who conceived the scheme, although other minds carried it through, whereby the rule of the Crown was substituted for that of the Company, an immense gain to the native races. Other changes led up to the India Councils Act of 1909, under which twenty-seven out of sixty members of the Legislative Council must be elected, so that the popular voice may be heard when important changes are proposed. This year India has been invited to send three representatives to the War Council,

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so that its great place in the Empire is generously admitted.

But beyond the self-governing Dominions and India, one must not forget the West Indies and the other dependencies and possessions, administered mainly through the Colonial Office. Here we have some forty high commissioners, commissioners, governors, commanders-in-chief, and commandants, and a further form of government under the two chartered companies of British South Africa and British North Borneo. It is in considering these dependencies and possessions that one is sometimes puzzled to know, in Lord Palmerston's phrase, 'where the British Empire isn't.' One may start from the Isle of Man and go on to the Channel Islands, Gibraltar, Malta, Cyprus. Then one may tarry a long time over Africa—the west coast possessions of Gambia, Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast, and Nigeria; the East African Protectorate, Zanzibar, Somaliland, Uganda, and Nyasaland; the states comprised in the South African Union and the huge territory (Rhodesia, &c.) under the sway of the British South Africa Company; not forgetting Mauritius and the Seychelles. One may next turn to the North American continent —Canada and Newfoundland; or to the West Indies—Jamaica, the Bahamas, the Leeward and Windward Islands, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands, with British Guiana and British Honduras. In the South Atlantic we do not fail to remember Ascension, the Falkland Islands (which have figured so prominently in the present war), and St Helena, the last home of Napoleon. While viewing New Zealand, and the states in the Commonwealth of Australia, we must bear in mind that there still remain Papua, Fiji, and many other Pacific islands, the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States, Hong Kong, Wei-hai-wei, and British North Borneo. Finally, there are all the glories of India and Ceylon. One is almost amazed in trying to recall what the British Empire is, and where it is. Its unity in diversity is almost incomprehensible.

That point of diversity, however, is worth noting, for, whereas the Russian and Chinese dominions and the United States of America are each composed of one continuous tract of territory, the British Empire is scattered all over the globe, and stretches from the Arctic Ocean in the north almost to the Antarctic in the south. The physical conditions, therefore, differ greatly from those found in any other empire of the world. The sea divides, but it also unites, the British Empire, thanks to a great mercantile marine and a supreme navy. But physical conditions suggest much also in relation to climate. Mr R. H. Scott, in his book on meteorology, remarks that, looking to the extremes of air temperature found at different places (−81° at Werchojansk, and 127° in the shade in Australia), it follows that man can stand a difference of something like 212°. That is the range between zero and the boiling-point of water. Yet it is a range which may be nearly, if not wholly, traced in air temperature within the limits of the British Empire, and it is under such conditions that rule is maintained from year to year.

But climate also has an important bearing upon race. Neither in China, Russia, Germany, nor the United States of America are differences of race so marked as in the British Empire. The population of the Empire is now placed at nearly four hundred and forty millions, or close on twenty millions more than when the census was taken six years ago. Of this huge total only about sixty-two millions are whites; of these again some forty-six millions are located in the United Kingdom, and about sixteen millions are to be found in the five self-governing Dominions. In Australia, with only one hundred thousand aboriginals in a population of five millions, and in New Zealand, with fifty thousand Maoris and others in a population of one million one hundred thousand, the colour question does not arise. In Canada there are only some two hundred thousand coloured subjects in a population of eight millions. In the South African Union, however, the coloured races outnumber the whites by three to one; in India there are but three hundred thousand whites in a total of over three hundred and fifteen millions; and in the rest of the Empire the whites are estimated at only a quarter of a million among the millions of other races. Perhaps the last fact is the most tremendous of all, speaking more eloquently than words of the British genius for government. A little while ago there was some objection in South Africa to British Indian labour, but that was met; and nowhere else has any real difficulty arisen out of difference of race or colour, no matter what the climate or physical conditions. Is there any other government of which so much can be said? Is it not indeed a wonderful tribute to British methods that a native chief in Togoland contributed one hundred and one pounds ten shillings to the National Relief Fund because of 'deep thankfulness for the release of his people from German rule'?

A corollary to variety of race is variety of language. It is not easy to say precisely how many languages and dialects are spoken in the world, but the majority of them probably are known in the British Empire. It is true that the language difficulty is not great in the United Kingdom, in Australia, and in New Zealand. In Canada it is mainly a question of knowing English and French, especially in certain provinces. But in India the magnitude of the problem becomes apparent at once, for there are two hundred and twenty vernacular languages to be faced—Hindustani, Bengali, Bihari, Pun-

jabi, Tamil, and other tongues, with all their offshoots. In Africa likewise there is a perfect babel of languages. The British and Foreign Bible Society, for example, stock the Scriptures at Johannesburg in a hundred tongues, not to serve an occasional purpose, but to meet a steady demand. So it is in the islands, settlements, and stations commonly spoken of as the 'other possessions' of Britain. In Malta there is a dialect supposed to have been derived from the Carthaginian and Arabic tongues; while away in the Straits Settlements the language of the people is Chinese or Malayan—matters which all have to be taken into account in the daily task of government.

Nor must one overlook the differences in religion or creed. Stay-at-home people are apt to think of these only in relation to the Christian faith; but a census of the Empire has placed the seven religions with the greatest number of adherents among British subjects in an order that is surprising—Hindu, two hundred and eight millions; Mohammedan, sixty-three millions; Christian (of all denominations), fifty-eight millions; Buddhist, twelve millions; Primitive Animistic (Pagan), nine millions; Sikh, over two millions; and Jain, one and a quarter millions. Professor Estlin Carpenter describes the Sikhs as disciples of Nának (1469–1538), whose faith touches Hinduism on one side and Mohammedanism on the other. The Jain religion is somewhat akin to Buddhism. But the point to be noticed is that the British Empire is not only Christian; it is also a great Hindu and a great Mohammedan Empire—an Empire, in fact, composed of all nations and kindreds, and peoples and tongues.

Yet neither physical conditions, nor conditions of climate, nor differences in race, language, and religion, could prevent that outburst of loyalty on the declaration of war that has been the wonder of the world. Mr Walter Long said recently that before the war the links that bound the Empire together were links of gold. That was true; but there was something more—an indefinable and omnipotent sentiment which no gold could buy. Yet, as a matter of cold, hard fact, the links of gold were very real. The self-governing Dominions and the Crown Colonies had before the war come to the London market and had borrowed gold to the amount of over three hundred and sixty millions sterling at from 3 to 4 per cent. interest, and the security was so good that the Government decreed by statute that trust money could properly be invested therein. The large municipal and other corporations of the Empire had similarly borrowed some thirty-three millions sterling, and the Empire of India had borrowed one hundred and sixty-four millions sterling, secured on its own revenues. Such links were indeed links of gold. They stand to-day, and there is a very general hope that they will be extended in respect of trade, defence, and foreign relations. But on these points opinion is often vague.

Take the question of trade. In 1913, the last full year of uninterrupted commerce before the war, only 26·2 per cent. of British Empire trade was inter-Imperial, the other 73·8 per cent. being with foreign countries. But press the matter further. Almost exactly three-fourths of British imports consisted of food, drink, tobacco, and raw materials; while more than three-fourths of British exports consisted of articles wholly or mainly manufactured. The significance of such facts in relation to the Empire is obvious. We import principally food and raw materials, and export principally manufactures. Food and raw materials are what the Dominions are best able to send us; and manufactured goods, which we produce, are what they most need in exchange. Hence the possibility of the extension of Empire trade. Wheat furnishes an apt illustration. In 1913 we imported fifty-five million hundredweights of wheat from foreign countries, and only fifty million hundredweights from the overseas Dominions. Now Australia desires to grow and send us more wheat. Mr Hughes, the Australian Premier, when in London last year, bought up a number of steamships in order to establish an Australian line for the express purpose of sending more Australian produce to the Mother-Country. Canada desires to send more, and British India will send all that is possible. So with beef, mutton, butter, cheese, fruit, wool, hides, and other commodities. Mention of hides reminds us of South Africa. Viscount Bryce, in his *Impressions of South Africa*, argues that, while not showing signs of becoming a manufacturing country, that Dominion will become a great grazing country, and should continue to export wool, goats' hair, and hides in large quantities; possibly also meat and dairy produce. Well, in 1913 South Africa sent us more hides than any other British possession; and in January of this year Sir Thomas Smartt, a member of the South African Parliament and leader of the Unionist Party there, proposed at Capetown that the Union Government should appoint a scientific commission to survey the resources of the country. Cotton is certainly a commodity which experts think could be grown largely within the Empire.

The development of agriculture and of food of various kinds presupposes an increased demand for machinery and other manufactured goods. Germany was before the war a large buyer of British goods, and Russia may be a large buyer in years to come. But there is room for a greatly enlarged trade with the Dominions, in response to the food products that we buy. Of certain agricultural machinery to the value of one million six hundred and twenty-eight thousand two hundred and thirty-two pounds exported from this country in 1913, an amount to

the value of only one hundred and seventy-eight thousand two hundred and thirty pounds went to our great Dominions. With a view to improve matters the Trade and Industry Committee of the Royal Colonial Institute has been in communication with Governments and Chambers of Commerce in the Colonies, urging that it should be obligatory on all Governments and municipal bodies to buy Empire-made goods, and to place all contracts, so far as possible, with British firms. This year it is announced that replies received from twenty-eight Governments and twenty-one Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade go to prove that the Empire is united in the desire to assist.

Questions of Imperial defence and of foreign relations are, of course, matters which will specially come up for consideration before the War Council of the Empire. As the Council will largely shape conditions and terms, it may be assumed that the problem of the future will be mainly one of the continuing and developing that upon which the representatives have agreed. But whichever way one turns, the Empire outlook as the result of the war is distinctly promising. Mr Froude, in his *Oceana*, expressed the opinion that one free people cannot continue to govern another free people. Here, however, there is no question of governing by way of dominance. It is a question of joint action and joint administration in the promotion of the interests of the commonweal; and thus it may be that a War Council of the Empire will in due time give place to a Peace Council that will make for the good not only of the Empire, but of the whole world.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXIV.—HOW THE OLD UN AND CERTAIN OTHERS HAD TEA.

'OLD UN,' said Joe, halting his aged companion in the middle of the second flight to wag a portentous finger—'Old Un, mind this now; if there should 'appen to be cake for tea, don't go makin' a ancient beast o' yourself with it; no slippin' lumps of it into your pocket on the sly, mind, because if I ketch you at it'——

'Don't be 'arsh, Joe—don't be 'arsh! Cake comes soft t' me pore old teef.'

'An' mind this again; if there should be any jam about, no stickin' yer wicked old fingers into it an' lickin' 'em behind my back.'

'You lemme an' the jam alone, Joe; it's a free country, ain't it? Very well, then.'

'Free country be blowed! You mind what I say, you venerable old bag of iniquity, you!'

''Niquity yerself!' snarled the Old Un, and, snapping bony finger and thumb under Joe's massive chin, turned and went on up the stairs, his smart straw hat cocked at a defiant angle, his brilliant shoes creaking loudly at every step.

'Oh, gorramighty!' he panted, halting suddenly on the fifth landing to get his breath, 'these perishin' stairs 'as ketched my wind, Joe. It's worse 'n th' treadmill! Is there many more of 'em?'

'Only six flights,' nodded Joe grimly.

'Six!' wailed the Old Un. 'Lord, it 'll be the death o' me!'

'Well, it's about time you was dead,' nodded Joe.

'Dead ye'self!' snarled the old man. 'I'm a better figger of a man than ever you was.'

'An' you would come,' continued Joe serenely, as he deftly resettled the old fellow's sporty bow-tie; 'ye fair plagued me to bring ye along, didn't ye, old packet o' vindictiveness?'

'Well, an' here I am, Joe, an' here I mean t' stay; no more climbin' fer me; I'm tired, me lad—tired!' Saying which, the Old Un spread his handkerchief on a convenient stair and proceeded to seat himself thereon with due regard for his immaculately creased trousers.

'Well,' growled Joe, 'of all the perverse old raspers that ever I did see!'

'That's enough, Joe—that's enough!' exclaimed the Old Un, fanning himself with his rakish hat. 'Jest bend down an' flick the dust off me shoes with your wipe, like a good lad, will ye? That's the worst o' these 'ere patent-leathers; they looks well, but they ketches th' dust, Joe; they ketches the dust oncommon bad. So jest give 'em a flick over; me pore old back's too stiff t' let me reach 'em, what wi' me rheumatiz an' a floatin' kidney or so.'

'Kidneys!' snarled Joe, drawing out a large bandana handkerchief and polishing the old man's natty shoes until they shone resplendent; 'what's the matter wi' yer blessed kidneys now?'

'Don't I tell ye—they floats, Joe—they floats!'

'Float!' growled Joe. 'Float—where to?'

''Ere, there, an' everywhere, Joe; I can feel 'em. They're always a-gettin' theirselves all mixed up any'ow. Oh, it's a norrible complaint to 'ave kidneys like mine as gets theirselves lost.'

'Wish they'd lose you along wi' 'em!' growled Joe, shaking the dust from his handkerchief.

'Joe,' said the old man, putting on his hat and blinking up at him beneath its jaunty brim—'Joe, sometimes I fair despise ye!'

'Well, despise away,' nodded Joe; 'only, get up—stand up on them dodderin' old pins o' yourn.'

'Not me,' declared the Old Un; 'I ain't goin'

to climb no more o' these perishin' stairs—no, not for ye nor nobody. 'Ere I am, me lad, an' 'ere I sits till you give me a piggy-back up to the top—me bein' a pore old cove with rheumatiz—I demands it.'

'You'll what?' growled Joe, hard-breathing and indignant.

'Demand it, Joe—a pore old feller wi' kidneys—an' every other ailment as flesh is hair to—a piggy-back, Joe—a piggy-back!'

Without another word Joe stooped, and, lifting the old man beneath one arm, bore him up the stairs, regardless of his croaking protestations and fierce invective.

'I said a piggy-back. Oh, you blightin' perisher, I said a piggy-back!' he snarled, his resplendent shoes twinkling in futile kicks. 'Oh Joe, there's times when I fair 'ates ye!' Thus, despite virulent curses and feeble kickings, Joe bore him on and up until, as he climbed the last flight, he was arrested by an exclamation from above, and, glancing upwards, beheld a tall, sharp-featured woman who leaned over the rail.

'Oh, land o' my fathers!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, 'what's the matter—what you got there? Who are ye?'

'The matter, ma'am!' answered Joe, for by this time the Old Un had cursed himself quite breathless. 'The matter's contrariness. What I 'ave under my arm, ma'am, is a old reprobate—and I'm Joe Madden, ma'am—come to take tea with my—come, as you might say, a-visitin' to Mr Geoffrey. P'r'aps you'll'——

'Don't 'eed 'im, ma'am; never 'eed 'im!' croaked the Old Un, who had regained his wind by now; ''e's a perishin' pork pig, that's wot 'e is.—Joe, you blighter, put me down.—It's me as the guv expects—it's me as 'as come a-visitin'.—Joe, put me down, you perisher.—Joe's only a hoaf, ma'am; a nass, ma'am. Joe ain't used to perlite serciety; Joe don't know nothin'.—Put me down, Joe, like a good lad!'

At this juncture Ravenslee appeared; whereupon Joe, having reached the topmost landing, set the old man upon his natty feet and fell to straightening his smart clothes with hands big but gentle.

'Sir,' explained Joe, answering Ravenslee's smiling look, 'old Sin an' Sorrer here wouldn't walk up, which forced me to'——

But now the Old Un, feeling himself again, cut in on his own account. 'Ma'am,' said he, flourishing off his hat to Mrs Trapes, ''ere's me an' me lad Joe come to tea—my best respex an' greetin's, ma'am.—How do, guv? I do 'ope as you ain't forgot th' cake.'

'Oh, we've plenty of cake, Old Un!' laughed Ravenslee.

'An' watercress an' jam!' nodded Mrs Trapes.

'Guv,' said the old man, gripping Ravenslee's hand, 'God bless ye for a true man an' a noble sport.—Ma'am, you're a angel! Jam, ma'am—you're a nymp—you're two nymps.

> I oft would cast a rovin' eye
> Ere these white 'airs I grew, ma'am,
> To see a 'andsome nymp go by;
> But none s'fair as you, ma'am.

An' there's me 'and on it, ma'am.'

'My land!' ejaculated Mrs Trapes, staring; then all at once she laughed, a strange laugh that came and went again immediately, yet left her features a little less grim than usual, as, reaching out, she grasped the old man's feeble hand. 'I guess you're only bein' p'lite,' said she, 'but jest for that ye're sure goin' t' eat as much cake an' jam as your small insides can hold.' So saying, she led the way into her small and very neat domain, and ushered them into the bright little parlour, where the Spider sat already enthroned in that arm-chair whereon sunflowers rioted. In keeping with the chair, the Spider was somewhat exotic as to socks and tie, and he seemed a trifle irked by stiff cuffs and collar as he sat there staring at the green-and-yellow tablecloth, and doing his best not to tread upon the pink hearthrug.

'Joe,' said Ravenslee, 'this is Spider Conolly, who knocked out Larry M'Kinnon at San Francisco last year in the sixty-ninth.—Spider, I want you to shake hands with'——

'Bo',' exclaimed the Spider, rising reverently and taking a step toward Joe's massive figure, quite forgetful of the pink hearthrug now, 'you don't have t' tell me nothin'; I guess I know th' best all-round fightin'-man, the greatest champion as ever swung a mitt, when I see him! T' shake his hand 'll sure be'——

'Young feller, me lad,' cried the Old Un, reaching out nimbly and catching the Spider's extended hand, 'you got a sharp eye, a true eye—a eye as can discrimpinate, like—ah, like a flash o' light. You're right, me lad; I was the best fightin'-man, the greatest champeen as ever was—sixty odd years ago. Ho yus, I were the best of 'em all, an' I ain't to be sniffed at now. So shake me 'and, me lad—an' shake—hard!'

The Spider's grim jaw relaxed and his eyes opened very wide as the Old Un continued to shake his hand up and down. 'But say,' said he faintly at last, 'I don't'——

'No more don't I,' nodded the Old Un. 'What's the old song say?

> I don't care if it rains or snows,
> Or what the day may be,
> Since 'ere's a truth I plainly knows,
> Love, you'll remember me.'

'But say,' began the bewildered Spider again—'say, I reckon'——

'So do I,' nodded the Old Un.

> 'I reckon up my years o' life,
> An' a good long life 'ave I.
> Ye see, I never had a wife,
> P'r'aps that's the reason why.

So take it from me, young feller, me cove, don't

'ave nothin' to do with givin' or takin' in marriage.'

'Marriage?'

'Marriage ain't good for a fightin'-cove; it spiles him—it shakes 'is nerve—it fair ruinates 'im. When love flies in at the winder champeenships fly up the chimbley—never t' come back no more. So beware o' wives, me lad.'

'Wives!' repeated the Spider, lifting free hand to dazed brow. 'I—I ain't never'——

'That 's right!' nodded the Old Un heartily, shaking the Spider's unresisting hand again; 'marriage ain't love an' love ain't marriage. Wot 's the old song say?

> Oh, love is like a bloomin' rose,
> But marriage is a bloomin' thorn.
> A 'usband 's full o' bloomin' woes,
> An' 'eaves a bloomin' sigh each morn.'

'Why, Old Un,' exclaimed Ravenslee, 'that 's a very remarkable verse!'

'My land!' ejaculated Mrs Trapes, squaring her elbows in the doorway, 'I suspects he 's a poet—an' him sech a nice little old gentleman!'

'A poet, ma'am!' exclaimed the Old Un indignantly. 'Not me, ma'am, not me—should scorn t' be. I 'm a 'ighly respected old fightin'-man, I am, as never went on th' cross:

> A fightin'-man I, ma'am,
> An' wish I may die, ma'am,
> If ever my backers I crossed.
> An' what 's better still, ma'am,
> Though I fought many a mill, ma'am,
> Not one of 'em ever I lost.'

'My land!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes again; 'what a memory!'

'Memory, ma'am!' growled Joe; 'that ain't memory. 'E makes 'em up as 'e goes along.'

'Joe,' said the Old Un, glaring, 'if the lady weren't here—an' axin' 'er pardon—I 'd punch you in the perishin' eye'ole for that!'

'All right, old vindictiveness,' sighed Joe; 'an' now, if you 'll let go of Spider Conolly's fist, I 'd like to say 'ow do. Sit down an' give some one else a chance to speak. Sit down, you old bag o' wind.'

'Bag o''—— The old man dropped the Spider's nerveless hand to turn to Mrs Trapes with a gloomy brow. 'You 'eard that, ma'am—you 'eard this perishin' porker call me a bag o'—— Joe, I blush for ye!—Ma'am, pore Joe means well, but 'e can't 'elp bein' a perisher; but'—and here the old man raised and shook a feeble old fist—'I 've a good mind t' ketch 'im one as would put 'im t' sleep for a fortnight; I 've a good mind'——

But Mrs Trapes caught that tremulous fist, and, drawing the Old Un's arm through her own, turned to the door. 'You come along wi' me,' said she; 'you shall help me t' get the tea, you shall carry in th' cake an'——

'Cake!' exclaimed the Old Un. 'Oh, j'yful word—ma'am, you 're a—a lydy! An' there 's jam, ain't there?'

'Strawberry!'

'Straw—oh, music t' me ears, ma'am—you 're a nymp—lead me to it!' So saying, the Old Un followed Mrs Trapes out into the kitchen, while the Spider stared after him open-mouthed.

'Sufferin' Pete!' he murmured; then, inhaling a long, deep breath, turned to grasp Joe's mighty outstretched hand. Then, drawing their chairs together, they sat down, and Ravenslee, by an adroit question or two, soon had them talking—the Spider quick and eager, and chewing voraciously; Joe soft-voiced and deliberate, but speaking with that calm air of finality that comes only of long and varied experience. So, while Ravenslee smoked and listened, they spoke of past battles, of fights and fighters old and new; they discoursed learnedly on ring-craft; they discussed the merits of the crouch as opposed to the stiff leg and straight left; they stood up to show tricks of foot and hand—cunning shifts and feints; they ducked and sidestepped and smote the empty air with whirling fists to the imminent peril of the owl that was a parrot, which moth-eaten relic seemed to watch them with his solitary glass eye.

And ever the Spider's respect and admiration for the mild-eyed, quiet-spoken champion waxed and grew. 'Bo'!' said he, dexterously catching the toppling bird, glass case and all, for the second time, and addressing Ravenslee with it clasped to his heart—'bo',' he repeated, his eyes shining, 'I guess Joe Madden, the greatest battler of 'em all, is—Joe Madden still. I 've always wanted t' meet with him; an' say—I wouldn't ha' missed him for a farm.'

'Is that so?' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, entering the room at this moment with the teacloth. 'Well, now, you jest put 'im down—you jest put that bird back again, Spider Conolly!'

'Yes, ma'am,' quoth the Spider, all abashed humility.

'What you doin' with it, anyway?' she demanded, elbows jutted ominously. 'It 's lost an eye, an' a cat got it once an' sp'iled it some, but I treasure it for reasons o' sentiment, an' if you think you kin steal it'——

'Not 'im, ma'am—not 'im!' piped the Old Un from the doorway; 'it ain't the pore lad's fault—it 's Joe's; blame it all on to Joe. Joe 's got a bad 'eart, ma'am; a black, base-'earted perisher is Joe—so no jam for Joe, ma'am, an' only one slice o' cake.'

But here Ravenslee hastened to explain, whereupon Mrs Trapes's grimness abated and her bristling elbows subsided; and now, perceiving how the abashed Spider, meeting her eye, flushed, plucked at his cuffs, and shuffled his feet, she reached out to pat his broad and drooping shoulders.

'Mister Conolly,' she said, 'for harsh words spoke in haste I craves now your pardon, an' I craves it—humble. Am I forgive?'

The Spider, flushing redder than ever, rose

to his feet, seized her hand, shook it, and muttered, 'Sure!'

And when the table was laid, the Old Un proposed, and was duly seconded, thirded, and fourthed, that Mrs Trapes be elected into the chair to pour out the tea, which she proceeded to do forthwith, while the Old Un, seated at her right hand, kept a wary eye roving between jam-dish and angel cake. And now, by reason of the unwonted graciousness of Mrs Trapes, of Ravenslee's tact and easy assurance, and the Old Un's impish hilarity, all diffidence and restraint were banished and good-fellowship reigned supreme, though the Spider was interrupted in the midst of a story by the Old Un suddenly exclaiming, 'Keep your 'and out o' the jam, Joe!'

And Joe was, later, rendered speechless, hard-breathing, and indignant by the Old Un turning to Mrs Trapes with the shrill warning, 'Ma'am, Joe's 'ad two 'elpin's o' cake an' got 'is 'orrid eye on what remains!'

Nevertheless, the meal was in all ways a success, and Ravenslee was reaching for his pipe when Mrs Trapes, summoned to the front-door by a feverish knocking, presently came back, followed by Tony, whose bright eyes looked wider than usual as he saluted the company.

'Hey, Geoff, me tell-a you piece-a da-noos!' he cried excitedly; 'big-a piece-a da-noos! Da cops go-a pinch-a Bud-a M'Ginn'!'

'Bud! Bud!' stammered the Spider; 'have they pinched Bud? Is this the straight goods, Tony?'

'Sure—they got-a heem this-a morn in Jersey City. 'N' say, he theenk-a eet a frame-up—he theenk-a Geoff set-a de cops for-a take heem.'

'The hell he does!' exclaimed the Spider, starting to his feet.

'So he send-a da word to Soapy,' continued Tony, his eyes rolling, 'an' now all-a da gang's out layin' for-a Geoff. So when Geoff go-a out on da street—bingo!—dey snuff hees light out.'

'Not much they won't!' said the Spider, buttoning up his coat and turning to the door. 'I'll mighty soon fix this, I guess.'

'Do you think you can, Spider?' inquired Ravenslee. 'If you're going to have any trouble, don't bother about'——

'Bo',' said the Spider, squaring his big jaw, 'get onto this—here's where I chip in with ye. From now on we're on this game together, an' I ain't a guy as'll lay down his hand till I'm called—an' called good; see? You said it was goin' to be a man's work. By Jiminy Christmas! it looks like you're right. Anyway, I stand in with you, that's sure. Put it there, bo'!'

'But,' said Ravenslee as their hands gripped, 'I don't want you to take any chances on my account, or run any'——

'Fudge, bo', fudge! I ain't takin' no chances.'

'Well, I'm coming along to see you don't!' said Ravenslee, reaching for his hat.

'Not on your life, bo'; you'd queer the whole show. Ye see, they're a tough crowd, an' apt t'act a bit hasty now an' then; 'sides, they might think you're heeled, and they know I don't never carry a gun. They all know me.'

'Still, I'm coming, Spider.'

'Ye can't, bo'; Mrs Trapes ain't goin' t' let ye. Look at her!'

'You never spoke a truer word since you drawed the vital air, Spider Conolly!' nodded Mrs Trapes, hands on hips and elbows at the 'engage.' 'If Mr Geoffrey stirs out this day he's jest gotter trample over my mangled remains, that's all!'

Now hereupon, heeding the glitter in her eye, and noting the inexorable jut of her elbows, Ravenslee sat down and went on filling his pipe.

'Ye see, bo', I know as it wasn't you as give Bud away; an' the boys'll listen t' my say so—you bet they will. So here's where I ooze away. S'long, all!'

But now the Old Un, having bolted the last handful of cake, got upon his legs and clutched the Spider's coat in talon-like fingers. ''Old 'ard, young feller, me lad!' he cried; 'if there's any chance of a scrap comin' off, wot about me?—Gimme me 'at, Joe, an' get yourn; if I don't knock some on 'em stone-cold, call me a perishin' ass!'

'Why, since you say so, old blood an' bones,' said Joe, his mild eye brightening, 'we will step along with the Spider a little way, if the guv'nor'll excuse us?'

'Certainly, Joe,' nodded Ravenslee, 'on condition that you do just as the Spider says.'

'You mean, sir?'

'No fighting, Joe—at least, not yet.'

'Trust me, sir! What ain't to be—yet, is to be sometime, I 'opes,' sighed Joe.

'Good-bye, guv, good-bye!' croaked the Old Un; 'if I don't put some o' they perishers in the 'orspitals an' the infirmaries, I ain't the man I was.

> Oh, used am I to war's alarms,
> I 'unger for the fray.
> Though beauty clasps me in 'er arms,
> The trumpet calls away.'

So, having made their adieux, the three took their departure; though once, despite Joe's objurgations, the Old Un must needs come back to kiss Mrs Trapes's toil-worn hand with a flourish, which left her voiceless and round of eye until the clatter of their feet had died away. Then she closed the door and fixed Ravenslee with her stoniest stare. 'Mr Geoffrey,' she demanded, 'why did they call you "guv'nor," and wherefore "sir"?'

Ravenslee, in the act of lighting his pipe, had paused for a suitable answer, when Tony, who had remained mute in a corner, stepped forward and spoke: 'Say, Geoff, I gott-a bit-a—more noos. Old-a Finlay-a want-a spik with-a you.'

'Old Finlay—with me?'

'Sure. Old-a Finlay-a go die-a very queek, an' he want-a spik with-a you first.'

'Dying! Old Finlay dying?' questioned Ravenslee, rising.

'Sure! He go die-a ver' queek.'

'I 'll come!'

'An' I guess,' said Mrs Trapes—'yes, I opine as I 'll come along wi' ye, Mr Geoffrey.'

Old Martin Finlay lay propped up by pillows, his great, gaunt, useless body seeming almost too large for the narrow bed wherein he lay, staring up great-eyed at Ravenslee—live eyes in a dead face.

'It 's dyin' I am, sorr,' said he faintly, 'an' it 's grateful is ould Martin for the docthers an' medicine you 've paid for. But it 's meself is beyand 'em all—an' it 's beyand 'em I 'm goin' fast—she 's waitin' for me—me little Maggie 's houldin' out her little hand to me—she 's waitin' for me—beyand, Holy Mary be praised! An' she 's waited long enough, sorr, my little Maggie as I loved so while the harsh words burned upon me tongue—my little Maggie! I was bitter cruel to my little girl; but you 've been kind to me, an', sorr, I thank ye. But,' continued the dying man, slow and feebly, 'it aren't to thank yez as I wanted ye, but to give yez somethin' in trust for Miss Hermy. Ye see, sorr, I sha'n't be here when she comes back to-night; I 'll be with—little Maggie when the hour strikes—my little Maggie!—Norah, wife, give it to him.'

Silently Mrs Finlay moved across the room, opened a drawer, and, turning, placed in Ravenslee's hand a ring, a heavy gold ring curiously wrought into the form of two hands clasping each other.

'It was my Maggie's!' continued Martin, 'an' I guess she valleyed it a whole lot, sorr. I found it hid away with odds an' ends as she treasured. But she don't want it no more—she 's dead, ye see, sorr—I killed her—drowned, sorr—I drowned her. Cruel an' hard I was—shut her out onto the streets, I did, an' so—she died. But before the river took—— Oh Blessed Mary—Oh Mother o' God—pity! Before she went to heaven Miss Hermy was good t' her; Miss Hermy loved her, an' tried t' comfort her; but only God could do that, I reckon, so she went t' God. But Miss Hermy was kind when I wasn't, so, sorr, it 's give her that ring ye will, plaze, an' say as poor Martin died blessin' her. An' now it 's go I 'll ask ye, sorr, for God's callin' me to wipe away me tears an' sorrers an' bind up me broken heart—so lave me to God an'—my little Maggie.'

Very softly Ravenslee followed Mrs Trapes out of the room; but they had not reached the front-door when they heard a glad cry, and thereafter a woman's sudden, desolate sobbing.

'Go on, Mr Geoffrey,' whispered Mrs Trapes, 'but I guess I 'd better stay here a bit.'

'You mean?'

'As poor Martin 's sure found his little girl again.'

(*Continued on page 387.*)

TROUT-FISHING IN JEMPTLAND.

By G. Lindesay.

FOR the wandering angler the wild and picturesque country in the Swedish province of Jemptland, where the Indal River has its sources, possesses many attractions, more especially in the months of July and August. The innumerable hill-lochs which lie among the mountains and moorlands on the Norwegian frontier, and the larger lakes farther to the east, each of which contributes its quota to the formation of this great water-system, differ greatly in character; while the trout and char with which they abound exhibit a diversity of taste in the matter of lures which is always interesting and often very puzzling.

What may be described as the first large catchment lake is Skalsjö, two thousand feet above sea-level, about twenty miles in circumference. It has a clean, rocky bottom, the water is beautifully clear, and it holds quantities of magnificent trout and char, which are captured in hundreds by the natives in autumn by means of nets; there are also extensive areas admirably adapted as regards depth for fly-fishing. But although I have drifted over these for miles time and again under favourable weather conditions, and have trolled hour after hour for days together all round this beautiful upland lake, with both natural and artificial baits, I never made a fifteen-pound basket upon it, or captured a trout weighing more than five pounds. The char were nearly impossible, and the only way of picking up a few very moderate-sized individuals was by using a small Devonshire minnow. In bright sunshine these fish could be seen in great shoals swimming along near the surface, but nothing would induce them to take a fly.

Into a bay on the southern side of Skalsjö a tributary discharges through a glen so deep and narrow that the sun rarely penetrates its recesses, and great snowdrifts lie in it throughout the entire summer. This stream, in spite of the low temperature of its water, contains beautiful trout, but they are hard to catch. Up among the wastes, some four or five miles from its mouth, lies a fine loch, called, from the number of islands on its surface, Hohusjö. It holds plenty of trout of a free-rising disposition; and there are always Lapps in its immediate neighbourhood from whom a draught of fresh reindeer milk can be obtained. When judiciously

blended with sound Scotch whisky, it forms an admirable pick-me-up.

One of the best lochs in this district is Stor Björn Sjö ('Great Bear Lake'), only about three miles to the east of the Norwegian frontier. Here I have seen trout rising well to the fly in June during a heavy snowstorm; but under ordinary weather conditions the angler can generally secure between twenty and thirty pounds any day in the month of July. On the way home to Skalstugan, the lonely upland farm where he who would explore these parts must put up, there are three or four moorland tarns which are well worth trying.

The next large lake on the main water-system is very similar in character to Skalsjö, and the river between these two is so rapid that it is of little use for fishing. Below Midstugsjö, however, it assumes a much more interesting aspect, and before Staltjernstugan, the next road station, is reached, there are three or four miles of very pretty trout water. This is an excellent centre of operations for the angler, and from it better sport can be had than from Skalstugan. The house stands close to a tiny lakelet with a grassy meadow on one side; beyond, the forest stretches away for miles.

Into this little sheet of water the river flows, and up the lowest rapid, as I was not long in finding out, the better-sized fish were in the habit of making their way towards evening to a deep, rocky pool immediately above in search of smaller members of their species. Fortunately, however, they did not despise the artificial fly, and many a goodly two and three pounder found its way into my creel with the assistance of a small Black Palmer. The cannibalistic tendencies of these speckled beauties were very pronounced, for it often happened that a small fish which had got hooked was seized by a big one when being dragged ashore. I never succeeded in securing one when attached in this precarious manner; they invariably shook themselves free when just beyond the reach of the landing-net.

After passing through a rocky gorge below the lakelet at Staltjernstugan, the river discharges over a fall into another small extension, which is connected with a large sheet of water, Bodsjö, farther on, by two canal-like channels of dead water. Up these in time of flood the trout from the lake make their way to the foot of the fall aforesaid, and there they lie in wait for the food swept down to them. One day, after rain, I caught here in a couple of hours forty-five pounds with the fly. There was nothing under a pound; most of them were between one and a half and two and a half pounds, and one weighed three and a quarter pounds. Two of one and a half and two and a quarter pounds I succeeded in landing at the same cast. In the afternoon I got thirty pounds of similar-sized fish in the neighbourhood of the house, and three or four char.

Throughout nearly the whole of its extensive area Bodsjö is well adapted for fly-fishing. The bottom consists for the most part of soft, muddy sand, in which abundance of insect life develops; and there are plenty of sheltering weeds—too many, indeed, for the angler's comfort as the season advances. In addition to the stream which flows into it past Staltjernstugan, this lake receives another and much larger confluent which comes in from the south. The characteristics of the Kvarnström are rather those of a salmon than a trout river, abounding as it does in heavy rapids and spacious pools; but throughout nearly the whole of its course the forest comes down so closely on both banks that it is in reality only fishable when low, and even then some deep and rather dangerous wading is necessary. A fair number of moderate-sized trout are always to be got on it with the fly; but far and away the best lure is the Devonshire minnow, with which, casting from the left bank, I used to catch from fifty to ninety pounds a day of beautiful fish, running from one to two and a half pounds a piece.

About a mile up from Bodsjö there is a splendid pool immediately below a fine fall, which can be conveniently fished from a low, gravelly island in its midst. A delightful spot this to smoke the pipe of peace in midday sunshine. The air is sweet with the perfume of the surrounding pine forests and of wild flowers innumerable, the surface of the foam-flecked water which dances and sings on its way is dimpled with the rises of many trout, and the roar of the foss is the only sound that breaks the stillness. '*Se der!*' said the big Swede who accompanied me, in the middle of a yarn, one day; and following the direction of his gaze, I saw a mighty elk emerging from among the trees on the opposite bank. For a short space he stood there, an imposing figure, and, with his great antlers thrown back, surveyed the beautiful scene; then he disappeared once more in the depths of the woodland.

On the short stretch of water between the foss and Bodsjö, a distance, as above stated, of about a mile, I made all my best bags. The estuary itself, a wide, streamy flat, sometimes presented an extraordinary sight, hundreds upon hundreds of trout and char ('roding') feeding upon the insects as they rose from their birthplace at the bottom of the river to the surface. They were very difficult to tempt with artificial flies, even when presented on fine tackle; but I generally succeeded in adding a few to the day's bag before starting off home in the boat.

Above the foss, between it and Gefsjön, there are some fine pools on the Kvarn, into which the heavy trout from the lake above descend for spawning purposes in autumn. The largest of these which I ever secured weighed twelve pounds; but I was several times smashed in the boulder-strewn rapids by bigger fish.

A QUIET WEEK-END.

CHAPTER II.

I DID not see my way to contradict him. I had always known that he held theories of life that were a little startling to a law-abiding person like myself. One had to take Dare as he was, or not at all.

'So,' Dare went on, 'I had the papers. Other matters intervened just then, and they were laid aside. When war broke out a year ago, I took my information to our War Office, and was cold-shouldered—naturally, of course. The man I saw quite laughed at the idea of poisonous gases being used. They *were* used, as we now know but too well. I interviewed the War Office again, lighted by sheer good luck upon a highly placed official with some rudiments of common-sense—Heaven knows what brought him there!—and now I'm hand and glove with them. Let me just tell you how far I have got. You are not very thoroughly acquainted with the chemistry of gases, are you, though?'

'I know nothing of the chemistry of anything,' I answered promptly.

'So much the better; you will bring an absolutely open mind to bear on what I say.'

Into that open mind, or, rather, perhaps upon my open and attentive ears, Dare forthwith poured a flood of learned talk. Yet he was such a master of his subject, and possessed in such a high degree the art of putting things both clearly and attractively to the lay mind, that I was interested, and even dimly understood. When he had finished, I had gained some knowledge of the path that he was treading, and could appreciate to some extent his nearness to his goal.

It was an hour and more past midnight when we moved to go to bed.

'Will eight o'clock suit you for breakfast?' Dare inquired as we rose. 'Six hours of sleep will do for me, now that this talk to-night has braced me up and cleared my brain. But by all means have yours later if you like.'

I said that eight would suit me, and then added, looking at Bagheera, 'Where does this pet pass the night?'

'Upon your door-mat, if you like,' replied her master, with a half-malicious gleam of his own special humour shooting from beneath his heavy lids. 'You won't insist? Then she shall go to her own quarters.—Come, old girl.'

He left the room with the great cat. A door was opened and then shut, and I could hear his footsteps for some instants till they died away.

'Now,' said my friend the following morning as we lit our after-breakfast pipes—the sweetest pipe of all the day—'I'll say good-bye to you till seven to-night. I know you can amuse yourself. Here,' he continued, walking to the wall, 'you'll find an Ordnance map of the immediate district; let me recommend the downs. Or Willchester, four miles off, is a quaint old town. The woman in the kitchen will, if you write down your orders, get your lunch at any time you choose, or she will put you up some sandwiches. Please make yourself entirely at home. But first I'll show you round the place.'

He led the way into the hall and through the door by which Bagheera had arrived the night before. The house itself formed the base and part of one side of an L. In line with the kitchen and dairy stretched a long range of what had formerly been carriage-houses, loose-boxes, and stalls. Beyond this was a rickyard with more buildings formerly belonging to the farm.

Dare had, it seemed, now got the house upon a seven years' lease, with a free hand to make such minor alterations as he pleased. These had evidently been pretty extensive; he had thrown open doors and constructed boarded passages, till he could make the range of the entire premises dry-shod. There was a great room, formerly a barn, in which he had installed his writing-desk and apparatus for experiments. More apparatus stood in other rooms at hand. Bagheera had her quarters in a loose-box opening from the passage; next door to her was a well-fitted garage with a motor-car.

'Well, I shall see you, then, at dinner-time—seven sharp,' said Dare, dismissing me. With this he disappeared.

It was a promising November morning, hazy and still, and with a parting veil of high, light cloud across the sky. I chose the downs in preference to the antique charms of Willchester, and, well supplied with sandwiches, had covered nearly twenty miles by three o'clock. I found a quaint old coaching inn which furnished tea, and reached Pool Farm soon after six.

'I have accomplished an important step to-day,' said Dare when, dinner finished, we were in the study with our pipes alight and the great leopard stretched upon the rug. 'You followed all I said last night; I will continue from the point where I left off.'

He did so; but I fear I proved a somewhat less attentive listener than upon the previous night. I was just comfortably weary, the result of a long day in the fresh winter air, and there were points in his discourse which I failed to grasp. But I could follow him sufficiently to gather that he seemed upon the brink of a complete success.

The following day—the Sunday—passed in the same way with Dare. 'Work of necessity, you know,' he said with a dry smile, and disappeared at nine o'clock. I loitered in the house

and garden all the morning; then, when my solitary lunch was over—for Dare ate a sandwich at his desk—I traced a fresh route on the Ordnance map, and started forth. The walk proved pleasant, and it was again quite dusk before I returned to the house.

My homeward way lay on the side of Pool Farm opposite to that on which the village stood, and ended by a footpath leading through a wood and then across a field adjoining the small orchard which Dare rented with the house. The wood was entered by a wicket-gate; the coppice seemed neglected, with dense clumps of thorns and brambles growing everywhere among the trees.

In passing through the gate I noticed a broad, single wheel-track on the ground—a track as of a motor-bicycle. It kept the path for some few yards, then disappeared. I thought it curious for a moment, then dismissed it from my mind.

The path, after crossing wood and field, entered the road at the field's corner which adjoined the orchard hedge. Partly in the field and partly in the orchard there was a large pond which gave the farm its name; it was shallow on Dare's side, but became deeper towards the centre, till, below a high bank in the field, it seemed to form a deep and even dangerous pool. The hedge between the field and the orchard came down to the water of the pond at either end; the interval was filled up by a wire fence, effectually preventing animals from wading through.

The field-path led within a few yards of the pond. As I approached the water I heard sounds of splashing, and concluded that some cattle had gone down to drink. But on arriving at the summit of the bank above the pit I saw a dripping human figure clinging to the wire fence. The water reached half-way between his waist and shoulders, but his condition, so far as I could make out in the gathering darkness, was that of a person who had been in over his head.

'I 've fallen in,' he cried, catching sight of me.

That fact seemed evident—unless, indeed, he had attempted suicide. The more immediate question was to get him out.

'You can't get out this side,' I shouted back; 'at least, not easily. It 's very deep. Can you get through the fence? The water is quite shallow on the farther side.'

He took my hint at once, and although handicapped by his precarious footing and his dripping clothes, his movements seemed to indicate a strong and active man. I hurried down the path and to the road, then through the orchard gate close by. By the time I reached the bank of the pond he had just struggled through the fence, and was already wading towards the shore. A minute later he stood by me on the bank.

He was a well-built man of four or five and thirty, dark, with a short beard, and also with the accent of an educated man.

'A most unpleasant ending to my walk,' he said. 'I came from Willchester this afternoon for exercise. In passing through that field I saw the pond, and, looking closer, thought I noticed an uncommon little plant growing half-way down the bank. My foot slipped as I tried to reach it, and I found myself over the head at once. It is really rather a dangerous place. Gad, I am cold!'

The man was shivering. Little wonder, for the evening air was growing chill.

'I wonder where I can best get a change of clothes,' he went on; 'for I can't go back to Willchester like this.'

I hesitated. I knew that there was no public-house in the village; the whole place was the property of a rich banker, who, endowed with rigorous temperance views, had closed the only licensed house on purchasing the property some years before. There was The Court, inhabited by two old maiden ladies; I could hardly send this dripping figure there. There were, of course, some cottages; but it was Sunday, and the male villagers would probably be wearing their best clothes themselves.

And yet I hesitated at the thought of taking him to Dare. Dare would be courteous, but he did not care for strangers at the best of times; still less just now, when his whole mind was concentrated on his work, and when that work was of the kind it was. Still, there seemed nothing else to do; I could not leave the fellow unbefriended in his present case.

'This is the nearest house,' I said, and pointed to the farm. 'The tenant is a friend of mine, whose guest I am for a few days. He is a busy man, and greatly occupied just now; but I can let you have a change of clothes. You would be all the better for a warm bath, too.'

'Thanks, yes, I should; but I should be extremely sorry to intrude.'

Without more words, I led the way across the orchard, through the garden, and so to the house. The water was still dripping from the stranger's clothes, and so I made for the back-door. It stood within the angle formed by the house-front and the side. As we approached it, I observed Dare's workroom window lighted. Dare himself appeared a moment later and drew down the blind.

To ask the slightest service of Dare's silent-footed man I had to use a slate; but little need existed to enlarge upon my new companion's case. I saw him to the bathroom, and then went in search of a rig-out of my own; he was too tall for anything of Dare's.

When I had got him all he needed, I went off to break the news to Dare. I found him in his workroom, and laid bare the case. I could see he did not like it, but he was quite courteous, if not exactly enthusiastic.

'Of course you had to bring him in,' he said; 'and he must dine with us—must sleep here,

too, so far as I can see. We cannot turn him out; the man will catch his death of cold.'

This proffered hospitality was more than I had hoped for, and I brightened up. 'He's quite a decent sort of chap,' I said.

'No doubt, no doubt,' replied my friend in his cool tone. 'Well, I have got a few small notes to make of my day's work; then I will join you, and we'll dine.'

I hovered in the hall until I heard the bath-room door unlocked, and then I fetched the stranger down. My suit fitted him reasonably well, and he seemed all the better for his bath and for a jorum of hot brandy that I had already given him. His name, he said, was Alsop. Having had business in the neighbourhood, he had been spending the week-end at Willchester. He chatted pleasantly about the district until Dare came in.

The man's apologies for his enforced intrusion were perhaps slightly too elaborate for good taste, but were quite easily excusable in the peculiar circumstances of the case. Dare accepted them and made their giver welcome with grave courtesy. I noticed that he shot one searching look upon the stranger from beneath his lids as he came through the door; then, during the meal, he seemed to take the new-comer's presence with us as a matter of no moment, talking with all his usual freedom—although not, of course, upon the subject of his work. I, naturally, was careful not to hint at any special topic of the sort.

Dinner was finished, and our guest began to speak of going.

'Your clothes are certainly not dry, nor will they be for several hours yet,' said Dare. 'I can quite easily accommodate you for the night.'

Alsop protested, but at last yielded to the invitation. Certainly, perhaps, he said, it would be rather better not to venture into the night air. It was extremely kind of Mr Dare, and he greatly regretted the intrusion of which his carelessness had made him guilty.

Dare listened to all this and something more with a grave, quiet smile, and led the way into the sitting-room upon the farther side of the hall. Cigars and pipes were lighted, and Dare turned to me.

'I don't think we'll have pussy in to-night,' he said.

The stranger hastened to protest. 'I hope you are not banishing a pet on my account. Is it a cat? I am very fond of cats.'

'Still, she is better where she is to-night, I think,' said Dare; and as he spoke he flashed a look at me which I interpreted as a command that his great cat's identity was not to be revealed.

By half-past ten the conversation languished, and we went to bed.

(*Continued on page 391.*)

BAKHTCHI SARAI.

THE OLD CAPITAL OF THE TARTAR KHANS OF THE CRIMEA

By R. Courtier Forster.

BURIED in the heart of the Crimea, at the foot of the mysterious mountains which contain the dead cities of the People of the Caves, lies the old Tartar capital of Bakhtchi Sarai, the city of the Howling Dervishes, where frenzied rites are still performed each week. It slumbers among olives and vineyards, shaded by heavily scented acacia-trees, dreaming of lost magnificence and mighty khans who in the fifteenth century swept the great population of a vanished and puzzling civilisation off the face of the Crimea. Now it lies forgotten and almost unknown. Russian tourists do not discover it. The crowds of travelled people who come down from Petrograd and Moscow year by year to Yalta and the Crimean coast are never seen within the Tartar town. High above the drowsy, crumbling dwellings tower the huge basaltic rocks, smooth as glass, and weird balanced boulders, which look as though they would slip down and crush the old streets to powder.

A mile or two to the north rise the precipitous cliffs of the rock mountains, where, on plateaux some two thousand feet up, stand the dead cities of Tchufut Kalé and Magup Kalé. Bakhtchi Sarai remains almost exactly as it was three hundred years ago, clinging to the fringe of the inland mountains, with its quaint, old, jumbled, bright-hued Tartar houses, now red, now blue, now brown; some raised two or three steps above the roadway, others only entered by descending a foot or two below the road. Veiled women peep from behind little latticed windows under deep eaves of pointed gables carved and fretted with strange beasts and birds among curling circles of barbaric colours. The chief street, not more than twenty feet wide, twists and turns in a snake-like progress up the town. The queer little houses, as though frightened of it, have forgotten to stand in line. One has backed away from the narrow, high pavement; another has jumped forward almost into the road. Here and there thick-foliaged acacias grow from the curb, and shed showers of white blossoms into the hummocky highway of dishevelled cobble-stones; while little Tartar boys in glorious clothes saunter by, singing, '*Oo arh lee! Oo arh lee!*' The street is flanked on either side by narrow pavements, which generally the houses have overstepped till less than a yard remains. They

are raised a foot and a half from the roadway, with worn stone steps at intervals to bridge the rushing torrents of the winter rains.

Here the fronts of the strange, bright shops are let down on hinges by day, and rest on trestle feet, and on these stands are piled the wares for sale: bright leather goods stained blue and wine-red, broidered in silver; satchel-bags fastened with glass beads threaded on leather thongs; boots of vermilion and yellow; and charms sewn into triangular amulets stringed with two blue beads which, when worn upon a horse's head, protect the good beast from spavin and other harm. Some shops are piled with fresh fruit—cherries of saffron and black and purple, and pyramids of scarlet tomatoes on banks of green parsley—interspersed with old glazed wine-jars filled with great bunches of tall white lilies. The metal-workers, sitting within the shade, make a cheerful *tink-tink* with their delicate tools as they grave their pots, bending cross-legged on their benches in robes woven in Tashkent.

The modern railway passes Bakhtchi Sarai some two miles to the west. A peasant's cart and an antiquated high-seated barouche well raised out of the mud of the unmade road wait at the station to drive any chance passengers to the city of the once dreaded Tartar kings. The khans and their sovereignty have gone; but the Tartars remain, olive-skinned and almond-eyed, clad in robes of emerald green and rose, and coats of purple and lemon and crimson stripes, and cloths of puce and white, with threads of gold wound round their waists, and skull-caps of coloured silk or velvet instead of the fez, embroidered with flowers in blue and silver, and strange and beautiful devices of the Tartar mind. We passed them singly and in groups as we drove into the city to the great walled enclosure of the once closely guarded palace of the gorgeous khans, built by the proud Abdul Sahel Girai in 1518. The massive iron-studded gates stood open under the shadow of the heavy arch through which the last of the khans passed, never to return, in 1783; for, though the Tartar Empire fell into ruin before the victorious armies of Prince Dolgoruki in 1771, and they were utterly defeated and broken by Suvarov in 1777, during six more years of despair and bitterness the khan held his court within these walls. Now a single Russian soldier sleepily directed us across a corner of the palace gardens to an entrance within the inner walls, where a clanging bell at length disturbed an astonished keeper of the gate, who opened for us a palace of the *Arabian Nights*. We passed through courtyards of mellowed marble, where fountains centuries old still played among trailing roses, and under great arches glowing with faded vermilion and gold and blue. We were led along queer corridors and up old marble steps, and round and on through rooms where fair women had loved and laughed, and found their beauty fade and others steal their places, and planned swift death and dark intrigue, as they moved, desolate and hungry-eyed, under the stars in the dark shadow of the Girai's palace walls. We stood in the Royal Garden Room where a queen had fought with all a woman's wiles, passionate and pitiful, to revive a prince's dying love, and other women watched and understood, the while, beneath her gracious smile, she was fiercely aware of their every thought. We mere passers-by wandered through rooms whose walls were eloquent of centuries of love and hate. So we passed up to chambers panelled and ceiled with carved cedar-wood, where trellised windows looked down into a deserted garden of tangled lilies and sweet-smelling flowers. Below lay, half-buried in untended blossoms, the marble bathing-pool of the Royal Harem. We stood where a little earlier in the day of time no man save the great khan, the sovereign lord himself, might stand and live. Around us were the soft-toned panelled walls whose very luxury of design was chosen carefully to please the eyes of the idle beauties of the last khan's Court. A pile of faded, moth-eaten velvet cushions, broidered in tarnished silver, still lay where they had been thrown in a corner of the low marble divan that ran round the room, against the windows. The last of the Tartar princes had stood here little more than a hundred and thirty years ago. Tattered hangings of faded silk brocade, once rustled with the whispered laughter of a dead khan's loves, hang forlornly in archways where no lover comes to break the spider's web.

In the once magnificent Hall of Audience a stream of water had poured through the exquisite painted woodwork of the ceiling from the heavy rain of the night before, and lay in a pool, rotting the floor. On a little table were still standing in the dust three wonderful vases of Venetian glass, once the possession of some fair bather in the Forbidden Garden. Amid the crumbling splendours of the Throne Room stood some glass cases, dim with the dust of years, containing treasures and relics of the royal Tartar dead—rings and little intimate things in daily use by the once dreaded owners of the palace.

High up in the thickness of the wall above the Hall of Gold we entered a little chamber where the khan often stood, unseen and unknown, and heard every whisper of his courtiers in the great hall below in the days of deadly intrigue when palace plot was met with counter-plot.

In a covered court all open on one side through pillared arches to a garden of figs and flowers, where the gray doves come and go at will—doves which the peasants say are the souls of fair women who once flitted through the corridors—there is the Fountain of Tears, a marble fountain in a marble wall, soft-hued and stained gold with age. Here the water slowly falls from the wall drop by drop, as tears fall, into tiny marble

basins no larger than the palm of a woman's hand. The story has it that the Khan Mengli Girai captured and held prisoner a Russian countess of surpassing beauty and grace, whom he loved passionately, but with honour refused to take advantage of his power until she willed to come to him. The Russian beauty remained deaf to all his passionate entreaties and his love, and wept her life away in captivity within the palace walls, when her soul passed into the fountain whence her tears still well and flow.

We waded knee-deep in flowers and grasses through a little walled garden to the domed octagonal Mausoleums, shining white among the cypress-trees where the great khans and their queens lie buried beneath worn marble sarcophagi, those of the khans shown by a turban, the tombs of the queens distinguished by a hood. Within the Mausoleums the doves, unfrightened and secure, fly in through the open lattice-work beneath the roof, and rest about the pillars and the tombs, watching us with curious eyes. The old keeper of the gate turned and bowed to them with calm respect and the ceremonial inherited from centuries of palace servitors as we passed out into the sunlit garden again. Here among the roses lies the khan who so loved the flowers and wind and sky that he refused to be buried within the Royal Mausoleum, and asked that his tomb might never be covered; therefore it stands beside his now deserted palace walls, a shrine of marble lattice-work and slender pillars, storm-swept and stained by sun and rain, unroofed and open to the earth and the stars.

When we passed out through the great gates again, and over the brawling torrent of the Tchuryuk, we crossed the open space before the palace, ascended the old stone steps to the low veranda of the Tartars' coffee-house opposite, where quiet men in multicoloured robes sat cross-legged, drinking Turkish coffee and playing dominoes. From beneath us, through the drowsy stillness of the afternoon heat, floated up the *tink-tink* of the brass-worker making little metal pots. Delicate henna-tinted fingers fluttered the curtains of an inner doorway slightly aside for a moment, and the odour of the burning spices cast into a brazier floated out like incense to the open veranda and the domino-players. The myriad acacia-blossoms hung unmoving from their trees beneath the tapering white minaret of the great mosque. Only a faint murmur rose from the old town as it stirred in its sleep and perhaps dreamed of the home-coming of dead kings and victorious armies, and an empire now vanished and almost forgotten.

WITH THE GUNS.

AN IMPRESSION BY THE WAY.

By Lieutenant J. R. CLELAND, R.F.A.

OH God! what a day! It makes one feel that it is above all things good to be alive. All nature is at work. Everywhere the living green of her summer mantle shines resplendent; the birds are singing and calling to each other, and the hum of myriads of insects fills the air.

Otherwise no sound breaks the stillness except the occasional interruption of the telephone, 'Buzz-z-buzz-z — buzzz —— buzzz-buz-buz-buz, O—B—O—B—O—B,' and the signaller's voice as he tests the line: 'Hallo! Yes! Is that all right? Right-o!'

The observation-officer sits back in his chair, and sighs, 'How long, oh Lord, how long?'

For many weary days and weeks he has sat there, looking through the shell-hole in the gable of a deserted house in a deserted and ruined village. He is tired—oh, so tired—of this constant strain of watching and waiting, the monotony of which is varied only by occasional firing or being fired at!

To-day he feels at peace with the world; he is so tired of all this bloodshed and slaughter. Oh, will there never be a move? He scarcely seems to want it now. Late spring is here, and all nature is entering upon the joys of summer; but unmoved is the portion of the line he watches.

The observation-officer draws from his pocket a little leather case and opens it. It contains the portrait of a girl. The pictured face speaks of calm resolution and strong-minded contentment. 'Gladys!' he whispers.

Snap! The case is shut and returned hurriedly to the pocket whence it came. 'Buzzz —z—z!' goes the telephone.

'Hallo! Yes . . . message . . . half-a-mo'!' The operator grabs a message-form and pencil. 'Hallo—yes—go on. . . . O.C. —th Battery . . . yes . . . break . . . yes . . . date A.A.A. Yes . . . enemy reported . . . yes . . . to be massing . . . yes . . . on your front . . . yes . . . keep sharp lookout . . . yes . . . towards points . . . yes . . . A6 . . . yes . . . and B5 . . . yes . . . break . . . yes . . . —th Brigade . . . yes . . . Here you are, sir; message from brigade, sir.'

'At last,' mutters the observer; 'or it may be just another of their scares. Well, we'll keep a sharp enough lookout, and give it to them hot and strong if only they will come on.'

He returns to the contemplation of the country through the shell-hole. In front of him is spread a wide open plain, stretching on either side, until it becomes tree-clad and merges into dis-

tance. The view straight ahead is blocked at a distance of about fifteen hundred yards by a straggling village with high trees at intervals throughout its length. Behind the houses are more trees—trees everywhere; trees of different kinds and fantastic shapes at varying distances.

Between the two villages the plain is intersected by roads and lines of willows marking ditches, and the little stream which runs oblivious of the fact that fifty yards from either bank stretch the lines of barbed wire which safeguard the high walls of sand-bags and earth erected by the opposing armies for protection against bullet and shell.

Omou—u—u—u! Louder and louder grows the sound as of an express train approaching. In front of the village rises an inverted cone of earth and greasy-looking black smoke, and immediately comes the noise of the bursting shell —kr-r-rupp!

It is as if this shell had been a signal. Immediately the air is filled, shrieking, rolling, bubbling, and moaning, each shriek, roll, bubbling, or moan being followed instantly by the ping, bang, crash, or krupp of the various kinds of shell bursting. The landscape is blotted from sight. 'Fizz-bangs,' 'Greasers,' 'Woolly bears,' 'Black Marias,' and 'Jack Johnsons'—every sort and description of shell is there, crashing and banging around the breastworks in which our devoted infantry lie awaiting the assault which will inevitably follow this bombardment.

The observation-officer is sitting tense in his chair, watching—watching. He is awaiting an opportunity to observe the first rounds he fires. At present the smoke is too dense.

'Battery—action!' he calls over his shoulder.

Buzz-z-z! 'Hallo! . . . battery . . . action.' The operator takes up the tale, and passes it on to the guns. 'All guns on communication-trench A5.'

Through a rift in the smoke the observer has caught a glimpse of movement in the enemy's communication-trenches at a point which he has previously registered.

'High explosive—one-round, battery fire ten seconds.' The order rings sharp and clear, and the imperturbable telephonist passes it on.

'No. 1 fired,' announces the telephonist.

Above the din of the enemy's fire comes another sound—boom—um—whizz—z—bang!

The observer's face is drawn, and he stares intently through his glasses. The sound is repeated six times in all, the telephonist reporting the guns as they fire. The smoke is too thick to see all the bursts, but the observer spots one of them. It has burst correctly.

'Repeat!' Again the sharp, clear word of command.

Another telephonist comes up the ladder. His face is white, and a scared look is in his eyes. 'They've put two just over us, sir, on the cross-roads.'

'All right; let me know if they come nearer. Battery fire five seconds.'

Omou-u-u-u! Kr-r-rupp—rupp—rupp! Three heavy high-explosive shells have burst just short of the house; but the bombardment of the breastworks seems to be slackening.

Omou-u-u-wump!

'Thank God, that's a dud!' A blind shell has landed just at the foot of the wall where he watches.

Suddenly the bombardment stops, except for the heavy shells, which continue to come thick and fast into the village and on to all roads leading up to the breastworks from the rear. Kr-rupp! thump! bump! bang!

'Target B—shrapnel—one-round battery fire three seconds.'

The observer is going to get his guns on to the area between the lines of trenches before he looks to his own safety, although the shells are coming nearer now, and the houses on either side of his observing-station have been hit.

. . . . . .

The sun is beginning to sink in the west. The shells still shriek overhead and burst, knocking houses and trees and earth about, and making a thunderous din. A long gray line is emerging rapidly from the enemy's trenches. Immediately a rattle of musketry sounds, but the line advances in quick rushes toward our breastworks.

'Gun-fire!' shouts the observer.

The line comes on, and the buzz and bang of shell continues. Suddenly, directly in front and above the advancing infantry, appears a white puff of smoke, and three men fall forward to the ground. Another puff, and another, then three together, until the line of bursts merges into a continuous pall of white smoke raining death on the human beings advancing beneath it.

Other batteries on right and left have commenced firing now, and the observer thinks it is time to leave the front line for the infantry to deal with while he tries to stop supports coming up.

'Stop . . . add two hundred . . . high explosive . . . go on.'

Black puffs appear over the enemy's support and communication trenches, and the noise of the bursts alters to a sharper note than before. Meantime the rattle of rifles and machine-guns is continuous, and the observer has to keep well down behind his sand-bags to avoid stray bullets.

Omou-u-u-u-crash! kr-rupp! Clatter, clatter, clatter come the tiles and woodwork and a few bricks.

He sees the telephonist disappearing straight down, and makes a grab. He is falling. Ugh! all feeling is gone from his left arm. He is falling, fall-ing, f-a-l-l-i-n-g!

. . . . . .

It is night. The dark blue of the starlit sky is broken by the darker masses of cloud, and lit up fitfully by the white glare of trench-lights and the occasional flash of gun or shell-burst.

The attack has been successfully repulsed, and a sharp counter-attack has gained us some ground. A squad of men with stretchers makes its way slowly through the street of the village.

'Help! help!' The faint cry echoes through the darkness.

''Ere, Bill, stop a mo'!' says a voice; 'that there call came from the artillery observing-house.'

Two men detach themselves from the group and cross the street; one of them produces an electric torch and presses the switch. A man's head and shoulders are visible outside a dug-out of sand-bags built against the rear wall of the house. The wall has collapsed and broken in the roof of the splinter-proof, pinning the man's legs so that he cannot move.

'Give a hand, mate, and help us out o' this,' he says, 'and get some o' your fellers to look in the house for the officer and my mate.'

He fainted. With difficulty the two men moved a heavy beam, and lifted the unconscious man on to a stretcher.

At this moment a platoon of infantry, headed by an officer, come along the road. They are returning to rest, having been in the support-trenches for two days.

'Hallo, you fellows!' cried the officer, 'whom have you got there?'

'Gunners,' remarked the stretcher-bearer. 'The 'ouse looks pretty well wiped out, and this bloke, afore 'e fainted, said there were an orficer and a telephone cove inside somewhere. We ain't bin in ter look yet.'

The officer rushed into the building, calling out, 'Come on, sergeant-major; come with me,' as he went.

A big man came forward from the group in the road, and followed the officer into the house.

'I know the way,' said the officer; 'I was up here this morning having a look round.'

He led the way up a narrow staircase till he reached a landing. Here he stopped. The stairs to the top floor had disappeared, shot away by the great shell which had hit the house. Above the two men was a gaping hole where once had been the roof. They recoiled in horror. There, suspended in the faint light, was a dark mass, which, as their eyes grew accustomed to the light, resolved itself into the figure of a man hanging by his left arm, his right holding the body of another, from whose head hung a telephone instrument held by the receiver-leads.

A party of men were brought in to assist, and with difficulty they got the two men away. The observation-officer had grasped the telephonist as the floor disappeared from under him. In doing so he had overbalanced himself, and only caught a rafter with the crook of his left arm, which was immediately pinned by a falling beam. The telephonist was unconscious, with a terrible gash in the head from a splinter. The observer was wounded in the leg, his left arm was crushed, and he was completely exhausted and delirious; and as soon as he was brought down he subsided into unconsciousness, muttering a word which sounded to the infantry officer like 'Gladys.'

. . . . . .

It was evening. In a beautifully furnished room, once a fashionable London drawing-room, now a ward in a private hospital for officers, a man lay tossing and turning and muttering in delirium. His left arm was bandaged tightly to him, so that he could not hurt it. Beside him stood a sweet-faced girl. Tall, dark, and beautifully formed, she made a lovely picture, standing there in her close-fitting, gray-and-white nursing-dress, trying tenderly to quiet the sufferer. As we watch she straightens up, and the Red Cross upon her breast intensifies the paleness of her face. She has been crying, and her eyes are still moist.

She raises her eyes to the ceiling with a gesture of pleading, and her lips move. 'How long, oh Lord, how long?'

. . . . . .

It is morning. The curtains are drawn, and the bright sun shines in through the windows, throwing deep shadows into the corners of the room, and lighting up the clean white of the patients' beds and the radiant colours of the flowers disposed about the room. The girl looks worn and tired, but a faint hope lights her eyes. The sufferer near the window is sleeping more peacefully than he has done for a week past. The crisis must be over.

She seats herself by his bedside, and takes up a newspaper which had been brought in shortly before, and had lain unnoticed. She turns the pages listlessly. Suddenly a change comes over her, and she sits upright. She has noticed a name in one of the lists. It is under the heading of those upon whom is conferred the honour of the Victoria Cross.

At that moment the sleeper moves and opens his eyes. The tired brain has cleared. He is sane. 'Gladys,' he whispers.

'Jack! Oh Jack! Thank God!'

The patient is asleep again, quietly and with a smile upon his lips, and the sun smiles upon the diamond tears of the girl, which this time are tears of joy.

THE BORDERLAND.

Just ere the recollection of the strain,
And stress of daily life is banish'd quite;
When facts are blent, and interfused, the light
Touch of a hand comes near; and once again
We hear the soft, rich voices we would fain
Forever hear; and then we take our flight,
Oarless, across the foam; pull far from sight;
Earth and its beckonings blown off, as rain
Ends in the yellow light of earliest morn.
Once more we traverse fields our youthhood knew;
Once more the trysting-place we near, and sue
With gentle words a maiden, whose light scorn
Breaks in a ripple of soft laughter. Tears
Are on our faces when morning reappears.

WILLIAM J. GALLAGHER.

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THE ISLES OF THE GOLDEN WEST.

By W. J. Hooper.

LONG, long ago, so the legend relates, the fair land of Cornwall, bearing upon its shores and heights a wealth of that semi-tropical vegetation, vestiges of which even now greet the eye of the traveller in the gardens of Scilly and the environs of Penzance, jutted fully thirty miles farther out into the Atlantic than is the case at the present day. This promontory, over which the sullen Atlantic now rolls its mighty waves, formed the mythical kingdom of Lyonesse. Here we now find nought save the sadness of the mighty deep, the cry of the seagull, and the everlasting roar and swirl of the hungry ocean.

One portion, however, of this fair land has successfully evaded the savage onslaughts of its perpetual and untiring antagonist. Twenty-five miles west by south-west of the Land's End, huddling close together as it were for protection from the raging surf which ever dashes in thundering cataracts of dissolving spray and foam against the outlying reefs, stands a miniature assembly of rocks and islands—the solitary and romantic isles of the west, the Scilly Isles. They are best known, perhaps, for their flowers and the awful shipwrecks to which they have been subjected from time to time. Beyond these items, the general public evinces little or no enthusiasm; indeed, so many people seem to be under the false impression that the islands belong to France, and are inhabited by a French-speaking population, that it may be as well to state at once that they are the exclusive property of Great Britain, and support an English-speaking race mostly of Cornish and mixed extraction.

For the benefit of those who have not visited these islands, we may state that a royal mail steamer visits them three times a week from Penzance, the passage occupying about three and a half hours, the distance being roughly forty-two miles.

Here, within easy reach of the tourist, we have a collection of islands, the climate, beauty, and romance of which are unequalled by those of any other locality in the British Isles. Fishing is to be had in a variety and an abundance to which that of some of our best-known fishing-grounds bears no comparison. The fairy-like bays and coves, full of deep-blue water as clear as crystal, and fringed by a curving line of sand and shells, remind one of those coral lagoons which dot the tropical waters of the deep Pacific. Here the delights of boating, bathing, and swimming may be indulged in with a freedom and an impunity never dreamt of by the sophisticated crowds which throng the heated sands of Eastbourne and Margate. And the climate? Ah! we who have tasted the scents of Scilly, let us summon the gracious muses to our mortal aid in celebration of that supernal atmosphere!

First, in the strict sense of the word, Scilly knows no winter. Let that be clearly understood. There are three seasons: summer, autumn, and spring. At a time when we in England are already in the throes of winter's biting frost and cold, the bulbs of Scilly are gladly throwing their tender heads above the ground in readiness for the great Easter exodus, when ton-loads of the fragrant blooms quit St Mary's pier for the motley precincts of Covent Garden.

The flowers are grown in fields, just as we in England grow fields of corn. Here it is possible to witness the magnificent sight of an acre or so of narcissi in full bloom, another of arums, another of the great single daffodils in all their golden glory. These fields must be palisaded round with wattle to protect the flowers from the winds which sweep across the islands with such fury. Sometimes whole fields of the most delicate blooms are destroyed by a strong gale. In the stormy season the winds at Scilly reach an intensity and fury of which mainlanders can form no adequate conception. All young trees must be protected by shelters, and it is often difficult for a man to walk upright. During these storms the islanders anxiously scan the distant horizon, or remain closely locked within their homes.

The flower season often begins in December, and generally continues till the end of May. While it lasts the blooms must be cut, tied in bunches, and packed in boxes as quickly as possible. At this time the services of every one are required, and men, women, and children work from morning till night until all are safely gathered in and despatched to the markets of London.

With reference to the dreadful shipwrecks which have occurred from time to time amongst these dangerous rocks, it is essential that the

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reader should bear in mind the important fact that perhaps nowhere else in the world is there so numerous and varied a sea-traffic as that which daily and nightly passes the forbidding coasts of these solitary isles.

The configuration of the group is easily described. The islands are extremely small, and lie so closely huddled together that from the highest point of each it is possible to take in at one glance the whole conformity of the component mass. St Mary's, the largest, may be roughly said to have a length and a breadth of two and a half miles and one and a half miles respectively. On it is situated the most populous and important town of the archipelago—Hugh Town. Next in importance ranks Tresco, where the governor of the islands resides. This island, one of the loveliest, is placed in the centre of the group, due north of St Mary's. It is roughly two miles long and a quarter of a mile broad. Here we find the celebrated Abbey gardens, the lake into which King Arthur is supposed to have flung his magic sword, and a subterranean cave containing another lake, known as Piper's Hole. Only three other islands, St Martin's, Bryher, and St Agnes, are inhabited.

The nature of the rocks, channels, tides, and currents surrounding these treacherous coasts is so complicated and insidious that it takes years of patient seamanship to understand them thoroughly. Many a party, even of skilled boatmen, has set forth never to return.

The occasion of a wreck marks a red-letter day in the annals of Scilly. Once its existence becomes known everything else is forgotten. Occupations and engagements, however urgent, are hastily forsaken in the excitement and curiosity of the moment. In a word, industry and the monotonous routine of daily existence give place to a feverish anxiety for saving human life, and a not altogether excusable lust for plunder.

In connection with both these instincts an amusing story is often told. During the course of a Sunday evening service in the church at Tresco the preacher was surprised to notice that his congregation was gradually growing smaller and smaller, until at last only two remained. Wondering what could be the cause of this remarkable diminution in the number of his flock, curiosity at last compelled the austere divine to interrupt his sermon and inquire the reason for so sudden and stealthy an exit. He was informed that there had just been a wreck. That was enough. The last thing seen by that faithful couple was a cassock and a surplice disappearing at lightning speed round the corner of the church porch.

Perhaps the most terrible wreck which has ever cast its shadow of gloom over these islands was that of the *Schiller*, a German mail steamer carrying a crew and passengers numbering three hundred and fifty-four, which struck the Retarrier ledges during a fog, and went down, with a death-roll of three hundred and eleven. It is said that a fashionable ball was in progress at the time when the vessel struck, and the scene must have been one of indescribable horror. The vessel did not sink immediately. The wretched passengers, clinging with wild and hopeless despair to the rigging, were washed away one by one.

The largest vessel ever wrecked at Scilly was the *Minnehaha*, an Atlantic liner of thirteen thousand seven hundred and fourteen tons, on her way from New York to London, which struck the Scilly rock during a fog. Every one was saved. From the very first, judging by the way in which the vessel had gone aground, it was thought that by careful blasting of the rocks and removing all the heavy cargo it would be possible to dislodge and drag her into deeper water; a hope which was afterwards fully realised. The *Minnehaha* was a short time ago making her usual passage between New York and London just as though there were no such place as Scilly, or wrecks, or, it may be added, German submarines, to disturb her untiring perseverance.

During this memorable wreck the islands were in a state of continual bustle and excitement. Everything which could be removed from the wreck went overboard—motor-cars, bags of silver, grand pianos, furniture, coffee, tobacco, pencils and paper, typewriters, clocks, sewing-machines, and three hundred cattle. To prevent the islanders boarding and plundering the vessel, it was necessary for the captain to stand constantly on the bridge with a loaded revolver, ready to shoot any one caught in the act. But this precaution could not prevent a great deal of plunder being secretly carried away, because anything which, on being thrown overboard, was not immediately secured by the authorities would be quickly surrounded by a swarm of boats, and carried off. Many of the islanders are still drinking the coffee, smoking the tobacco, and sitting in the luxurious chairs which once filled the spacious interior of the *Minnehaha*.

All sorts of vessels have been wrecked at Scilly. This heterogeneous collection has brought to the islands a corresponding variety of salvage. At one time a cotton-ship threw up her cargo of fleecy bales on the silver strand of Hell Bay; at another, the sea was floating with oranges from the Far West. Another occasion saw the black waters seething with grease and oil from the tanks of a vessel which had gone down some days before. Many a fair ship and many a sailor have found their everlasting tombs amongst the watery chasms which stud the subterranean depths of these frightful ledges and rocks.

There is something awe-inspiring and terrifying about the way in which these black, forbidding, hungry masses of solid granite, surrounded by the perpetual gurgle and swirl of the heaving waters, stand like solitary sentinels waiting for their innocent prey. Often, at varying intervals,

sad relics of wrecks long forgotten are discovered on the lonely beaches of an outlying island seldom visited—skulls in varying stages of decomposition, sodden leather purses, broken spars bearing the name of some long-lost ship.

The romance of Scilly teems with stories of the days when pilots and smugglers held their sway. The old house in which the author spent so many happy days must at one time have been the silent witness of many a goodly haul of goods, many a heated fight. From its capacious cellars an underground passage, since closed in, communicated with the adjacent beach. Some few years ago visitors staying in the house resolved to explore the entrance to this tunnel. Armed with picks and spades, they succeeded in removing near its commencement a considerable portion of the cellar floor. To the amazement and horror of the diggers, two human skeletons, calcified with age and riddled with shot, were unearthed. An old inn, situated in the centre of the same island, was in bygone days a rendezvous for foreign sailors, who were frequently drugged, robbed, and murdered.

In the days of the sailing-ship, when pilots were indispensable for the purposes of Channel navigation, a number of these men lived at Scilly. A pilot frequently left the islands never to return. His wife and children were then left destitute. The lure of some lucrative occupation on the mainland or on the Continent was generally the cause of these desertions. There is a woman whose husband left her in this cruel way still living on one of the islands.

That these pilots were brave men, who knew every rock and tide of Scilly, the following story bears ample testimony. In bygone days it happened that the French had a dispute with the islanders about an encroachment on their fishing rights. To settle the matter they despatched two men-of-war to the distant isles, hoping thereby to awe the inhabitants into a state of submission. On arrival it was necessary to procure a pilot to steer them safely in. After having carefully interrogated the man as to his technical knowledge, the captain put the helm into his hands and bade him take the vessel in charge. All went well for a short time; then—CRASH! Wondering what could have happened, the captain rushed to the bridge, and angrily asked the pilot what, in the name of all that was holy, he meant by such behaviour. 'You told us you knew the rocks.' 'Yes, so I do,' replied the pilot very calmly; 'this is one of them.'

The number and variety of strange events which have taken place in these islands from time to time combine to produce reading at once melancholy, weird, and dramatic. Novels, too numerous to enumerate here, have been written under the influence of these romantic isles.

On one occasion a death-ship put into the waters of Scilly. Her decks were silent and deserted, the crew smitten with deadly plague. The islanders, oppressed with silent dread of the unknown, discussed her fate and theirs with a helplessness born of despair. They were saved in a manner as remarkable as it was strange. One night, when all was still, and the moon cast its melancholy light on the pale, cold waters, the death-ship glided stealthily out to the west. At the tiller stood the helpless figure of a youth, a crazy boy from one of the off-islands, who had boarded the vessel when all were asleep, cut her cables, and drifted out. The ship and her strange pilot were never heard of again.

For scenery the Isles of Scilly provide a fund of variety and colour equalled by that of no other locality in the British Isles. Here the artist finds the delicate blending with the savage, the savage with the refined, until that indefinable sense of beauty which every Scillonian knows so well captivates and leads the mind from a mean and sordid æstheticism to an uplifting conception of the majestic and sublime. Moreover, it is not so much what one actually sees as what one hears and feels which helps to instil into the mind of the visitor that haunting sensation of melancholy romance which permeates the atmosphere of these strange and lonely isles.

Those who have once sampled the delights of Scilly seldom fail to return. The place exercises a sort of haunting influence over those who have lived there long enough to learn its varied moods and passions. The overwhelming preponderance of nature over man, the illimitable waste of hungry ocean, the cry of the seabirds, the evening sunset lighting up the western rocks in a blaze of magic splendour, and, finally, the lighthouses emblazoning the night sky in fantastic arcs of whirling magnificence, combine to produce an effect exalting the soul from the regions of casual indifference to those of eternal and impassioned reverie.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXV.—HOW SPIKE MADE A CHOICE AND A PROMISE.

MONDAY morning found Ravenslee knocking at the opposite door, which, opening, disclosed Spike, but a very chastened and humble Spike, who blushed and drooped his head and shuffled with his feet, and finally stammered, 'Hello, Geoff!—I—I 'm all alone; but you—you can come in if—if you care to.'

'I dropped in on my way down just to have a word with you, Spike.'

With dragging feet Spike led the way into the

sitting-room, where lay his breakfast, scarcely tasted.

'Sit down, Geoff; I—I want to apologise,' said the lad, toying nervously with his teaspoon. 'I guess you think I'm a mean, low-down sort o' guy; an' you're right; only I—I feel worse 'n you think. An' say, Geoff, if I—if I said anything th' other night, I want you to—forget it, will you?'

'Why, of course, Spike.'

'Hermy's forgiven me. I—I've promised to work hard an' do what she wants.'

'I'm glad of that, Spike.'

'She came creepin' into my room this mornin' before she went; but—me thinkin' she meant to give me a last call down—I pretended t' be asleep, so she just sighed an' went creepin' out again, an' wrote me this;' and Spike drew a sheet of crumpled notepaper from his pocket and handed it to Ravenslee, who read these words:

'Boy dear, I love you so much that if you destroyed my love I think you would destroy me too. Now I must leave you to go to my work; but you will go to yours, won't you—for my sake, and for your sake, and because I love you so? Be good and strong and clean; and if you want some one to help you, go to your friend Mr Geoffrey. Good-bye, dear; and remember your promise.'

Ravenslee passed back the pencilled scrawl; and Spike, stooping his head low, read it through again.

'I guess I've just got to be good,' he murmured, 'for her sake. Oh Geoff,' he cried suddenly, 'I'd die for her!'

'Better live for her, Spike, and be the honourable, clean man she wishes.'

'She sure thinks you're some man, Geoff! I guess she's—kind o'—fond o' you.'

'That's what I've come to talk about, Spike.'

'Are you—fond o' her, Geoff?'

'Fond!' exclaimed Ravenslee, forgetting to drawl. 'I'm so fond—I love her so much, I honour her so deeply—that I want her for my wife.'

'Wife!' exclaimed Spike, starting to his feet, his eyes suddenly radiant. 'D'ye mean you'll marry her?'

'If she will honour me so far, Spike.'

'Marry her! You'll marry her!' Spike repeated.

'As soon as she'll let me!'

'Geoff—oh Geoff!' exclaimed the boy, and, choking, turned away.

'Won't you congratulate me?'

'I can't yet,' gasped Spike. 'I can't till I've told ye what a mean guy I've been.'

'What about?'

'About you—and Hermy. Bud said you meant t' make her go the way—little Maggie Finlay went, an'—oh Geoff, I—I kind o' believed him.'

'Did you, Spike—that foul beast? But you don't believe it any longer, and M'Ginnis is—only M'Ginnis after all.'

'But I—I've got to tell you more,' said the lad miserably, as, meeting Ravenslee's eye with an effort, he went on feverishly: 'The other night, after—after Bud slipped me the—the stuff, an' I'd had a—a drink or two, he began askin' all about you. At first I blocked an' side-stepped all his questions, but he kep' on at me, an' at last I—I give you away, Geoff.' Here Spike paused breathlessly and cast an apprehensive glance toward his hearer; but, finding him silent and serene as ever, he repeated, 'I—give you away, Geoff!'

'Did you, Spike?'

'Yes; I—I told him who you really are!'

'Did you, Spike?'

'Yes! Yes! Oh Geoff, don't you understand?'

'I understand.'

'Well, why don't ye say something? Why don't ye tell me what I am? Say I'm a dirty sneak—call me a yeller cur—anything!'

'No, you were drunk, that's all; and when the drink is in, honour, and all that makes a man, is out—you were only drunk.'

'Oh, but I wasn't s' drunk as all that,' gasped Spike, cowering in his chair; 'but he kep' on comin' at me with his questions, an' at last, when I told him how I met up with you, he kind o' give a jump, an' his face'—— Spike clenched his fists, and, slowly raising them, pressed them upon his eyes. 'I'll never forget th' look on his face! So now you know as I've blown th' game on ye—given ye away—you as was my friend!' With the word Spike sobbed and fell grovelling on his knees. 'Curse me, Geoff!' he cried. 'Oh, curse me an' tell me what I am!'

'You are Hermione's brother!'

'My God!' wailed the boy, 'if she knew she'd hate me.'

'I almost think she would, Spike.'

'You won't tell her, Geoff; you won't never let her know?'

'I don't get drunk, Spike.'

'But you won't tell her?' he pleaded, reaching out desperate hands. 'You won't?'

'Not a word, Spike!'

'Oh, I know I'm rotten!' sobbed the lad. 'I know you ain't got no use for me any more; but I'm sorry, Geoff—I'm real sorry. I know a guy can't forgive a guy as gives a guy away if that guy's a guy's friend. I know as you can't forgive me. I know as you'll cut me out for good after this. But I want ye t' know as I'm sorry, Geoff—awful sorry—I—I ain't fit t' be anybody's friend, I guess.'

'I think you need a friend more than ever, Spike!'

'Geoff!' cried the boy breathlessly, 'say—what d'you mean?'

'I mean the time has come for you to choose between M'Ginnis and me; if I am to be your friend, M'Ginnis must be your enemy from now on. Wait! If you want my friendship, no more secrets; tell me just how M'Ginnis got you into his power—how he got you to break into my house.'

Spike glanced up through his tears, glanced down, choked upon a sob, and burst into breathless narrative: 'There was me an' Bud an' a guy they call Soapy—we 'd been to a rube boxin' match up th' river. An' as we come along Soapy says, "If I was in th' second-story-lay, there 's millionaire Ravenslee's wigwam waitin' t' be cracked;" and he pointed out your swell place among th' trees in th' moonlight. Then Bud says, "You ain't got th' nerve, Soapy. Why, th' kid 's got more nerve than you," he says, pattin' my shoulder. An' Soapy laughs an' says I 'm only a kid. An', Geoff, I 'd got two or three drinks into me, an' th' end was I agreed t' just show 'em as I had nerve enough t' get in through a winder an' cop something—anything I could get. So Bud hands me his 'lectric torch, an' we shin over the fence an' up to the house—an' Soapy has th' winder open in a jiffy, an' me—bein' half-soused an' foolish—hikes inter th' room, an' you cops me on th' jump, an'—an' that 's all!'

'And M'Ginnis has threatened to send you up for it now and then, eh?'

'Only for a joke. Bud ain't like me; he 'd never split on a pal. Bud wouldn't gimme away.'

'Anyway, Spike, it 's him or me—which will you have for a friend?'

'Oh Geoff, I—I guess I 'd follow you t' Kingdom Come if you 'd let me. I do want t' live straight an' clean—honest t' God I do, Geoff; an' if you 'll only forgive'——

Spike's outstretched, pleading hands were caught and held, and he was lifted to his feet.

'My Arthur-Spike, art going to the office this morning?'

'Sure I am; my eye ain't—ain't s' bad after all, is it? Anyway, I feel more like what a man should feel like now; an'—gee! look at me doin' the sissy tear-spoutin' act! Oh hell—lemme go an' wash me face. 'N' say, if—if any o' them—I mean those dolly office-boys—has anything t' say, I 'll punch th' sawdust out o' them!'

(*Continued on page 404.*)

HEDGEHOGS, AND A NEW USE FOR THEIR SPINES.

By PERCY VERE, Author of *The Confessions of a Literary Free-Lance.*

SOME years ago the mole suddenly sprang into importance on account of its skin becoming fashionable for ladies' coats. Now it is the turn of another lowly animal—the common hedgehog—to come into prominence, for an officer in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders has made the interesting discovery that hedgehogs' quills make excellent needles for gramophones—that they are, indeed, greatly superior to the metal ones at present employed. 'There are some gramophones,' he writes, 'which I, a wounded soldier, can testify utter strident chords to the accompaniment of the persistent scraping of the metal needle—a needle that too quickly wears away a costly record. I have substituted a hedgehog's quill, with the result that you can hear even the words of the singer, and every note of the song in the softest renderings.' He proceeds to say that he has captured hedgehogs in country lanes, and robbed them painlessly of a few spines, the best being those which spring from the back of the creature. He finds it a good plan to stiffen the quill by inserting in it a No. 7 diamond sewing-needle. Those owners of gramophones who may be inclined to experiment with a hedgehog's spine should follow very carefully the officer's instructions: 'Snap the needle off just above the top of the quill, and very little else is required. Do not push the needle down too far, or it will work through the quill and endanger the life of the record. Also, if the point of the quill is too fine, it may be cut with a very sharp knife or razor to enable it to keep an erect position on the record.'

There are many whose pleasure in the performances of gramophones is considerably modified by the scratching of the needles, a fact which is well known to the manufacturers, who, doubtless, will be only too glad to substitute spines for steel needles if the former are found to be more satisfactory. Perhaps the day is not far distant when the breeding of hedgehogs will rank with poultry-farming and bee-keeping as a minor industry, and, by a process of selection, specially fine spines for gramophones will be produced.

Frank Buckland tells us that the quill of a hedgehog, if cut across, will be found to be quite hollow. The walls are formed of a hard, horny substance, and the interior is filled with a sort of pith, as pith lies in the stem of elder. It resembles, in fact, a magnified human hair, which under the microscope looks very much like a hedgehog's bristle when viewed with the naked eye. He also states that German professors of anatomy employ hedgehogs' spines to pin out dissections of nerves and muscles. These preparations are usually placed in bottles containing a corrosive fluid, and if metal pins were used they would soon corrode and spoil

the preparations. Coachmen, he remarks, will sometimes tie a hedgehog's skin on the pole of the carriage, to prevent a shirking horse from leaning against it; and the ancients made use of the skin as a clothes-brush.

The hedgehog goes on the prowl at night, running about with more agility than one would imagine its short legs and dumpy body were capable of. It has a stomach of strong digestive power, to which little comes amiss—cockroaches, earthworms, slugs, snails, frogs, toads, chickens, dead birds, and other animals, and eggs (including the shell), are all grist to his mill. Gamekeepers are their sworn enemies, for well they know that many a pheasant's and partridge's egg or chick finds its way into the alimentary canal of a hedgehog. Some years ago a contributor to *The Field* stated that a friend of his was walking in the fields one evening, when he heard a flapping noise in some long grass, and stepping cautiously up, he found a hedgehog trying to poke off a partridge from her nest (no doubt to get at the eggs), whilst the latter was endeavouring to beat him off with her wings.

If driven to it by hunger, the hedgehog thinks nothing of turning cannibal, and, like rats and rabbits, a mother, if disturbed, will sometimes devour her newly born family.

The older naturalists believed that hedgehogs entered orchards, and, climbing the trees, impaled pears, apples, or plums on their bristles, and bore them off in triumph. Others alleged that they knocked off the fruit, and then, throwing themselves upon it, trotted off quietly with their booty sticking to their spines. This is giving the creature credit for an intelligence he does not possess, for his brain is remarkable for the poorness of its development. Besides, his liking for fruit is not strong enough to induce him to undertake gymnastic feats of this kind.

The female hedgehog makes a snug rainproof nest of moss and leaves, and brings forth from three to seven or eight young ones at a birth, which, like puppies and kittens, start life blind. They are quaint little creatures, with their white bodies and soft spines, and their funny attempts to curl up if touched. The spines, however, soon grow and harden, and as their muscles develop they quickly gain the ability to turn themselves into prickly balls and to erect their spines for self-protection.

The writer one winter day, accompanied by his dog—an Airedale terrier—was strolling in a wood, when he noticed his companion acting in a strange manner at the foot of a tree. The dog repeatedly thrust his head into the undergrowth, and then quickly drew it back, at the same time making an impatient whine. On walking up he noticed blood on the nose of the dog. Parting the bushes and peering in, he saw, almost covered with leaves, many of which were attached to its spines, a fine, fat hedgehog fast asleep in its winter quarters. The prize could not be left, so it was borne home in a handkerchief and placed on the kitchen table. Then a discovery was made that quickly aroused eloquent objections on the part of the lady of the house. The animal was infested with fleas, which hopped about in all directions. An hour later the hedgehog was back in its hibernaculum, the parasites in undisturbed possession of their host.

Young dogs do not, as a rule, maintain for long an attack upon a 'thorny hedgehog;' but older dogs, Richard Jefferies assures us, learn how to go about the business scientifically. They roll the animal over with a paw, touching it gently, so as not to run the spines into the paw, till the depression comes uppermost where the hedgehog has tucked his head inwards. This is the only vulnerable place, and with one desperate bite the dog thrusts his teeth in there, seizes the nose, and then has the hedgehog in his power. The writer once discovered a hedgehog which was bleeding at the nose and in a half-dead condition. It had evidently suffered from a recent scientific canine attack. A small dose of whisky, forcibly administered, revived it for a while; but the stimulant only hastened the end, for a few hours later it gave up the unequal struggle. The hedgehog's omnivorous tastes include, it is said, if not a fondness, at least no dislike, for intoxicating liquors, which have the effect of making him immediately tame, after passing through a period of inebriety, during which his gestures and proceedings have a most ludicrous resemblance to those of a drunken man.

Eagles do not seem to object to hedgehogs for diet purposes, despite their prickly protection, for Frank Buckland puts on record an experience of his in this connection. At one time he possessed, among other singular pets, an eagle and a hedgehog, the former being chained to a perch in the garden. The hedgehog disappeared, a careful search failing to discover the animal. The next morning, when going to feed the bird, Buckland noticed a large ball lying on the ground immediately under the perch, and on examining it he found that it was composed of the bones, skin, and bristles of the missing quadruped, which indigestible substances the eagle had, in the manner of his tribe, disgorged. In making a nocturnal search for slugs and beetles, the hedgehog had strayed within range of the eagle, and had paid the death penalty in consequence.

One certain way of making a hedgehog unroll itself is to place it in water, when self-preservation forces it to swim. It shuts up, however, all the tighter for the fright when it touches land, and, in the words of the showman, 'the more you stir him up, the more he won't uncoil.' Consistent kindness will, with hedgehogs, as with most animals, cause them to lose their timidity, and though they are not capable of manifesting much affection, they show for those

who feed them a certain amount of cupboard love. It is recorded that in the year 1799 an innkeeper at Fulton, in Northumberland, possessed a hedgehog that performed the duty of a turnspit. It ran about the house (answering to the name of Tom) as familiarly as a cat or a dog, and displayed in other ways most unusual intelligence.

The fondness of hedgehogs for 'black-beetles' has led to their being kept in houses for the purpose of destroying these creatures, in the pursuit of which they show much activity, crunching them up with evident relish. It sometimes happens that a hedgehog, newly introduced to such a happy hunting-ground, falls a victim to its own voracity, and dies of overfeeding.

Finally, it should be placed to the credit of the hedgehog that it makes a toothsome meal for Gipsies and tramps, the Gipsies being adepts in the art of cooking it. This is the recipe of an old Gipsy woman: 'You cuts the bristles off 'em with a sharp knife after you kills 'em fust, sir; then you sweals 'em' [Oxfordshire, burn them with straw like a bacon pig], 'and makes the rind brown; then you cuts 'em down the back, and spits 'em on a bit of stick, pointed at both ends, and then you roasts 'em with a strong flare. They are nicest at Michaelmas-time. Some have yellow fat and some white fat, and we calls 'em mutton and beef hedgehogs; and very nice eating they be, sir, when the fat is on 'em.'

A QUIET WEEK-END.

CHAPTER III.

I AWOKE with a start, to find Dare standing by me with his hand upon my shoulder.

'What is the matter?' I inquired.

'Do you think it possible,' he said with a faint smile, 'that your friend Mr Alsop walks in his sleep?'

'How should I know?' I answered rather pettishly, still only half-awake. 'The fellow is no more my friend than yours; I never saw him till to-night.'

'Then I have the advantage of you there,' Dare went on; 'but I asked because he is not in his room.'

'Not in his room!' I exclaimed, now thoroughly roused. 'Where is he, then?'

'That I propose that we should see. Will you get up?'

I sprang out of bed, slipped on my trousers and coat, and then followed Dare. He crossed the passage to the stranger's room, which was exactly opposite my own. It was empty; and a moment's glance showed me that its occupant had evidently left it fully dressed. I looked at Dare.

'Whatever can this mean?' I said.

'That I can tell you later. Meanwhile, let us see if we can find the vanished bird.'

We went downstairs and along to the door which opened on the passage leading to the many buildings in the side-wing of the house. The door was shut, but opened freely on the handle being turned.

'I locked this door last night and took away the key,' said Dare. He held the candle to the keyhole for an instant, and then added, 'Yes, the lock has been picked.'

Just at that moment, from the depths of the long passage, came a cry—a cry which broke off suddenly, as though it had been cut in half. I started forward, but Dare held me back.

'Let me go first,' he said.

And it was he who led the way, with steady and unhurried steps, down the long passage, past the many doors. Only one door stood open, and a sound of muffled growling came from the dark depths beyond. I looked at Dare in horror; it was the door of the large loose-box where the leopard slept.

'Good God, Dare! what has happened?'

'Some disaster to Mr Alsop, I fear,' said Dare composedly. 'Let me go in.'

He entered, while I held the candle at the door. Stretched on the floor lay Alsop's body, with the leopard standing over it. Dare walked up to the creature firmly, and struck her sharply on the neck.

'Get back, Bagheera. Let it go, my girl.'

For some few moments I quite thought the creature would have sprung in fury on her master; but Dare's power over her maintained its sway. Scolding and pushing, striking frequently, slowly Dare forced the leopard backwards to a corner of her box.

'Drag out the body,' he called to me.

I did so, noticing with horror the exceeding limpness of the neck. When I had got it to the passage, Dare came out himself and closed the door, leaving Bagheera raging angrily within. He set the candle on the floor and stooped beside the man.

'The neck is broken,' he said quietly; 'no doubt she did it with a single blow.'

'Good heavens, what a fearful business! But what brought him here?'

'That's a long tale,' replied my friend; 'and meanwhile we must think of what is to be done. Just help me, will you? Take the feet.'

Between us we took up the body, bore it down the passage to a carriage-house, and laid it on the ground. Then we went back to the

hall. Dare led the way into the dining-room, and lit the fire; it was laid ready every evening after we had dined.

'What did you mean just now, Dare, by saying that you had the advantage of me in knowing this man?' I asked. 'Did you know him?'

'As an acquaintance, not at all; but perfectly by sight.'

'But you made no sign of recognising him when you two met last night. Did he know you?'

'Undoubtedly. What he did *not* know was that I knew him.'

'There is some mystery in all this, Dare.'

'Well, yes. Sit down, and I will tell you all about it. But you want a drink. There's some liqueur brandy in the sideboard; it won't hurt you after what you've just gone through. And we shall have to settle what is to be done.

'Your dripping acquaintance of last night,' continued Dare, 'saw fit to introduce himself as Alsop and an Englishman. Now, I prefer to recognise him as a German of the name of Woell.'

'A German! Do you think he was a spy?' I exclaimed, my mind naturally following the thoroughfare popular at the moment.

'A spy in general? Very likely—yes, most probably indeed. And certainly, in regard to this particular visit here. He is—or, rather, was—the nephew of the old professor whom I told you of. His uncle and he were not on very cordial terms, but Woell would call upon the old man now and then. He did so once when I was there; but it chanced quite simply that, though he saw me and I him, *he* was unaware that I had seen him. He did not live in Heidelberg, but in Berlin, where he was occupied as a business "agent" of some kind—ostensibly. But, to my notion, he was in the pay of the police.'

'Then you believe that he was after you down here?'

'My dear fellow, just review the facts you know. His uncle invents a valuable agent of war, and disposes of the secret to the German War Office. Then he is further known to be engaged on something else of the same kind. He meets sudden death by an accident. No traces of his work on this unknown discovery are to be found in his rooms. I, who have been on terms of acquaintance with him, and have shared the use of his laboratory, soon move from Heidelberg. That is sufficiently suggestive, is it not?'

I nodded. 'Then he came down here to spy on you?'

'To spy? Well, yes; but what he wanted was the record of his uncle's work, and also of what I have lately done to further it. Germany has maintained spies everywhere for years. In spite of every care, I dare say that my doings, my visits to the War Office, are known.

'Of course, I recognised him when I came into the room last night; in fact, I thought his figure seemed familiar when I watched him cross the garden at your side. I guessed at once what brought him here. A clever trick, his choosing Sunday, and his falling into the pond. He had, no doubt, been reconnoitring round the place before. It was impossible, as he foresaw, for us to do otherwise than ask him in.

'As I came from the passage, crossed the hall, and went into the study, he was standing where he could observe the hall; the study door was open, and he saw the door through which I came. And he had previously observed me from the garden drawing down the blind. You follow him? He sees me safe to bed; he hears me snoring—I took care to snore'—Dare smiled. 'He goes downstairs, soon picks the lock—a simple one—and sets off down the passage to explore. One thing he did not know, and therefore did not bargain for—the presence of Bagheera in the house.'

A sudden, horrible idea occurred to me. I tried to put it from me, stifle it; but Dare, no doubt, had seen the terrible suspicion on my face.

'Well, my dear man, speak out,' he said.

'Dare—for God's sake!—you didn't surely'——

'Didn't leave Bagheera with the range of the whole passage that our German might encounter her?' my friend replied, his steady eyes on mine. 'Well, had I done so I am by no means certain that I should not have done right. This man, a spy, was compassing what would have meant the death in agony of many thousands of men. Why should I not arrange that he should meet his own?

'However, I did not do that. No; it was unfortunate for Herr Woell that Bagheera seems to have achieved last night a small success which she has been attempting to accomplish for some little time—the trick of opening her box-door by clawing the handle. I see the handle is much marked with scratches, so that she has been at it for a few days. To-night she has succeeded. Perhaps she heard him coming, clawed the door open, and sprang out on him as he came; perhaps she was out already, and he met her there. We can't know now, but I think probably the latter was the case. And now we have to settle what to do.'

'Shall I fetch a doctor? The police, too, must be told.'

'My dear chap, no. There is no hurry for a doctor. Woell is dead. And local doctors and police are the last people we want here.'

'But, Dare, the law. Of course, there 'll have to be an inquest. I know it is unpleasant, but'——

'My dear, good fellow, you are all for trifling legal detail, while I have much more important things in mind. In general, I know, it is obviously desirable that a public inquiry should be held into a sudden death. In this particular case, and at this particular time, it is of the most vital importance that the affair should be smothered.'

'Good heavens, Dare, how can you smother such a thing as this?'

'In more than one way, perhaps; in any case, we *must*. The War Office would be indignant with me if I let the two main facts get out—that work for them is being done here, and that a German spy has been prying into it and lost his life. Therefore, it must be smothered; but next comes the question, how?'

Dare stroked his chin for a few seconds, looking thoughtfully at me.

'The really simplest way, and the one entailing little loss of time—a most important thing just now for what I have in hand—is one to which I fear you would object, you are such a stickler for law and order. Were I alone in this affair I think that I should put Woell's body in the pond, with stones tied fast to head and feet, and try to think no more of it. Indeed, I should forget it without trouble, occupied as I now am. But that would not suit you?'

'You would not dream of such a piece of folly, Dare! We should lay ourselves open for life to suspicion of a murder. Don't speak of such a thing.'

'Yes,' said Dare, smiling in a way that made me question whether he was jesting or in earnest in the hint that he had dropped—'yes, I feared that that would be the view you'd take. As you object, there's nothing for it but that I should get the car out and go up to town. I have friends there who will soon deal with the affair. You don't mind staying here a few hours by yourself? I think, if you don't object, you'd better keep inside the house.'

I cannot say that I was much delighted with the prospect, but, of course, I readily agreed. It was just half-past two when Dare waked me, and by four he was upon his way to London, leaving me alone.

I went back to my room, though not to sleep. At breakfast-time I told the servant that his master had been called to London—news which seemed to cause him no particular surprise. With the aid of books I passed the hours of the morning and the early afternoon as best I might; but they were hours I have no desire to re-live. Before the printed pages ever rose the picture of my company in that old house: two deaf-mutes, a full-grown and half-tamed leopard, and the lifeless body of a man.

At three o'clock I heard the welcome sound of a car stopping at the garden gate. A moment later Dare came in, accompanied by two keen-looking, well-dressed men.

'I'm afraid that you have had a long, slow morning of it,' said Dare cheerfully to me; 'but we are all right now. First, let me introduce these gentlemen—but not by name. This'—and he pointed to the taller man, who bowed to me—'is an official from the Home Office. He is vested with absolute authority to act in this matter, and we may look upon him as representing to us the Home Secretary. This other gentleman is a special officer from Scotland Yard. They will, to satisfy you, show their warrants of authority to act as they think best.'

I did not stand upon the letter of the offer, for in vital things I absolutely trusted Dare.

'Perhaps, Mr Dare,' said the official from the Home Office, 'your friend will give us his account of the affair, so far as it is known to him.'

I did so, both officials taking copious notes. When I had finished, we adjourned to where the body lay. After a casual glance, and while the Home Office official was satisfying himself about the broken neck, the detective took from his pocket a letter-case, chose a small photograph from other papers, and compared it with the dead man's face. He passed the photograph to his companion, then to Dare and me. It was an obvious likeness of the man who lay upon the floor.

'A very clever spy, who has been working in this country for some weeks,' the detective said. 'We've nearly had our hands upon him more than once, but each time he has just slipped through.'

Dare now proposed an interview with Bagheera, and the two men glanced at her through a small 'judas' in the upper portion of her loose-box door. When we were once more in the study, the official from the Home Office decreed what must be done. Although he spoke ostensibly to Dare, he looked most frequently at me, as though divining—or most likely Dare had told him—that it was my scruples that he had to overcome.

'This matter must be kept quite quiet locally,' he said; 'the special needs of the country, the requirements of the army authorities, are matters before which all usual forms give way. We shall arrange for the body to be taken to London; there a doctor will certify the cause of death, and it will then be dealt with—in the proper way. The man, if he had been captured, would, I feel quite certain, have been shot. As both your servants are deaf, and the affair took place at dead of night, it is most likely that there is no rumour of the matter in the neighbourhood; but to avoid any trouble in that way, I will cause the coroner and the chief constable of the county to be informed that a death has taken place in this house, and that the body has been removed by the Home Secretary's orders; further, that they are to take no proceedings, and must keep the information absolutely to themselves.'

'Suppose inquiries are made from his hotel at Willchester?' I said.

'I doubt his having been at an hotel at all,' said the detective. 'He was believed to have a motor-bicycle, and he most likely rode straight here from town.'

The matter of the wheel-mark in the gateway of the wood occurred to me. I mentioned it. Five minutes later the detective and myself were at the spot. Examining the path, we traced the wheel-mark through the gateway and along the path until it turned off suddenly among the trees. I wondered that its course had failed to catch my eye the previous afternoon; branches were broken from the bushes; fern and grass were crushed.

Thus guided, we went on until a clump of nut-bushes was reached. Behind it, screened on all sides by other clumps, there stood a motor-bicycle, with a neat, bulky parcel strapped over the saddle. It presently displayed a heavy overcoat, a pair of goggles, and a cap.

'You see he obviously came down from town that day, hid his kit here, and then posed as being a casual visitor from Willchester. Thus he would count upon being recognised by no one in the neighbourhood except yourself and Mr Dare.'

We returned to the house and reported our find.

'The motor-bicycle had better go to town as well,' declared the chief arranger of affairs. 'Your car won't take it, Mr Dare, and I should prefer not to trouble the railway company in the matter.'

'A light, quick-running motor-lorry would be best for it and for the—other thing,' suggested the detective deferentially.

'The police at Willchester have one,' said Dare.

So it was arranged by the great man. By half-past ten that night the motor-lorry had arrived, had taken up its double burden, and had gone, the Scotland Yard detective sitting by the constable who drove. The German's body had been wrapped in sacking until quite unrecognisable for what it was. We three who stayed behind had supper, and a little later Dare drove the Home Office official to the mail.

'I really am extremely sorry that your visit should have turned out as it has,' Dare said when, late that night, we once more sat alone. 'But what would you? Fate is master of us all. And, after all, you have no cause to worry, either for yourself or for me. My mind and conscience are entirely at rest.

'Entirely,' my friend continued, throwing down a match. 'I know what is in your mind: that I kept a dangerous beast in my house, taking no proper care to prevent its doing mischief; that I should have kept its box-door locked. That I deny. The servants, both the man and his sister, knew that they had no business in that portion of the house unless I sent them there—as I did send the man sometimes. They slept in rooms upon the second floor; the leopard never came beyond the passage door unless I was at hand.

'Why should I, then, take any steps to make a spy or a burglar safe? If such men come, they do so at their proper risk. Woell well deserved to die; he would assuredly have died if caught. As to the manner of his death, as well the swift blow of a velvet paw, a broken neck, as to stand blindfolded against a wall in that old Tower and front a dozen rifles levelled at his breast. No, frankly, I am unconcerned; and you should be the same.'

Perhaps so; but it was long ere I could chase the dreadful business, even for a moment, from my mind. As for Dare's sentiments, as I have said before, you had to take Dare as you found him, if at all.

On reassembling after such occasions as a mid-term holiday, it was my custom to pass a few preliminary minutes in exchanging news of the vacation with my class. I had intended to describe Bagheera, judging that a jet-black leopard would be new to every boy. As things had turned out, I decided it was best to leave the leopard undescribed.

THE END.

A RUINED WORLD.

SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE—WHAT THE LAND IS LIKE.

By LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT, C.F.

IT is impossible for the people at home to imagine the effect of war upon a country. What were beautiful rural retreats are now smashed and scarred out of recognition. A heap of dusty bricks marks where a village stood only recently; a broken wall is all that is left of a fine old church, which was encrusted by most sacred memories; a few stunted spars, splintered and blackened, show where once was a forest of shimmering greenery fit for the haunt of fairies. Where was a country road, down which were wont to come the laden carts in harvest-time, is a miry track, torn by shell-holes, powdered and crunched into clinging mud-paste by the ambulances, the motor-lorries, the transport limbers, and the long lines of jaded, soaked, earth-stained men continually on the move along it.

All over the hillside, once beautiful in the

sunshine, with waving corn, and woodlands where the birds were singing, run the intricate mazes of forsaken trenches, broken and ploughed by the terrible artillery, gaping with the huge craters of exploded mines, wrinkled and scarred, seared and blighted as if with some horrid leprosy. It is strewn with graves. It is a land that bears the story of its torture in every feature. And the fruitful soil has been buried deep under stones and chalk refuse. It is an emaciated thing, like a blind beggar, the very bones projecting through its rotting skin. It is not like a bit of God's fair earth at all, but rather some kind of underworld, away from hope and laughter. And it was only so recently beautiful among the nations, and the pride of the people whom it bore.

All over those ruined fields battle upon battle has swung in passionate struggle to and fro. For the enemy had laid down, with consummate thought and masterly design, what he intended to be an absolutely impregnable frontier line of earth-fort, strong dug-out, and powerful trench. And you would understand, as he has been made to understand, as never before, the stuff of which our race is made, if you saw the kind of place from which your boys drove out the stiffest and most stubborn foe we ever had to face.

The dug-outs which have been left undamaged ought to be preserved for all the world to see, as monuments alike of determined and purposeful industry, and of invincible courage and sacrifice. Some of them are two and three storeys in depth. You go down stairs that are wood-lined all the way with great strong beams; you can go along from passage to passage, looking into rooms comfortable, dry, and ventilated, furnished with many a titbit shifted from the homes which the guns have now blown flat—big, fine French beds, cosy arm-chairs, gilt-framed mirrors that once were in drawing-rooms, sumptuous rugs, warm curtains, stoves, and electric light. The men who occupied these never expected to be shifted. Deep down there they could sit secure from bomb and shell, the explosions of which sounded far away. There, in safety from our unspeakably terrible bombardments, the Germans crowded together and lay low, and then, rushing up, brought their machine-guns to bear on our advancing lines. But yet, despite it all, the lads from our firesides at home and oversea stormed the stern citadels, snatched the strong shelters from the grip of the enemy, and with bayonet and fist forced the dismayed and astonished Huns into death or surrender. They are the true monuments and mementoes of our army's devotion. The heart swells with a pride that has tears behind it, beholding the strength which was overcome, and remembering the sacrifice willingly given, in the strenuous hour of honour's call, by those of our flesh and blood. God grant we may be worthy of them in the days that are to be!

The very human instinct which makes people write their names upon the Pyramids, and in holier places, leaves its trace in the dug-outs also. On the lintels and jambs, in indelible pencil, is written name upon name; sometimes the legend, '*Gott mit uns;*' a stanza of Luther's hymn, '*Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott;*' or a verse or two of some old folk-ballad. At the door of one of these strongholds, on the ridge of a slope overlooking a once beautiful valley, I found a verse of warmest sentiment, inspired by the thought of a girl far away, and by the vision of the red, round moon in the hazy sky. Some Saxon lover's heart was for a while uplifted from the grim environment of war by the magic of remembrance, while the vast solemnity of moonlight flooded that place of death and doom and dire destruction. On at least one of the dug-outs a desire for strict privacy had prompted the occupants to inscribe upon the lintel the notice, '*Durchgang verboten*' ('No admission'). They forgot to put 'except on business,' so our brave Tommies went right in without knocking and took possession.

Some of the mine-craters are awe-inspiring, huge and monstrous evidences of the reality of war, scarified traces of terrible sacrifice. I saw one which must be about fifty yards in diameter and nearly fifty feet deep. The chalk soil and gravel glistened in the sun. And it reminded me of nothing so much as the photographs of mountains in the moon which were in our manuals of astronomy at college. Right down at the centre of it was a little cross; and here and there along the sloping sides the marks of brave dust's sleeping-places, with remains of German uniforms scattered about. Not far from the edge of it stands a big, simple white cross inscribed, 'Here lie buried the gallant men of the ——th Division, killed July 1st, 1916.' Then follow the names of some well-known regiments, including one of our own. Everywhere in No Man's Land, the scene of conflict on that memorable day, where, among the rough grasses and thorns, the broken and rusting barbed wire caught your foot, are to be found memorials of the fallen. There is a touch of extreme pathos in some of the distinctive marks, as, for example, the weather-worn broad bonnet of a Scottish regiment, the ordinary regulation cap, a trench helmet or two with the hole made by the bullet which was the sudden messenger of death. These, placed on the top of the little, rude wooden crosses, showed where had been found unknown and unidentified dead. The piteousness of the lost, who fell without a message, strikes you there.

I remember another mine-crater, in another place, where the graves were for the most part those of French soldiers who had been laid to rest by the hands of those who knew them not. There was a slab about the centre to the memory of '*Plusieurs soldats français inconnus morts au*

champ d'honneur.' To one cross was affixed a letter from the little daughter of the man whose stricken body slept below. It had been found in his pocket, stained and creased, but kept as a tender souvenir of home. It was addressed, '*A mon père à la guerre.*' It spoke to us, beholding it, of a young heart, somewhere, with the first touch of the mystery of death and the enigma of the empty chair cold upon it.

The stillness of those places, so lately swept by the overwhelming thunders of doom, was beyond description. And Nature's exquisite poesy had intervened; for, along the forsaken trenches, and near the graves, the drowsy scarlet poppy was waving in the silent garden of sleep. And sometimes it was as though war's destructive hand, rending the clay, had loosened the slumbering seeds of countless wild flowers, and given them their chance to hide the scars which the wrath of man had made on the face of the world.

We sat on a ridge there for a little while, and looked down on the battered village below, and the wood beyond, where such a dire struggle had so recently marked the dawn of a summer day; and the tragedy of it all came close in beside us, keeping us silent as those whose grave-mounds were scattered in the green plots near. Just in front of us was the grave of a German officer; the silver-gray moth which was creeping up his broken cross seemed to take a sudden meaning in that quiet place. And across the valley we could see the long line of men in khaki winding over the hill, horizonwards, through a ruined land.

As one moves from place to place one cannot but ask what is to be the fate of those shattered places, where happy folks once dwelt together, and of which, save for some heaps of brick-dust and a few spars, scarce a vestige now remains. Will they be rebuilt? I fancy, however poor the ruins are to-day, sentiment will bring back the scattered people to the old sites, that still in their desolateness are dear to the memory of those whose homes were there. For a long time after the war there will be villages of huts, for I have heard a whisper that the wooden buildings in our encampments may be purchased by the French Government for this very purpose. But it is at present difficult to conceive a set of settled communities in these valleys and fields of death. And yet every day one has seen how the people cling to the land. Shells may fall with nerve-shaking insistency, but the peasant will go on with his ploughing or his harrowing, turning a deaf ear to the threat of war. And the industry of the French nation has in the past wrought wonders when the cloud of war has removed its threat from their country.

Perhaps as terrible as crumbled ruins is the deserted village, where the houses still are standing, though at intervals along the street some have had their roofs blown in or the front walls shattered, and the church has been pierced by shells. I remember the first of these through which I rode in the dark. The empty, windowless rooms sent back the beat of our horses' feet most eerily, and we hushed our voices to a whisper as we rode. A large convent loomed by the roadside, empty and dark. And one felt something like the shadow of some great despair behind those forsaken walls. By daylight it was just as eerie. And you saw what wreckage war had made. At one door, in the passage, a cradle had been left behind. The people had apparently been in flight when a shell had dropped in the street, and they had fled precipitately then for dear life. The church precincts and the convent garden had been thoroughly searched by artillery, shell-hole lying in almost immediate contact with shell-hole. There was not a sign of life anywhere, except a stray cat or two which still lingered about the familiar places, and the chirp of the sparrows which thronged the bushes about the silent convent. In a corner of the garden there, a little gathering of plain white wooden crosses told where the tired ones were sleeping till the great awakening. In that place I have spoken of the resurrection and the life above the sleepers, in the sunshine and the rain.

Perhaps as pathetic as the deserted village is the half-forsaken town, where, because the German guns drop their 'crumps' there daily, most of the population have shut their doors and fled. I was often in one such, where before the war probably almost twenty thousand people led a busily industrious life. In the thoroughfare which bears the French equivalent of 'Commercial Street' the grass was growing thick. Everywhere windows had been blown in, and high roofs broken like matchwood. The beautiful old square was silent, the green grass flourishing between the paving-stones, and scarcely a footfall disturbed its slumber. But one day my servant said, 'Ride round this way, sir. There 's something here that touched my heart yesterday.' And we turned into a side-street of working folks' houses. And there were bairns laughing in their games, forgetful of the ruin and desolation. John stopped his horse, and his voice was husky as he said, 'There 's something in the Scriptures about a thing like this; a promise that in ruined Jerusalem there shall be children playing in the streets again. I found this here yesterday, and it minded me o' that.'

As sad as anything is the old château in the pleasant, wood-environed meadow, like a lamed and wounded thing, with ancient names on the marble slabs in the vaults, and the gilding still on the drawing-room, though sorely tarnished by the rain and the fog that have had too free entry through the dilapidated ceiling. I was sitting in one like that, chatting with some doctors who had made it their headquarters, when suddenly three shells fell in the wood

close by, and rocked the old place like a cradle. Somebody just said, 'Hullo!' and then we went on with the conversation. On the floor of the drawing-room, quite near us, lay an ugly lump of iron which had come in the day previous, through a panel of the drawing-room door, from a similar experience.

You do not need to go up to the front-line trench for risky moments. The messages of Brother Fritz are delivered unpleasantly far back, and when least expected. I have heard them falling quite near us when we thought ourselves in quite a secure billet. And one day, just across a field from where I stood, I saw one burst in a threadbare bit of wood, amongst some men who little looked for such a missive. It was strange to see the sudden alarm, and how the poor fellows ran hither and thither seeking cover, some of them vainly, from their horrid visitor.

All these places had names of their own before the war. They will, of course, have them still when war is over. They will keep the broken remembrance of them somehow, as a maimed brain keeps the memory of its past. But the British soldier has baptised them all by odd terms, making wild, grabbing attempts after the real thing, with the oddest and yet frequently most eloquent meanings as result. When one reflects on his experience in certain neighbourhoods, could anything be more appropriate than Armytears, or Devil's Wood, or Business, for certain well-known spheres of strenuous and painful activity? The trenches get their own names too. You find your way by Paternoster Row out to Ailsa Craig, so called from its remoteness and isolation; and you must be careful going through Na Poo Avenue, for it can be enfiladed by the enemy snipers, and many a brave fellow has been 'na poo' there. It is the soldier's familiar equivalent for the French phrase which expresses the fact that anything has come to an end, that there is no more of it; but it is in reality the patois synonym for the French classical sentence. And sometimes you stumble upon more familiar ground. One day I had to stoop in going underneath an overhead obstacle in a trench; and as I rose too suddenly I received a very sharp blow, which might have stunned me but for my good steel helmet's protection. As I looked up I found that I had just passed through Gibb's Entry. Surely it was an Edinburgh lad from Nicolson Street that wrote the name there.

In this ruined land the presence of winter gives us all serious thought. It is a horrible thing to contemplate. A few days' rain, and you will in some places have three feet of muddy, chill water to waddle through. And farther on, where the great guns have battered the world into smashed pulp of mire, you may go up to the waist, and indeed plunge into death itself, in loathsome mud. Nothing can be drearier, more dismal, or more grim than the landscape there—black slime of clammy clay, with water-filled shell-holes, stretching to a dull gray horizon-line. The camp where the transport lies is a quag, where mud-covered horses and men shiver by day and night. And the line is a series of deadly holes, where the faithful hold their posts in hideous discomfort, under an intermittent fire of shells which splash into the mire, flinging up first of all dirt and stones around them, and then, with a roaring burst, showers of missiles and fragments of iron, with the red fiery thing of hate in the heart of them. And that is the discipline through which our boys pass, without despondency, till the time for advance comes again, and we go forward once more along the inevitable path of sacrifice to victory.

A CELESTIAL SIGN.

By Andrew Quentin.

AS the matron, tray in hand, turned to leave the sickroom she paused, and glancing at the convalescent in the bed, said firmly, 'Now, remember, Mr Cunningham, no more tricks, such as getting out of bed and walking round the room, to "admire the scenery," as you say. On no account must you get up for at least three days. Your last escapade might have been fatal, and the next will almost certainly be so.' She glanced severely at the pale face on the pillow, not unhandsome even with its three weeks' growth of brown beard.

The patient smiled cheerfully back at her. 'All right, Miss Blaydon; I'll attend to that,' he murmured, with an almost ludicrous attempt at penitence.

'Your word, please, Mr Cunningham,' went on the matron, entirely unmoved by the apparent contrition. From long experience Miss Jane Blaydon placed little faith in the repentance of a convalescent.

'Oh, I say, Miss Blaydon, that's a bit stiff. Surely you can trust me.'

'Your word, please. Your life has some value, Mr Cunningham, although you apparently do not think so.'

'Very well, I give you my word,' replied the occupant of the bed, half-sulkily, as he swung round into a more comfortable position.

The matron, with a grim smile, and a satisfied nod of the head at the result of her firmness, noiselessly departed, closing the door carefully behind her.

When she was gone Roddy Cunningham sat

up in bed and shook his fist at the closed door.

'Confound that angular damsel!' he ejaculated angrily. 'Here am I chained to this blessed bed for another three days. Ugh!' And he scowled at the various interesting and agreeable objects in the room, winding up with a gaze of particular and intense hatred at the tumbler of Vichy water on the table at his bedside.

It was May 1900. He was lying in the English hospital, planted on the hillside above the great South American port of San Pedro, just recovering from a severe bout of yellow fever—far more severe, in fact, than he had had any notion of. But he had pulled through, thanks to a powerful constitution, inherited from his Scottish ancestors; thanks also to that spice of luck which is necessary to every man at the critical moments of his life's history. Now he had only two desires—to be allowed to get up, and to be furnished with what he considered a sufficient amount of sustaining food. Yesterday he had horrified his pretty, but prim, nurse, Miss Watson, by demanding a large beefsteak with a fried egg on top, plus a bottle of pale ale. To-day she had been even more horrified, on entering his room unexpectedly, to find him standing at the open window, gazing entrancedly at the great view beneath him—the hillside with its luxuriant vegetation waving in the fresh breeze; beyond, the superb bay crowded with merchant and naval shipping. As a matter of fact, at that moment he was meditating a stroll along the veranda outside the window, and a talk, through *their* open windows, with the few other fever-stricken 'Inglezes' occupying similar rooms along the corridor.

This most irregular proceeding had promptly been reported by Miss Watson to the matron; result, the interview above recorded, ending in the complete rout of Roderick Cunningham, accountant at San Pedro of the great English Bank of South America.

Ugh! He lay down again, drew the bedclothes round him, and fell fast asleep.

A few hours later he was roused by the sound of footsteps moving softly about the room. Opening his eyes slightly, he perceived the slim figure of Miss Watson—Nurse Mary. She was closing the window, as dusk was about to fall. This done, she approached the side-table, and, to his extreme astonishment, Roddy saw that she had recently been weeping bitterly. For a few moments he watched her arranging the medicine-bottles; then, stretching himself with a yawn, 'Hullo, nurse! What has gone wrong now?' he inquired.

The nurse started violently, almost upsetting the detested tumbler.

'Nothing, Mr Cunningham,' she replied; 'nothing at all.'

Roddy eyed her narrowly. He had not had a diverse experience of men—and of women—in several portions of the globe for nothing.

'Come now, nurse, that won't do.' Then, as a sudden thought struck him, he added, 'By-the-by, how is Merton getting on?'

Merton was one of the aforesaid inmates of the corridor rooms, and was reported to be a rather bad case of Yellow Jack.

The nurse burst into tears, and, without attempting any reply, hastened from the room, holding her handkerchief to her streaming eyes. He could hear the sound of sobbing as she hurried along the passage, and even in the midst of his surprise Roddy caught himself hoping that Miss Blaydon would not appear at that particular moment. If she did, Nurse Mary would wish herself back in dear old London by the time that strict disciplinarian had finished with her. Roddy rather liked Nurse Mary, although he had a shrewd idea that his manner of life and conduct met with her severe disapproval.

He stared now in deep thought at the white plastered ceiling, glimmering faintly in the dusk. Merton, poor chap! must be in a bad way. That was a dashed pity. Not that he, Roddy, was a friend of Merton, or even liked him as an acquaintance—rather the contrary. For Merton was one of those 'churchy' fellows one meets with occasionally abroad; never went to the Casino, the bull-fights, or the races; hardly touched wine; attended the English church every Sunday in his life, including the most grilling days of a tropic summer; while Roddy . . . No, he was no friend of Merton. Still, it was infernal hard luck to peg out like that, a man under thirty, with all his future career to look forward to.

And the nurse? When he had asked her that sudden question, he had recollected meeting Merton and Miss Watson, one Sunday forenoon a few months ago, on the shore front, not far from the English church. He was on his way to the boat-races in the next bay, and they were evidently just returning from the morning service. He had thought at the time that they appeared to be on very friendly terms. Infernal hard luck! Still, there was always a chance while life held. He would inquire of Miss Blaydon to-morrow.

But on the following day he did not see the matron until late in the afternoon, when she entered the room, grave and sedate as usual, but carrying what appeared to his incredulous eyes to be a bottle of champagne! Nurse Mary had not appeared that day, another nurse having evidently taken up her duties in that part of the building.

As Miss Blaydon perceived the unbounded surprise with which her refractory patient was staring at the bottle a faint smile crossed her lips, but she merely remarked, in her customary calm voice, 'To-day is the Queen's birthday, Mr

Cunningham, and our custom is that every person in the hospital receives a glass of champagne on that day, to drink her Majesty's health.'

'By Jove, Miss Blaydon!' answered the unregenerate invalid in the bed before her, 'that is absolutely the most magnificent custom I ever heard of. Just put it down on the table here, please. But, I say, couldn't you make it two glasses?'

The matron shook her head solemnly, though still smiling. 'Only one glass, Mr Cunningham. Then, generously, and as one making a great concession, she added, handing him the bottle, 'You may pour it out yourself.' As she spoke she placed a glass on the table.

Roddy sat up in bed and held the bottle up to the light. 'Look here, Miss Blaydon, it's almost empty,' he said in tones of the utmost alarm.

The matron's smile broadened. Perhaps in her inmost heart there burned more than a flicker of admiration for the fair-haired, six-foot Scot.

'Now, Mr Cunningham, there are at least two glassfuls left. But as a special favour, and as you have kept your promise about remaining in bed, I will leave the bottle with you. Take care not to spill any,' she added, shooting this Parthian arrow as she retreated towards the door.

With a seraphic smile the convalescent took up the glass, but even as he did so he recollected his brief conversation with Nurse Mary on the previous day.

'I say, Miss Blaydon,' he called, 'a moment, please.'

The spare figure of the matron reappeared in the doorway. Roddy bent forward, and lowered his voice: 'How is Merton?'

Miss Blaydon advanced slowly to the bedside, and, pausing there, gazed down at her questioner. Across her face there passed an expression of supreme pity, but her tone was level, steady, controlled. 'Mr Merton's condition, I am sorry to say, is quite hopeless. He cannot live beyond midnight.'

Roddy stared at the sallow face above him. 'Dashed hard lines,' he murmured; 'although we must all take our chance. But yet, "while there's life there's hope," you know, Miss Blaydon,' he added, quoting that venerable adage which has given consolation to so many thousands of anxious hearts.

The matron shook her head. 'No, Mr Cunningham,' she answered sadly; 'that does not apply to yellow fever. There may be life, and no hope. The doctor has just seen poor Mr Merton, and his verdict is final.' With a sigh she turned away, and Roddy lay down again, leaving the champagne unpoured, untasted.

So Merton was doomed. Hard lines indeed! But Miss Blaydon had seen too many cases of yellow fever, fatal and otherwise, during her long stay in San Pedro to be deceived. She was reputed to know almost as much as any doctor in the great city about that terrible scourge. When she spoke in that definite tone it must truly be only a matter of hours.

Not beyond midnight! and already night was approaching. Roddy glanced at the window space framing the fast darkening sky, and as he did so his eyes lighted on the champagne-bottle. Merton would drink no health to her Majesty that evening. Unconsciously his thoughts turned to the friends of past years whom he had lost by fever; then to the few, the very few, almost miraculous recoveries, even in the article of death. One especially he recollected —Constable, now in London alive and well, who had suddenly awakened from the final state of coma, and demanded—a bottle of Dublin stout! to which request the doctor in attendance, on being interrogated, had replied almost sardonically, 'Give him anything he asks; nothing matters now.' Yet from that hour Constable had turned his face towards life, rejecting death. A miracle!

Perhaps if Merton received a mouthful of that champagne he also would get round the corner. It was, at any rate, worth trying. As the thought struck Roddy he stretched his hand towards the little bell on the table to summon the nurse. But his arm stopped in mid-air. The nurse would think that he was mad. So would Miss Blaydon, of a surety. He well knew the matron's strict views as to fever patients and alcohol. With a shrug of the shoulders he drew back his hand, then suddenly sat up in bed.

Why should he not give Merton the champagne himself? He glanced swiftly at the closed door, then at the open window. The nurse would come in very soon to close the window for the night; but five minutes, less, would be enough. He threw off the bedclothes, pushed his feet into the slippers he had worn on the previous day, and hastily donned his dressing-gown. Suddenly there flashed across his mind his promise to the matron, and her grave warning. He stood irresolute. 'His word of honour;' 'his life.' Life is as sweet at thirty-five as at eighteen, especially when one has just emerged from the clutches of such a malady as Yellow Jack. After all, Merton would not have one chance in ten thousand.

Suddenly he grasped the bottle, and turned quickly to the window. His resolution was taken. Merton should have that last chance, were it one in ten million.

Silently he stepped out on to the veranda. As he did so, railing, house, trees, all swayed around him, but a timely grasp of the framework prevented him from falling.

'Dash it all! I am weaker than I thought,' he murmured.

Pausing a few moments until the mist had cleared, he passed along the veranda. Merton's room, he knew, was next but one to his own, so at the second window he bent his tall figure and peered in.

Yes, that was Merton; a small, slender form, almost puny, lying motionless in bed, with wasted, haggard face, unseeing eyes, turned towards the light, his spirit undoubtedly travelling fast towards its journey's end. Roddy slipped quietly into the room, and stooped over the bed.

'Merton, old chap—Merton!'

From the prone figure there came no movement, only a faint sound as of interrogation.

'It's Roddy Cunningham—Cunningham of the Bank, you know, Merton. I say, old chap, would you like some champagne to drink the Queen's health?'

Merton moved feebly, and apparently tried to raise his head from the pillow, but in vain. Roddy glanced anxiously round. Time pressed. At any moment the nurse might come in, or might enter his own room, to find it empty. Bending again over the bed, he whispered, almost hissed, 'Merton, some champagne!'

There was no reply; but Merton, moving his head partly round, slightly opened his mouth as if to imbibe the precious liquor. As Roddy hastily stooped lower, it occurred to him that he had forgotten to bring the glass.

'Confound it!—no matter,' he muttered, and tipping up the bottle, he poured the contents down the dying man's throat, to the last drop. Then, gathering up the skirts of his dressing-gown, he swiftly passed through the open window, and regained his room, and bed, with all speed.

As he laid his head on the pillow and drew a long breath of satisfaction the door opened, and the night nurse came in.

'Well, Mr Cunningham, how did you enjoy the champagne? Why,' she continued, with a touch of acerbity, 'you have taken the bottle to bed with you.'

'So I have, nurse,' he answered apologetically, lifting the empty bottle from the side of the pillow, where he had laid it on his hasty return. 'That shows how fond I am of it.'

. . . . . .

Four weeks later Roddy Cunningham, fresh from his recuperative sojourn in the hills, was turning into the broad Avenida Grande, when he perceived advancing towards him Miss Blaydon and Nurse Watson, evidently busy on a shopping excursion. The matron, stiff and austere in her white costume, with her hair drawn flatly back from her sallow forehead, was as indifferent to the amused smiles of the South American gilded youth as to the admiring glances directed towards her pretty companion. Both ladies greeted Roddy almost with effusion. As his eye caught the gleam of the diamond on the younger nurse's left hand he bowed and murmured, 'My best congratulations.'

'Certainly it was a most marvellous recovery that Mr Merton made, wasn't it, Mr Cunningham?' queried Miss Blaydon, her glance resting with a hint of approval on the manly figure before her. Without waiting for a reply, she went on, in her even tones, 'The Reverend Mr Danby made special reference to it in his sermon on the Sunday following; he said it could only be considered as a direct celestial sign of favour, a merciful interposition of Providence at the last moment.'

Roddy drew in his lips tightly, and stared at the pavement. Before his mind's eye there flashed the scene in Merton's room—his own fever-stricken, trembling arm pouring down the moribund's throat that life-giving, resurrecting fluid; he, Roddy Cunningham, in the guise of a merciful Providence!

But some remark had to be made; the ladies were expectant. 'No doubt Mr Danby was quite correct,' he observed gravely. 'After all, Providence is an old hand, and should know its business by this time.'

Miss Blaydon shook her head half-smilingly; but Nurse Mary was evidently somewhat shocked at this too light-hearted allusion to her fiancé's extraordinary escape from death. As the ladies proceeded on their way she suddenly remarked, 'I really don't care much for that Mr Cunningham. I don't think he is quite a good man. When at the hospital he told me that he had not been inside a church for seven years.'

The matron's face clouded over at this open condemnation, then cleared again as a redeeming thought evidently occurred to her. 'Of course, he is Scotch, my dear—no doubt Presbyterian,' she answered placidly; 'and everybody knows that they are rather peculiar.'

A SUMMER SIGH.

Soft breath of summer, sighing through the pines
And o'er the sloping moorland near the sea,
Swaying the trembling grass and drooping vines
Where fitful shadows flit across the lea—
Bring back again the voices that of yore
Made music which re-echoes evermore.

And, gentle rose, whose perfume never dies,
But lingers still, though time may pass away;
Pale lavender, whose scent stern age defies;
Sweet-brier, sweet next year as yesterday—
Restore to me the fragrance of the past,
The hope that died, the joy that fled so fast.

Gay, slender swallow, flashing swiftly by;
Sad nightingale, whose silence comes so soon;
Light, fleecy clouds, that race across the sky;
And tender mists, chased by the rising moon—
Can you not bring to me, when you return,
The heart I lost, the love for which I yearn?

Nora C. Usher.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

IN recent weeks a bright light has been shining in the west of a world of sorrow and of glory. Its brilliance increases. It has seemed like a heavenly fire, and its effulgence has spread over the earth, lightening obscure paths upon which harassed men in search of a great ideal have been arduously pressing their way. It has needed but a little imagination on the part of those who have perceived this shining light, its significance and its splendour, to see also a scintillating halo flashing round the head of that noble statue of 'Liberty Enlightening the World' that towers up at the entrance to New York harbour, to see the fire of justice and truth burning from the torch that the figure of Liberty holds aloft. I think that, perhaps more than the Americans themselves, all who have visited the United States must be led at this present moment to profound reflection on the significance of that great statue, the old significance and the new. It is tremendous. In the days of peace the visitor to those hospitable American shores could hardly look upon that work for the first time without experiencing a deep emotion. There is something that thrills about that view of Liberty at the gates of the freest people. And to-day we cannot fail to recall that the statue was France's gift to the United States. That is something to remember now, one of the little crumbs of history about which three years ago perhaps not one person in four or five on the deck of an ingoing liner knew or seemed to care. Those were careless days, if happy in their way. Now we see that at the first moments of her entry into the war the United States thinks first of all of the civilisation of the world and her own situation and responsibility in regard to it; next she thinks of France, then of the other Allies and Britain with them. She is right in this order of thinking, although there may be a few of the more superficial egotists in our islands who may wonder as usual why Britain does not come first, since it is on her that the burden of the war is now chiefly falling. But certainly America is right. If you spend a little while in any part of that great country that stands between the Atlantic and the Pacific you will come to a new understanding of the affection that it has for France and all that is French; and then if you will read only a little of the elementary history that has been forgotten, and consider anew the nature of these people now, you will see why it is so. The significance of this marvellous statue increases with every thought. It is America as nothing else has ever indicated her; and now it is the new America that leaps from isolation in her own western continent and flings herself afar upon the enemies of the old world from which she rose. I remember well the subtle emotion that crept within me the first time that I saw this work. It was not in the sunlight of morning or in the blue dusk of an American evening, as I had hoped, for I was looking forward to the view. I saw it through the torrents of a storm, with the wind screeching through the fittings of my ship, and furious rain ricochetting on the deck planks, and water-mists blurring everything around. From this fury and chaos the figure of Liberty came slowly out, better defined at each murmur of our engines. Just in time the gale seemed to abate for a moment, as if by, or in obedience to, that force of Liberty, and as we sailed by we had a fair view of the noble form and face, of the strong right arm (which I may tell you is forty-two feet in length!) holding on high the flaming torch. My clothing was soaking wet as I turned away, Liberty fading into the storm again; but I had gained a great impression, and, wonderful as they are, the sight of the tall buildings that seem to kiss the sky failed in its effect as we steamed through placid waters to our harbour berth.

* * *

How splendid is the statue's situation! Auguste Bartholdi, the French sculptor, had a fine inspiration when he chose this little Bedloe's Island for the site. The French people had decided half a century ago to make a gift to their true friends of the great republic across the seas, to commemorate the centenary of their independence and the long-established warmth of feeling between the two nations. They sent Bartholdi to New York to study the project and prepare for it. As his ship sailed through the Narrows and on towards Manhattan, he went on deck like the others to strain his gaze, with a curious wonder, towards the shores of this new world, now seen for the first time. Bartholdi

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was impressed with this general eagerness to look upon the country, and when, gazing and wondering like the rest, his eyes fell upon Bedloe's Island in the middle of the upper bay, he knew he had found his true site ere he landed. It was perfect. He would, with the help of God and his own true genius, make a statue that should be fit for it, an indication of America and her meaning that should be presented to the view of expectant visitors and emigrants as they approached the country. On the threshold of America this Liberty should be seen holding high her lighted torch as an emblem of freedom and opportunity in this new world. Bartholdi did his work in a splendid way. Completed in 1884, it was erected on the chosen site two years later, there to commemorate for ever the first centenary of American independence and the French Government's affectionate interest therein, their joy that in this new land there should be *Liberté éclairant le Monde*. The tablet has on it the date, 'July 4, 1776.' It may well be impressive, apart from its meaning and the effect of that meaning upon all history, for this is the greatest colossus in the world. Its pedestal rests firmly upon a foundation which is a monolith of concrete declared to be the largest artificial single stone that has ever been made. The figure is of copper hammered to its shape, fastened to form by rivets and supported within by an iron framework which was designed by the engineer Eiffel, the same who made the tower in Paris. It is a scientific affair, as it needed to be, since here it is alone with the water and the wind, and there is more than three hundred feet of it from the foundation to the torch, the Liberty herself being well over a hundred feet, her hand sixteen and her finger eight, a finger-nail veritably a matter of thirteen inches by ten. There are allowances and contrivances made for expansion and contraction by heat and cold, and there is asbestos packing to insulate the copper from the iron and prevent the corrosion which would otherwise be caused by the effect of electricity induced by the salt air. If, as we are thinking of Liberty, the joy of free peoples, and the nobility of ideals, there may seem for a moment to be something a little unsuitably materialistic in the mention of these details, it is not so; for here are foresight and mechanical perfection, strength and permanence, and these things are of America even as Liberty is. If I heard that this statue shook, that Liberty's torch fell down, that this majestic pile collapsed and sank into the waters of the bay, then I might fear indeed that the cause of freedom in the world was about to be lost, and that criminal Germany might be victorious and so spoil the whole scheme of creation and the world. It would be such a mighty and overwhelming portent. But we know that this Liberty, so strong, so sure, will not fall down. On the night of Victory might not the Government of the United States, partner in it, order that real fire and flames shall sparkle from that torch and signal to heaven that the work is done? Meanwhile it is symbolical of determination and serenity of confidence. There is a beautiful, a benevolent calm on the countenance of this figure. Bartholdi, I was told, modelled the features from those of his dear mother. Now he is dead. It is thirteen years since he passed away, just about the time when Germany was beginning the first preparations for her grand attack upon the liberty of the world. There was some Italian blood in this Bartholdi, yet he was utterly and passionately French. He was an Alsatian; Colmar was his birthplace.

* * *

Even though the news was expected, how wonderful was the thrill that spread through the fighting Allies when they heard they were joined at last by the United States of America, the strongest and freest people, the people who had nothing to gain! Some mysterious significance of this momentous event seemed to strike with a quick shock of exhilaration upon the very soul of mankind. Much of the meaning and the possibility were understood, and yet there was something beyond, uplifting, strengthening, which belonged to the instinct and the spirit, and could not be explained. America, the new land, the new world, the country and the nation that had begun life over again, separate and distinct and far away from the old scenes of the world—much of the system of which she disliked and even abhorred—had been moved to the most active sympathy with the fighters for right, to the most active anger against their devilish enemies, and she would fight with France and Britain and Italy, and with that new-born Russia come through trials to its freedom. America would abandon her isolation and take her turn in the crisis of old-world affairs with which every continent was at last closely concerned; she was definitely and intimately to associate herself with the cause and effort of the Grand Allies. With all its generosity and its boundless capacity, this richest and ablest of nations was to come to the support of the brave peoples struggling so desperately with the foe. It was a splendid act. It will bind the free peoples together in such love and harmony as could never have been without this grand decision. It gives a more magnificent hope for the world than the uttermost optimist could have cherished before. The war is a vast and appalling thing; we who live through it know that we are witnessing the most stirring, tremendous, and effective epoch in the history of the world, something so enormous in its character and its consequence that one almost feels that the heavens themselves, the other planets, must have regard to what is happening here and be affected by it. But, great as is the

war as we have known it, it is not greater than the American entry into this struggle.

* * *

It has been interesting to observe the development of a certain change of attitude and opinion towards the citizens of the United States and their President by the people of this country. There have been suggestions of admission that old judgments have been incorrect and need revision, that facts and circumstances which exist and are of ponderous importance had been but imperfectly understood and appreciated. Now, it is said, the real difficulties of the United States, as they have been, are perceived, and the character of the people is known. Certain withdrawals in regard to the President have been ungrudgingly made; his wisdom and his heart, his statesmanship and his conscience, have the most handsome and spontaneous tributes paid to them. It is well that this should be so. The complete belligerent in these days is not in the best position for a calm judgment upon the motives and the quality of neutrals. He would need to be superhuman if his judgment were to be unaffected and unbiassed. No doubt it has been hard for some of our people to realise the terrible truth of our own sacrifices, and to behold another nation, with much of our own blood in its veins, speaking our own tongue, at peace, becoming enormously rich through its neutrality, and being, as it seemed, willing to bear punishment itself from the Germans without retaliating. We were too proud, it was thought, to ask the help of any one; but there were things that were thought. Certainly, also, it was believed that the President was weak (a suggestion against which the writer vehemently protested in these pages months ago), that he was careless of the national honour, and that he was too willing to agree with any of his countrymen who might suggest that the true course for the United States was one of peace at any price. Now it is agreed that many of these judgments were wrong. There may be some opportunism in this revision, and yet there is a deep and joyful sincerity also. Our people are being taught a war lesson once again, and they realise better than before that they are given to a considerable superficialness of thinking and of speaking. Even now they must understand that if America has 'come in,' she has not done so entirely from respect and love for Britain, though she likes us. Herself and her principles have been the first consideration; her affection for France has clearly been the second. In our new enthusiasm let us not lose sight of the true values, in a national egotism that has often led us sadly astray. We shall henceforth be far better friends with the Americans than in the past, and at the outset, in wondering upon the marvellous preparations of our cousins, their splendid generosity in financial affairs, and their amazing display of order, method, and efficiency, superior by far to the best efforts of our enemies in this respect, let us come to a real appreciation of all the circumstances.

* * *

Too many British people seem to labour under the fancy that America is jealous of us, and that, with our blood in her, she is like an ungrateful child. They do not seem to understand how and why America has come to be, and what it is. They seem to have forgotten the *Mayflower*, and the great Puritan emigration of so much that was best in the bodies and brains of our countrymen that speedily followed; how and why that strong and splendid colony was built up in Massachusetts. In those years when the shores of North America were only just being discovered, they did not leave their native land for the mere love of adventure and change. They had been taught already that gold-hunting in this new country was useless; the principle was propounded by the great John Smith, and accepted afterwards universally, that only labour was good. 'Nothing is to be expected thence but by labour,' he wrote; and it was in labour and tears for the homes that had been left, and with a smile of hope to the future, that the first British settled in America. They had left Britain because of their loss of liberty, because of the unbearable tyrannies that had been forced upon them, because they yearned for freedom, for religious freedom. People of all nations went to this new land also. They had had their own sufferings and disappointments at home; they longed for a new life, new liberty, new opportunities. They wished to be rid of all the shackles of the European systems, the tyrannical survivals of ancient times. They were for freedom and equality. But allegiance was paid to Britain until Britain, as we all know now and freely admit, made appalling blunders in her handling of the new colony. Loyalty was tested too far, tyranny ventured across the sea, and then the States declared for liberty complete and an end to the European system and all its hateful works. They would live their own lives in their own way, free and independent. They asked nothing of Europe, and would tolerate no interference. Europe could go on its own way, with its autocracies, its machinations, its alliances, its diplomatic exercises, its gigantic armies, and its continual threats and fears of wars. America was not for these things, but for peace and labour. That is the spirit of the States, and the country's great foundation. It has been to escape from the European thraldom, and obviously with a sense of disappointment with their homeland, that most emigrants have gone to this new country. They have been tired of Europe. Perhaps at times America, in her strength and her independence, has been a little arrogant, but never was a country more entitled to a splendid pride. She is the wonder of the earth. Three hundred years have seen her grow from nothing but

the wild land of the Red Indian tribes to be the pivot of the world, as we see her, and the undoubted centre of future civilisation, which moves from the old to the new. And yet if she has been, as we say, arrogant at times, too prideful perhaps, again let us call to mind that in her own great domestic war, when she fought to purge herself of slavery, some of us in Britain were not her best friends then. Still, by some of those to whom we have referred, it has been thought that, despite all this, at the first rattle of the guns in Europe, this blend of blood in America, a full mixture of all the white races, should immediately abandon its principle of separation from the European system and fly to the battlefields. All that its first separation from Europe had meant, and all that its three hundred years of American history had taught, were to be given up. But, it is said, there was the cause of Humanity, there was the case of Belgium, the *Lusitania*, and a thousand other things. These were tremendous matters; America weighed them well. She was not indifferent; gradually, surely, she brought herself to the sacrifice of the great principle on which she had established herself, that of her absolute independence and separation from the European system. Naturally, some provocations to which she was subjected forced the decision, but there was never any doubt as to the direction in which her sympathies and tendencies lay.

* * *

And, again, as to what seemed her hesitation, it is not appreciated how far America is from Britain. I do not mean in a mere matter of mileage—though even then it is far—but in thought. New York, the eastern shore, is near enough; but only those who have travelled through the country, have boarded one of the great west-going trains from the Central or Pennsylvania stations in the city, and, with the big engine bells clanging mournfully through the night, have followed the path of the sun and gone over thousands of miles of barely developed country, sped over the prairies, gone on and on towards the far Pacific, can understand how distant Britain seems to be, how utterly remote is our dear land. In the central States it has seemed to the wanderer to be nearly as far away as the stars themselves; and I remember how once, after such a wandering, returning to the east coast, I saw the Atlantic sea again for the first time one autumn afternoon at Newport, Rhode Island, and, for very joy of the fact that this same ocean touched my native shore, ran down to the beach to splash hands upon the wavelets as some demonstration of affection. But the people of other races, a blend of races, so far remote from Britain, going on peacefully with their business, were expected to hurry to the slaughter at its first beginning. Herein one tries to present the case not from a partisan view, but as it might appear from the neutral view and fairly. On our side we know what there is to be said, and it need not be repeated. The heart of the American people is good and true. We who have been with them in their homes know them better than do those who merely see them passing through our country on their holiday trips. They need no lessons in right, in conscience, or in strength. The life of Abraham Lincoln was not thrown away.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXVI.—WHICH MAKES FURTHER MENTION OF A RING.

RAVENSLEE, strolling in leisurely fashion along Tenth Avenue, became aware of a slender, pallid youth whose old-young face was familiar; a cigarette dangled from his pale, thin lips, and his slender hands were hidden in the pockets of his smartly tailored coat. On went Ravenslee, pausing now and then to glance idly into some shop window, until, chancing to slip his fingers into a waistcoat pocket, he paused all at once, and, drawing thence a ring wrought into the semblance of two clasped hands, drew it upon his finger. Now as he glanced at the ring his eye gleamed, and, smiling as one who has a sudden bright idea, he set off faster than before, striding on light and purposeful feet. But as he turned a corner he noticed that the pallid youth was still close behind; wherefore he halted before a shop window where, among other articles of diet, were cans of tomatoes neatly piled into a pyramid. At these he stared, waiting, and thus presently found the pallid youth at his elbow, who also stared upon the tomato pyramid with half-closed eyes and with smouldering cigarette pendent from thin-lipped mouth. And after they had stared awhile in silence, cheek by jowl, Ravenslee spoke in his pleasant, lazy voice. 'Judging by the labels, these tomatoes are everything tomatoes possibly could be.'

''S right!' murmured the pale one imperturbably.

'Fond of tomatoes?' inquired Ravenslee.

'Aw!' answered his neighbour, 'quit foolin' —talk sense!'

'Certainly! Why do you follow me, Soapy?' asked Ravenslee.

Soapy's eyes grew narrower and the pendent cigarette stirred slightly. 'Know me, hey?' he inquired.

'Heaven forbid! 'Twas a bolt at a venture —a shot in the dark.'

'Talkin'—o'—shootin',' said Soapy, grimly

deliberate, 'pea-nuts ain't a healthy profesh around here—not for your kind it ain't!'

'Oh, I don't know,' answered Ravenslee, shaking his head gently at the tomatoes. 'I've heard of professions even more unhealthy.'

'Aw—well—say what?'

'Well, talking of shooting—yours!'

Soapy's narrow eyes gleamed with an added viciousness, his pale nostrils expanded, but the retort died upon his curling mouth, his puffy eyelids widened and widened as he stared at the ring on Ravenslee's finger, and when he spoke his voice was strangely hoarse and eager. 'Say, sport, where'd you—get that—ring?'

'Why do you ask?'

''Cause I want to know, I guess.'

'Think you've seen it before?'

'Sport, I don't think—I know. I seen it many a time. I'd know it in a million, sure.'

'Where did you see it before?'

'On M'Ginnis's mitt. It useter belong t' Bud.'

'Ah!' exclaimed Ravenslee, scowling down at the ring, 'you make me wish more than ever that I had throttled him a little harder.'

'Where'd you get that ring, sport?' Soapy repeated.

'From Maggie Finlay's father.'

Soapy turned away to stare at the tomato-cans again. 'Meanin'?' he inquired at last, hoarser than before.

'That once upon a time it belonged to—her.'

'Sport,' said Soapy after an interval, still staring at the pyramid of cans, 'I useter know her once, an' I've jest nacherally took a fancy t' that ring. If fifty dollars'll buy it, they're yours—right now.'

'It isn't mine,' answered Ravenslee, still scowling at the ring, which he had drawn from his finger. 'I'm on my way to take it to—its owner. But if that person doesn't want it, and I'm pretty sure—that person—won't, you shall have it, I promise you. And now,' said he, pocketing the ring and turning, still scowling on Soapy, 'you are one of M'Ginnis's gang, I fancy; anyway, if you see him you can tell him from me that if he gives me another chance I'll surely kill him for the foul beast he is.'

'Sport,' said Soapy, 'I guess the Spider's right about you—anyway, you ain't my meat. An' as for killin' Bud, you sure ain't goin' t' get th' chance—not while I have the say-so. S'long, sport!' and, turning upon his heel, Soapy lounged away.

Reaching Times Square, Ravenslee entered the subway, and, buying his ticket, was jostled by a boy, a freckled boy, round-headed and round of nose, who stared at him with a pair of round, impertinent eyes.

Lost in happy speculation, he was duly borne to One Hundred and Thirtieth Street, where he boarded the ferry. Upon the boat he was again conscious of a round head that bobbed here and there amid the throng of passengers, but paid small heed as he leaned watching the broad and noble river and the green New Jersey shore. At Fort Lee, exchanging boat for trolley-car, he was once more vaguely conscious of two round eyes that watched him from a rear seat; but as the powerful car whirled them uphill, plunged them down steep inclines, swung them round sharp curves, through shady woods, past far-flung boughs whose leaves stirred and whispered as the great car fleeted by, he fell again to dreaming of Hermione and the future; and so betimes reached Englewood, a small township dreaming in the fierce midday sunshine. Here he inquired of a perspiring butcher in shirt-sleeves the whereabouts of the house he wanted, and, being fully directed and carefully admonished how to get there, set off along the road. And, remembering that her feet must often have traversed this very path, he straightway fell to his dreaming again; and thus how should he know anything of the round head that bobbed out from behind bush or tree ere it followed whither he went? So Ravenslee came where the road led between tall trees to smooth green lawns, beyond which was the gleam of water, and so at last to the house he sought.

Now beside this house, separated by a wide stretch of lawn, was a small wood; and, lured by its grateful shade, he turned aside into this wood and began pushing his way through the dense undergrowth, which, presently thinning, formed a small clearing roofed and shut in by leaves and full of a tender green light. Here he paused, and, espying a fallen tree hard by, sat himself down and began to fill his pipe. And now, remembering his shabby person, he felt disinclined to go up to the house and demand to see Miss Chesterton; yet see her he would; but how? He was frowning over this problem, when it was resolved for him quite unexpectedly; roused by the sound of a snapping twig, he glanced up, and Hermione was before him. She was coming down a narrow path that wound amid the leaves, and, because she wore no hat, the sunlight filtering through the branches made a glory of her hair as she passed; her head was bowed, and she walked very slowly as one in thought; she had brought sewing with her, but for once her busy hands were idle, and as he looked upon her beauty, scarce breathing, he saw again that look of wistful sadness.

As he rose she glanced up, and, seeing him, stood utterly still. Thus for a long moment they gazed upon each other; then, even as he hasted to her, she came to him on swift, light feet, and, flushing, tremulous, quick-breathing, gave herself into his arms.

'Oh Hermione, my beloved!' he murmured, his voice tense and eager, 'didn't I say enough last time—didn't I? Don't you know I love you—worship you—hunger and yearn for you? I want you with every breath I draw. When

will you be my wife—eh? When will you marry me, Hermione?'

For answer she reached up her arms, sudden, passionate arms that clung about him close and strong. They stood thus, heart beating to heart, thrilling at each other's nearness, yet drawing ever closer until, lifting her head, she gave her lips to his.

'Oh my dear, my dear,' she whispered, 'is it right to love you so, I wonder? I never thought it could be—like this. It frightens me sometimes, because my love is so great and strong, and I so powerless. Is it right I—— Oh!' she broke off breathlessly, 'how can I speak if—if you'——

'Kiss you so much?' he ended. 'You can't speak, so don't speak, my Hermione!' But now, all at once, he started and glanced up among the leaves above them.

'Dear,' she whispered, 'what is it?'

'That tapping sound,' he answered, still gazing upward.

'It's only the woodpecker.'

'Why, of course!' he laughed. 'It's strange, but I dreamed a scene like this—yes, the great tree yonder, and you in my arms—though it seemed so impossible then, and'——

But uttering a sudden, low cry of alarm, Hermione broke from his clasp and fled from him along the leafy path, while he stared after her, lost in amazement; then he ran also, and caught her upon the edge of the little wood.

'What frightened you, Hermione? Who was it?'

'I—I thought I saw some one crouching behind a bush, watching us!'

'Not M'Ginnis?' he demanded, fierce-eyed.

'No, no, I'm sure it wasn't!'

'I'll go and look,' said Ravenslee, clenching his fists. But now, as he turned away, two round arms were about him again, soft and compelling, and she was looking up at him all shy-eyed, passionate tenderness; and before the revelation in that look he forgot all else in the world.

'Hermione, when will you marry me?'

Now, softened by distance, there floated to them the mellow booming of a gong.

'That means I must go,' she sighed.

'Hermione, when will you marry me?'

'Good-bye! good-bye! I must run!'

But his long arms only clasped her the closer. 'Hermione, when will you be my wife?'

'Oh, please, please, let me go—if I'm late'——

'When, Hermione?'

'When I come home, if—you really—want me. Oh, now my hair's all coming down, I know. Good-bye!'

Reluctantly he loosed her and stood to watch, until, reaching the veranda of the house, she paused to glance back to where he stood among the leaves ere she vanished between the screen-doors. Then Ravenslee turned, and, remembering her sudden fright, looked sharply about him, even pausing now and then to peer behind bush and thicket; but this time he did not think to glance upward, and thus failed to see the round eyes that watched him from amid the leaves of the great tree. So he came again to the dusty highway and strode along throbbing with life and the lust of life, revelling in the glory of earth and sky, and quite unconscious of the small furtive figure that flitted after him far behind. And it was not until he sat in the ferry-boat that he remembered he had forgotten to give her the ring after all.

(*Continued on page 423.*)

BURNS'S COTTAGE.

By JOHN HORNE, Author of *A Canny Countryside*, &c.

ON an average, there are some sixty thousand visitors annually to the birthplace of the poet. How many thousands have entered the shrine since it became a popular rendezvous would be no easy task to compute; but what concerns us, at this point, is to try to identify the pioneer of this almost countless multitude. Who was the first pilgrim? I venture to claim that distinction for Tannahill. The publication of 'Tam o' Shanter' so ignited the Paisley poet that he determined to see Kirk Alloway and its environs for himself. In the summer of 1794—while Burns was yet alive—he actually tramped from Paisley to Alloway and back in fulfilment of his resolution. The fact is to the abounding credit and prescience of Tannahill, a rival courtier in the palace of the muse. I feel pretty certain that this record cannot be beaten in point of time, and that we are safe in affirming that Tannahill has the honour of being the first admirer to set his steps to the track that has since been broadened and hardened by the feet of an ever-growing throng.

Another early visitor worthy of note is no less than John Keats, the English poet. In the month of July 1818 the now famous singer of England came to pay his tribute to our glorious Scot. We should not have known of it but for a letter written by him to his brother Tom. He seems to have walked from the direction of Maybole, and over Carrick Hill, for he begins by saying: 'We were talking on all things different and indifferent when, on a sudden, we turned upon the immediate country of Ayr.' Then he proceeds: 'The sight was as rich as possible. I had no conception that the native place of

Burns was so beautiful. The idea I had was more desolate; his "Rigs o' Barley" seemed always to me but a few strips of green on a cold hill. O prejudice! It was as rich as Devon. I endeavoured to drink in the prospect, that I might spin it out to you, as the silkworm makes silk from mulberry-trees. I cannot recollect it. Besides all the beauty, there were the mountains of Arran Isle, black and huge, over the sea. We came down upon everything suddenly; there were in our way the "Bonnie Doon," with the brig that Tam o' Shanter crossed; Kirk Alloway, Burns's Cottage, and the Brigs o' Ayr. First we stood upon the bridge across the Doon, surrounded by every phantasy of green in tree, meadow, and hill; the stream of the Doon, as a farmer told us, is covered with trees from "head to foot."' It may be noted in passing that the scenery around Alloway is quite worthy the eulogium of Keats. While in the cottage he wrote a 'Sonnet,' a performance, however, which did not please him, and he recast it later.

The only other visitor of outstanding renown to whom I wish to refer—although there is an abundance of such visitors—is Tennyson, our great Victorian. In the recent Life of him by his son there are several flattering references to Burns. One of these (a letter to Aubrey de Vere, himself a considerable poet) describes his visit. The epistle is dated October 1848. 'Dunkeld is lovely, and I delighted in Inveraray,' &c., writes Tennyson, 'but on the whole, perhaps, I enjoyed no day more than the one I spent at Kirk Alloway by the monument of poor Burns, and the orchards, and the "banks and braes of bonnie Doon." I made a pilgrimage thither out of love for the great peasant. They were gathering in the wheat, and the spirit of the man seemed to mingle with all I saw. I know you do not care much for him, but I do; and hold that there never were immortal poet if he be not one.' By the time of Tennyson's visit there was a visitors' book at the Cottage, and he entered his name—which proves that he also stood in the 'auld clay biggin'.'

These three samples of distinguished visitors will suffice. Following them, I wish to place three other types. While at the Cottage one day I came on a gentleman touching the ceiling with his finger, and saying quite audibly, 'Why, I can touch the roof—I can touch the roof!' As I entered he turned to me and exclaimed, 'Stranger, I never saw such a low roof in all my life!' He then told me that he was a doctor from America, that when he began business there twenty-five years ago he made a resolution to set aside a small sum yearly for the purpose of visiting the birthplace of Robert Burns, and that he had now fulfilled his resolve. 'And to think,' he cried, 'that the great soul who has filled the world with his fame was born in a room so low that I can touch the roof—it quite overcomes me!' He spoke with an emotion whose sincerity could not be questioned.

Another day I encountered an old man—a working-man—regarding the exterior of the building with uncommon interest. In the course of conversation he informed me that his grandfather was at the funeral of Burns's father; and he narrated to me his grandfather's story—how the body was carried from Lochlie between two ponies (one following the other), strapped crosswise on two poles, whose ends were fastened to the ponies' sides. At Alloway he particularly remarked the attitude of Burns standing reverently at the head of the grave, unbonneted. His face was very sallow, and marked with smallpox; and it showed no sign of distinction except in the eyes. His voice was deep, and carried like that of a good bass singer. These few details convey a picture which strikes one as being very real.

One other. While the light railway to Turnberry was being laid, and when work was proceeding at Alloway, a navvy entered the Cottage, and remained within for some time. Curious to know what had detained him, I entered after he had left, and found an entire page of the visitors' book covered with his writing. It was in the form of a letter to Burns in heaven, and its evident purpose was to bring the poet's information up to date. The writer began with the quotation:

> 'The Muse, nae poet ever fand her
> Till by himsel' he learned to wander,'

and then proceeded: 'The rural aspect of your environment is broken up, Robbie. The electric cars are running to your door; a new scheme is known for sending messages on wireless poles by an Italian; you can buy a suit of clothes for 15s.; you can travel on the railway for ½d. a mile; you can get your provisions from America as cheaply as from home; you get Dr Hornbook to fight with Death in reality; if you go into the surgical wards of some medical institutions, and watch the skill and care and judgment used for the benefit of suffering humanity, you will say that medical science has progressed also. Yes, Robbie; but I do not believe in vivisection; I hate to take life, even of the smallest atom, and yet in self-defence I would kill a thousand. Yes, Robbie, I would fight to death; and if any man made an attempt on my life, I would not rest until I had taken his life. How often have I thought on your verse,

> "A' lanely by the ingle cheek
> I sat an' spied the spewin' reek,
> That hoasted wi' provokin' smeak
> Aboot the ingle." J. M. F.'

This assortment of visitors is offered as illustrating the wide range of Burns's appeal. Polished literati and wanderers alike find their solace in him. No other writer in the world's history interests so many diverse readers. Even Shakespeare's constituency is circumscribed: the

average man gives little response to him. Yet those who read Shakespeare, and those who don't, find a common pasture-land in Burns. This is his great and exceptional achievement. He sweeps into his net every kind of fish. He is quoted by orators and mechanics; in him the classes and the masses are in agreement. This is the miracle of the peasant poet; it may also be said to be the miracle of literature, for its records do not reveal a parallel.

THE VOICE OF GOLD.

By Bart Kennedy.

THINGS were very tight with us when we got one afternoon to Los Angeles. Business had been bad, and for the last three or four weeks salaries had not been paid. The ghost had not even attempted to walk. But we were all filled with hope—all, from the prima donna to the feeblest chorus singer, who was perhaps myself. We were booked to play for a month in the Pavilion, and we felt that the inhabitants would come forth in their thousands—ready-money in hand—to hear us warbling the operas.

There was, however, a certain slight difficulty to be got over. We had got to the town a month before our actual opening night, and during that month it would be necessary for us to partake of food. A confiding hotel proprietor had to be found. But this did not bother us very much, for we had for our manager one Jimmy Pike. He had often got us out of such difficulties before. Often he had got us food through the magic of his personal magnetism. He was an artist at the weaving of the enthralling tale to the sceptical hotel proprietor.

He was a man of genius, who had been ordained by fate to be the manager of a tenth-rate opera company. He was possessed of a graceful and confiding manner, and a large and healthy imagination. He could transform a small chick into a full-sized swan with great ease. His voice, when he was telling the tale, would have attracted the bird from the bough. It was a beautiful, soft, put-your-trust-in-me voice. Nothing could withstand it. The coldest and hardest hotel proprietor heart melted before the sound of it as snow melts before a fire. A great ambassador was going to waste in Jimmy.

In person he was big and handsome and dashing. And the ladies of the company looked up to him with much fondness. He had an eye at once affectionate and daring. And there was another thing about him, too. He was as polite and as friendly to a chorus singer as he was to a principal. He was a great man in every way, was Jimmy.

And we were all very proud of him as we stood with him here in the station at Los Angeles. We knew that everything would be all right. At the moment he was talking to the prima donna, his hand placed affectionately upon her shoulder. He was soothing her, and telling her to wait for a little while with the rest of the company at the station, whilst he went into the town to fix things up.

Gallantly he went forth, I quietly following him. My desire was to see a great artist at work. He walked with the easy, assured gait of the person who possesses much substance, and who is at the same time modest about it. And he came to an hotel. But he evidently did not consider it good enough, for he passed on. And then he came to the big hotel of the town. In he went, and, after he was well in, I followed.

There he was, standing near the counter in the hall of the hotel, telling the tale to a flint-faced, angular man, who looked as if everything, including even the glorious Californian sunshine, disagreed with him. I could hear the murmur of the voice of Jimmy as I stood in the offing pretending to gaze at nothing in particular. That voice! That beautiful voice! The sound of it meant more to me than the sound of the voice of the greatest tenor in grand opera. It meant food and shelter!

Would he pull it off? Would he be able to get food for his brood of songsters? I took a cautious glance at the flint-faced man. It—well, it appeared to be softening. Yes, it was softening! A look of humanity was slowly suffusing it. The overpowering magnetism of Jimmy was gently steering the owner of it into the path of virtue. That melodious, put-your-trust-in-me voice was getting in its work.

I quietly left the hotel and waited outside. After a little Jimmy appeared. In his eye was a look of calm triumph.

'Ah,' he said as he saw me, 'it is all right. Everything is as it should be. I've stood the hotel off for the whole company. We're to board and lodge there during our stay in Los Angeles. Go and tell them. Be quick!'

I dashed swiftly ahead to the station with the glad news.

Such was the way that Jimmy handled whatever difficult and delicate situation turned up. He always managed to pull us through. He never failed us. If he were unable to fulfil his promise of paying for our sustenance at an hotel, he related to the proprietor still another tale concerning the big things that would happen when we played a return date. And we were always let forth with our trunks, and belongings generally, to try our luck in

pastures new. His beautiful, soft, put-your-trust-in-me voice was as a voice of gold.

I, personally, played but a humble part in this tenth-rate opera company. I was but a chorus singer with an ordinary kind of voice. My salary was alleged to be fifteen dollars a week. As a matter of fact, however, I hardly ever saw the colour of a dollar. But I was fascinated with the life. We, the members of this opera company, were a bright, merry, and gay crowd, and the hard-upness that we endured but brought us into a closer intimacy. The fact that salaries were rarely paid made for a democratic feeling amongst us. The principals did not give themselves airs with the members of the chorus. We were a happy family. And we were travelling through California, that most beautiful of all the countries of the world. We did not, to be sure, always pay our way. But there are lots of good people who owe a bit now and then.

After we were settled safely in the hotel, we began to rehearse. The Pavilion was a fine big place with plenty of light in it. It was not at all like the ordinary theatre that in the day-time is gloomy and dark. Rehearsing in it was a pleasure.

Need I say it? The ladies of the company, especially the chorus ladies, were all beautiful —or very nearly all. My heart was lost irretrievably.

If I remember aright, the first opera we rehearsed was *La Mascotte*. Jimmy played Beppo. I forgot to mention that he was a singer as well as a manager. But his voice in singing had not the golden quality that was in it when he was telling the tale to an hotel proprietor. Still, it was quite a good singing voice—a high baritone.

I liked the music of *La Mascotte*. It was bright and merry and sunny and gay. It seemed in a way to be like ourselves and the life we led. I haven't the score at hand now, but I am almost sure that it opened with a chorus. At any rate I remember distinctly singing in a chorus in the beginning of the opera. It was descriptive of the opening of spring after the close of winter. The words come to me: 'Now the winter-time is over, lads and lasses gaily meet.' We danced as we sang. It was a wonderful chorus, full of the joy and the tenderness and the beauty of life. It thrills me now as I think of it, though so many years have passed since I sang in it at the Pavilion in far-away Los Angeles.

We also rehearsed *Boccaccio*, *The Beggar Student*, *Fledermaus*, *A Night in Venice*, and some of the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan. I fear, however, that the royalties paid to Gilbert and Sullivan were of the invisible order. It was the fashion at that time in the States to forget the existence of authors. How it is now I don't know.

Los Angeles was an adorable town. In it were all kinds of interesting people—scallywags hailing from any place you like. The respectable person was conspicuous by his absence. I had the pleasure of meeting a three-card artist who belonged to the north of England. I happened into a saloon with a brother chorus artist, and the card-manipulator honoured us by introducing himself. He had the lined face of one who knew a thing or two, and he very kindly stood us a drink. After that he tried to get us to 'spot' the jack, for even a three-card artist has to live. But he was really a good sort, for when I explained that we were only chorus singers, and that we possessed but a dime between us, he charitably stood us another drink. And then he and I began to talk of the north of England. Both of us belonged to the same county! He was a good chap, that artist with the dexterous fingers. And I sincerely trust that he is not now doing time.

A land boom was going on in the town, and things were brisking up. It is not my intention here to define a land boom. I will content myself by remarking that compared with a land boom the three-card trick is a most innocent and honest transaction. One of the humorous things in this world of ours is that the real thieves never do time.

Under the spell of Jimmy's golden, put-your-trust-in-me voice the flint-faced, angular hotel proprietor blossomed forth into a noble character. He advanced Jimmy enough money to pay the company half what was owing them in salaries. I remember getting twenty dollars. It was given to me in the shape of a great gold-piece the size of an English penny—a twenty-dollar gold-piece! It was so soothing and noble and magnificent a coin that it seemed a shame to change it. A splendid and glorious golden penny! I could understand why misers hoarded up and gloated over golden coins. But my admiration for the beautiful coin did not allow me to hoard it for long. Within five minutes after getting it I had changed it. It had left me. It had gone forth on its journey of service, even as all coins should go.

When the opening night of our season came we had a big, thumping house. I believe that the opera we put on was *La Mascotte*. We were all feeling fit, all in good form. Before the curtain went up Jimmy went around to the members of the company, giving forth words of encouragement and cheer.

The curtain was up now, and we were on the stage, singing. And there, in the third row, was sitting the flint-faced hotel proprietor. He looked pleased; that is, he looked as pleased as it was possible for him to look. And well he might. For the size of the house was the surest kind of augury that he would get his money. It looked as though we should do good business through the whole of our month at the Pavilion. And we did. The people of Los Angeles flocked

to see us and to hear us warble. And also they came from the places round. And, most soothing of all, our salaries were paid on the nail. The ghost arose and walked. And there occurred a still more soothing thing. It became possible, before the month was up, to get an advance against one's salary to come. Any one who possessed confidence enough could go and touch Jimmy for a bit ahead. He always parted. He was a dear boy.

It was a glorious month in a glorious town in a glorious country. I had the time of my life. It was one long, perfect dream. And the face of the angular hotel proprietor became softer and softer. He began to look like a human being. In the end the flintiness disappeared from his features altogether. Well was it for his character that he had listened in the first place to Jimmy's gentle, put-your-trust-in-me voice. That voice! That voice of gold!

Well, at last there came the end. I was very, very sorry. I would have liked to go on singing in Los Angeles for ever.

We closed our season with *La Mascotte*. And after we left the theatre that night we had a grand supper in the hotel. The landlord took the chair, and Jimmy, our Jimmy, was the guest of honour. By his side was the prima donna, looking very happy.

What a supper it was! We had the best of everything. And champagne—well, champagne flowed like water. Speeches? Yes, we had speeches. And needless is it to say that Jimmy's was the best by far. He said kind things about everybody in his beautiful, put-your-trust-in-me voice. He mentioned us all by name—all, from the prima donna to my humble self.

That voice of gold! Years and years have passed since I heard it on that night. Years and years have passed since I last saw Jimmy, who was so resourceful, and who, at the same time, was so good and kind to everybody.

SUPERSTITIONS AND THEIR ORIGINS.

By J. Arthur Hill, Author of *Psychical Investigations*, &c.

MAN'S curiosity is in excess of his power to interpret and understand. Consequently he guesses, and when he guesses wildly and—as it seems to others, probably of later date—inaccurately, his guess is called a superstition. Owing to the innate conservatism of human nature, a superstition will linger long after its origin is completely forgotten, and after people have clearly seen that there is no rational evidence for the thing believed. This applies to customs of all sorts. It is on record that in a certain church the peasants were in the habit of bowing or genuflecting when they passed a certain part of the wall. None of them could give any reason, except that they had been taught to do it. Even the oldest inhabitant had never heard of any reason, and did not think that any was known to the previous generation. It was just a custom that had been handed down. But when some repairs came to be made, and the wall was stripped of lime, it was found that a painting of the Virgin Mary had existed, and still fragmentarily existed, at that place. It had evidently been covered up at the Reformation; but the customary obeisance had been kept up even after every one had forgotten the reason for it.

So with superstitions. There is some sort of reason to begin with, usually a mistaken guess; but this is forgotten, while the belief remains. For instance, take the 'thirteen at table' superstition, which has spread to thirteen of anything—even to No. 13 in a street or terrace, which often remains unlet, the landlord sometimes resorting to the subterfuge of 12A and 12B. The origin of this prejudice against the number is usually supposed to be the fact that thirteen persons sat down at the Last Supper, after which occurred the most tragical event of the Christian era. But it can be shown that of any thirteen people taken at random—or any twelve or fourteen either—it is an even chance that one will die in about a year. Quételet pointed this out in his *Theory of Probabilities* applied to political and moral science; but superstition dies hard when it has a sort of quasi-support from facts. Matthew Arnold was one of a party of thirteen, and he died within the year. To many people this would be convincing evidence of the maleficence of the number; but he would have died all the same if there had been fourteen. Moreover, the thirteen superstition is older than Christianity, for Hesiod says it is unlucky to sow corn on the 13th of the first month. And there is an old Norse legend according to which the twelve great divinities were dining in Valhalla, when Loki, the god of discord, appeared, and a quarrel with Baldur ensued, in which the latter—the god of peace—was killed. There is a similar belief in India. The superstition languished in the late Middle Ages, but had a curious rejuvenation in the last century. In many capitals, notably London, there were men who made a living by hiring themselves out at a moment's notice as guests at dinners where, owing to some disappointment, the number at table would otherwise be thirteen. Prince Bismarck shared the 'thirteen' weakness, and indeed was rather specially superstitious about numbers. Three was his lucky one. He was Chancellor under three emperors, received three titles of nobility, was responsible for three wars, and had three

children; and, according to the caricaturists, had three hairs on an otherwise bald head.

There are various forms of this 'three' superstition, one of the most objectionable—from a housewife's point of view—being the common belief of servants that if they break an article two more are sure to meet the same fate before the day is out. A certain lady, unacquainted with this superstition, was astonished to see her Abigail open the back-door and deliberately smash a jam-pot on the steps, afterwards picking up the pieces and throwing them into the dust-bin. By cautious inquiry she discovered that the girl had accidentally broken a plate and a cup that morning, and as she firmly believed that the gods demanded three such sacrifices before they would be appeased, she selected the jam-pot lest the doom should fall on something more valuable.

One of the silliest superstitions extant is the one about seeing the new moon through glass. I have never been able to trace this with certainty to anything connected with sense or reason. And the supposed connection of the moon with insanity (*luna*, lunatic) is not much better. The belief that the sun puts the fire out is comparatively reasonable, though mistaken; for, of course, it *seems* to dull the fire's brightness. But interpose a screen, and the fire is obviously as vigorous as ever.

In some parts of England, notably the eastern counties, there is a flourishing belief in 'charms,' which some local 'cunning man' sells for a few shillings, to be worn round the neck in a canvas bag. This belief in amulets is, of course, world-wide. Fielding Hall mentions a case in Burma, the charm (worn by a Buddhist) turning out to be a printed prayer of the Roman Catholic Church! There are some rather curious instances, which cannot be altogether laughed away, of amulets seeming to do real good in cases of illness. Some of these have passed the scrutiny of the Society for Psychical Research. The psychological explanation is that a 'suggestion' is implanted in the patient's subliminal mind, and the cure is a sort of faith-healing.

The 'Friday' superstition has a religious origin, having arisen because the Crucifixion is supposed to have taken place on that day. It has been recognised as particularly unlucky by sailors. As with all such superstitions, men noticed when it 'came off,' and overlooked the miss when it did not. But with greater control of the elements, and greater safety of travel—barring torpedoes—the superstition has faded. Probably few people now, even sailors, have much fear of embarking on a Cunarder which sails on a Friday; and railway journeys are undertaken on that day without hesitation. To many millions of people Friday is the luckiest day of the week, for it is their wage-day!

The unluckiness of spilling the salt has not been unanimously explained. Some think that it is because Judas Iscariot seems to be spilling it in Da Vinci's picture of the Last Supper. Others think that it is because salt is a symbol of incorruptibility, and its spilling is therefore a sign of broken friendships and general upsets. Very superstitious people will take a pinch of the spilt salt and throw it over the left shoulder, which is supposed to avert the evil consequences of the mishap. The left shoulder is associated with the Devil, or one's evil genius, and the thrown pinch is supposed to appease him.

There are some curious and very widespread customs, of superstitious nature, about sneezing. Old country-people will often say 'God bless you!' to the sneezer. The Romans had a similar custom—'Jupiter preserve you!' &c.—as Martial and other writers show. The Greeks did the same, and the custom was ancient even in the time of Aristotle, for he endeavours to account for it in his *Problems;* but he evidently knew nothing of its origin. His guess was that the first men, prepossessed with the idea of the superiority of the head to the other parts of the body, extended their reverence to all forms of its activity. A very poor sort of explanation for the Stagirite whom Dante calls 'the master of those that know!' The idea runs through classical literature—for example, Telemachus's lucky sneeze in the *Odyssey*, the soldier's good-omened sneeze in Xenophon, and a remark of Pliny, '*Cur sternutamentis salutamus?*' When a Hindoo sneezes bystanders say, 'Live!' and the sneezer replies, 'With you!' The Zulu thinks it is a sign that good spirits are with him, others that evil spirits are being expelled. Probably some notion of this kind is at the root of the belief and the customs associated with it; but nothing definite is now discoverable.

The various knife superstitions are easily explicable. It is unlucky to give a knife to a friend, because knives sever things, and might sever friendship; but if he gives you a halfpenny in return the danger is avoided, for his gift is a token of continued affection. It is unlucky to place one's knife and fork crosswise on the empty plate, because it invites crosses and misfortune, also recalling the Christian symbol of suffering.

Black cats are lucky, but nobody knows why. Cats of all sorts were regarded with reverence in ancient Egypt; but it is curious that black—the sign of mourning in Western countries—should be associated with luck. The Jam of Nawanagar ('Ranji' of cricket fame) had a partiality for this superstition, claiming that twice in succession the timely appearance of a black cat had been instrumental in winning a county match for Sussex, as well as on other occasions.

We often hear the half-jocular remark, 'My ears tingle; some one is thinking about me;' or sometimes the sign is a burning of the cheeks.

No doubt this arises from the fact that these conditions arise when a person is scolded or has his ears boxed, or when 'she' is made love to. Consequently, when they arise without the external cause, it is thought that some one's mind, if not his hand or tongue, is somehow exerting influence at a distance upon us. This belief also is very widespread. Warburton refers to it in explaining Beatrice's 'What fire is in mine ears?' in *Much Ado About Nothing*. Pliny says: 'Moreover, is not this an opinion generally received, that when our ears do glow and tingle some there be that in our absence do talk of us?' Sir Thomas Browne and Herrick, among others, allude to it.

The origins of the various marriage superstitions are mostly unknown. We have no idea why it is unlucky to marry in May, or why an old shoe must be thrown after the going-away couple. We know that the old notion of a special artery from heart to wedding-finger is mistaken, and that probably this particular finger is chosen because it is the most protected.

Some few old 'superstitions,' however, are turning out to be true. The most notable instance is that of the divining-rod, by the twitching of which, when held in the hands, underground water is detected by persons gifted with the faculty. Sir William Barrett has made lengthy and laborious experiments with various diviners or 'dowsers,' as they are called, and he was driven by sheer weight of evidence from a position of scepticism to one of belief. His opinion is that these people have clairvoyant powers in the subliminal strata of their minds, and that the rod is a handy externaliser of the perception, though without special virtue of its own. It need not be hazel or any particular wood; and 'electricity'—that favourite explanation of the ignorant—was excluded by Sir William's ingenious insulation devices. It seems quite possible, in view of discoveries made by the Society for Psychical Research, that even witchcraft had a basis of truth; for, if telepathy is a fact, an ill-wisher may exert real influence. But it is too early to come to conclusions on this point; and excessive scepticism is preferable to excessive credulity in such matters, for the latter leads to persecution. We want no return to the methods of Matthew Hopkins. Scepticism is better than superstition of that kind.

A rather common bit of pseudo-science is the belief that for healthful sleep the bed should be north and south. I know a man who believes that he was cured of long-standing disease by changing his bed from its former east-west position. Charles Dickens, whenever he left home for a night, always took a compass with him, so that he could put his bed north-south. Other famous men have had their weaknesses. Macaulay had superstitions about stepping on this or that part of flagstones or paving-stones; Max Müller always carried in his pocket a small coin with a hole in it; and Lord Roberts was once credited (but in a German newspaper) with a fondness for a horseshoe picked up near the Nelson Monument in Trafalgar Square, as well as with a constitutional dread of cats.

The prejudice about the danger of being the first occupiers of a new house is perhaps a dim recollection of our prehistoric ancestors' attitude towards a newly discovered cave. There might be wild beasts already in occupation.

The superstitions connected with marriage are legion. The most sensible one is, 'Happy the bride the sun shines on,' for fine weather is particularly welcome at times of gorgeous apparelling. But in some countries the bride prays for rain, taking it as an omen that all her tears are shed before marriage, which shows the optimistic faith of the female heart *in excelsis!* Alas that she should sometimes be disillusioned!

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

MORSE CODE SIGNALS FOR AIRCRAFT.

EVEN before the war wireless telegraphy was used by aeroplanes for communicating with the ground, and we might well suppose this system to be the one chiefly employed by aircraft at the front. According to the *Scientific American*, however, other methods are largely adopted. The Germans, for instance, use a small search-light having a very powerful lamp no larger than the ordinary electric bulb, through which an exceedingly strong current is passed, giving an intense white light. Such treatment naturally shortens the life of the lamps, which seldom last more than fifty hours, but this is deemed of little importance in the circumstances. The projector is designed to give a very narrow beam of light, which can be seen only by the receiving station to which it is directed, and signals are transmitted by the Morse code. Electricity is supplied by a battery so constructed as to allow of its being turned upside-down without the acid being spilled. Another useful form of signalling apparatus for aircraft is a device for discharging black powder from a container provided with a suitable valve. As the machine flies through the air the powder is discharged and forms a series of black lines varying in length according to the time the valve is kept open. In this way long and short lines can be produced to signify the dots and dashes of the Morse code. These signals retain their form for an appreciable

time, and they can be seen from a distance of six miles.

LARGEST LOCOMOTIVE IN THE WORLD.

From time to time in these pages descriptions have been given of large locomotives built in the United States, where their size is not restricted by tunnels and bridges to the limits obtaining in this country. What we believe may fairly claim to be the biggest locomotive in the world has lately been put into service on the Virginian Railway. This leviathan is of the Malet triple-articulated type; that is to say, it is supported upon three ball-and-socket swivelling joints, which allow the three sets of coupled driving-wheels to accommodate themselves to the curves of the track. How necessary such an arrangement is may be gathered from the fact that the engine measures close on one hundred feet in length. Propulsion is effected by six cylinders, arranged in three pairs, each of which drives four pairs of wheels coupled together. The wheels are comparatively small, being only fifty-six inches in diameter, as this size of wheel is the most suitable for the work to be done—namely, the hauling of coal-trains up steep gradients at comparatively slow speeds. When running at thirty miles an hour, this locomotive normally develops some eight thousand horse-power, while its tractive force is one hundred and sixty-six thousand pounds. For short spells, however, the horse-power can be greatly increased. The boiler needed to raise the enormous quantities of steam required measures eight and a half feet in diameter and is over fifty feet long, while the fire-grate is eight feet in width and ten feet long. Of course, even two men would be incapable of stoking such a colossal furnace, and the work of keeping it supplied with coal is performed by a mechanical stoker. Naturally a very large supply of coal has to be carried, while the water-tank has a capacity of thirteen thousand gallons. The weight of the complete locomotive is three hundred and seventy-five tons, and it has been built at the Baldwin Locomotive Works, Philadelphia.

CHARACTERISTICS WHEREBY THE CRIMINAL TYPE MAY BE DISTINGUISHED.

Some very interesting characteristics of criminals were given in a paper written by Mr Albert Marple and recently quoted from in *Popular Science Siftings*. According to the writer, the average characteristics of fifty criminals are given by Mr James Cline as follows: age, thirty-two years; height, five feet six and a half inches; weight, ten stone eight pounds; slope of forehead, forty degrees; collar, fifteen and three-quarter inches; jaw, protruding, heavy, and wide; ears, large, the tops being in line with the eyes. The most distinctive feature is the ear-lobe, which is often rudimentary and meets the cheek in a straight line. Keen and piercing is the average criminal eye, while the brows are slightly lower and farther apart than in other men. Prominent cheek-bones form another important feature, together with a long, wide, pointed nose in line with the sloping forehead. The colour of the hair is from medium brown to light brown, and the complexion medium light, while the lips are inclined to be thick. A brief general description of the criminal type includes inset piercing eyes, almost lobeless ears, high cheek-bones, receding forehead, and protruding chin.

ARTIFICIAL MILK.

A process has recently been patented for the manufacture of artificial milk. The chief constituents besides water are bleached meal made from nuts, sugar, and potassium phosphate. The solution is first boiled, and is afterwards treated in a vacuum-pan. Lactic bacteria are then introduced to give the necessary degree of acidity, and the milk is pasteurised for twenty minutes at a temperature of about one hundred and fifty degrees Fahrenheit. The final operation is the stirring in of a minute percentage of citric acid. The inventor claims that milk made in this way can be condensed, or dried and powdered, as in the case of the natural product; while cream may be formed by the addition of nut fat when the milk is in the vacuum-pan.

THE PROBLEM OF TRANSATLANTIC FLYING.

In a paper read before the Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders in Scotland Mr L. Desbleds explains some of the advantages and difficulties of transatlantic flying. With regard to the former, the carrying of the mails in a quarter of the time at present needed for the voyage between America and Britain would, in the author's opinion, be of immense benefit, as he considers that the correspondence of a country may be taken as a measure of its commerce with other nations, and the accelerated rate of exchange of correspondence would react upon commerce and shipping. Coming to the problem of carrying mails across the Atlantic, Mr Desbleds considers that existing knowledge of aeroplane construction and propelling machinery only allows of such flights by reducing the strength of the machines employed to far below that of the aeroplanes now in use; consequently those undertaking the passage would run grave risks of coming to grief on the way. Some particulars of an aeroplane for flying the Atlantic are given in the paper, the proposed machine having a weight by itself of about four tons, which is doubled by the addition of fuel and stores, while a crew of ten men account for another fifteen hundredweight.

ARTIFICIAL LIMBS MADE FROM CARDBOARD.

Few people would imagine that artificial limbs could be made from such unlikely material as

cardboard. Yet this is being done on a considerable scale, according to the London correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*. Legs and arms are cut out from cardboard about three-sixteenths of an inch in thickness, and bound together with bandages soaked in a solution of starch. Two flat pieces of cardboard are cut out, of which the combined widths equal the girth of the limb. These are soaked in water until they can be bent round into the requisite form, when the aforesaid starched bandages are applied. The finished article being hollow, it can be worn before the stump of the leg or arm has completely healed; in fact, this is often done within a fortnight of amputation. In the case of legs this invention obviates the need for crutches, the patient being able to get about with the aid of a stick. Limbs made in this way are not intended for permanent use, but only while an articulated limb is being prepared. They are, however, much more durable than might be supposed, their useful life being from six months to a year. Cardboard limbs made in the way described were invented by a Danish doctor at the Danish hospital at Paris, and it is claimed that a leg can be made from the inventor's instructions at a trifling cost in half-an-hour.

WOOD AS A SOURCE OF FOOD.

In their efforts to utilise every conceivable form of food, the Germans have lately been trying experiments with wood, upon which dogs and sheep have been fed. Birch wood was chosen as being the most promising. It was prepared by being pulped in a paper-mill. The pulp was then mixed with other foods, and given to the animals. As regards both digestibility and nutritive value the results are said to have been satisfactory, and it is thought that pulped birch wood might be mixed with cereals for making bread to the extent of 15 per cent.

ANOTHER SIMPLE CINEMA APPARATUS FOR AMATEURS.

A cinema apparatus comparable with the ordinary film camera for simplicity and cost has recently been placed on the market in America. The camera—for in appearance it is nothing more—measures seven inches in length by five nches in height, with a thickness of only two and a half inches. No adjustments are needed, and the only fitting in addition to those common to all roll-film cameras is the handle for causing the film to travel. A special feature is a daylight-loading film container, which is operated with a facility equal to that of an ordinary camera. Each roll of film contains fifty feet, and lasts for about two and a half minutes; and the small size of the pictures brings the cost within reach of the amateur. The projector is necessarily larger, but this feature is not of much consequence, as it does not have to be carried about. A seven hundred candle-power half-watt electric lamp, connected to the nearest lamp-socket, forms the source of light, and the pictures on the screen can be varied in width from eighteen inches up to nine feet.

CUTTING BARBED-WIRE ENTANGLEMENTS WITH RIFLE-SHOTS.

To some extent the well-known competition between the naval gun and the armour-plate has been simulated on a miniature scale between barbed-wire entanglements and the appliances for cutting them away. Among the more recent of these appliances, according to the *Scientific American*, is a device attachable to a fixed bayonet, by means of which the wire is cut when a shot is fired. This invention, which is the work of Joseph A. Steinmetz of Philadelphia, consists of a steel block attached to the bayonet by a thumbscrew close to the muzzle of the rifle. At the outer end of the block is a V-shaped recess, into which the wires to be cut slip automatically when caught up on the bayonet. A hole through the block in line with the rifle-barrel comes out at the bottom of this recess, and compels the bullet to pass through the wires. Several wires can be cut by one bullet, which, in fact, is capable of severing much thicker wire than could be used in actual warfare. The device has no detrimental effect upon the aiming of the rifle for ordinary use, and similar appliances can be attached to pistols and revolvers. Obviously such an instrument could not be used for night surprise attacks, but many charges across No Man's Land are made in the daylight, when the noise of the 'shooter-cutters' would be of no consequence, if indeed it were heard at all. A distinct advantage of this invention is the readiness of the rifle for offensive purposes in that the soldier holds it as he would for firing or bayonet-work. Moreover, the cutter can be effectively used by a man crawling forward.

VARNISHING THE SOLES OF BOOTS INCREASES THEIR LIFE FOURFOLD.

In view of the shortage of leather and its consequent increase in price, any device or process is welcome which will lengthen the life of our footwear. In this connection it cannot be too widely known that varnishing the soles of boots and shoes makes them wear four or five times as long as they would do without this treatment. An inferior type of copal varnish is quite good enough for the purpose, and half a pint, costing, with a suitable brush, about a shilling, should keep one person's boots treated for a year or more. The leather must be quite dry and bare when the varnish is applied. New boots should therefore be worn for a day before treatment, so as to remove the black varnish from the soles. The operation is carried out by brushing on the varnish, at intervals of, say, half-an-hour, until the leather will not soak up any

more. This condition may be recognised from the surface remaining shiny all over, instead of becoming dull in places. After being hung up to dry for about twelve hours, the boots are ready for wear. The usual plan is to wear out the soles after one varnishing, but an even longer life can be assured by treating them once a month. Those who have never tried varnish on the soles of their boots will be astonished at the length of time they wear when so treated; while last, but not least, the varnish renders them waterproof.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 'SERVICE' WATCH.

The war has led not only to new inventions, but to the development and improvement of things previously known. In the latter category may be included the wristlet watch, little used by the sterner sex before the war, but now to be seen on the wrist of nearly every man in uniform and of many men in civilian attire. The first wristlet watch was naturally a small pocket watch fitted into a leather holder and strapped on the wrist. This was soon improved by soldering to the sides 'knuckles' or loops, through which the strap was passed. But such a watch worn on the wrist was so open to dust, and so much exposed to the effects of the weather, that it quickly became dirty. To obviate this the case was next made in one piece, into which the works were screwed; but this device was found to have certain disadvantages. With the advent of war a great demand arose for a watch that would stand the hard wear incidental to 'service' use, and it is claimed that the demand has now been adequately met. Two submarine commanders approached a certain firm, and asked them to consider the construction of a special watch suitable for their work. It was explained that it must fulfil certain conditions. (1) It must be water-tight; for even when a submarine is on the surface the deck is always more or less awash. (2) It must be non-magnetic; for under water the submarine is driven by electricity, and in such a limited space watches made of magnetic materials are necessarily affected. (3) As, for the same reason, a compensation balance of the ordinary kind is impossible, the balance must be of some material which shows a minimum of expansion and contraction with variations in temperature. This condition is met by the employment of an alloy of iron and nickel, which expands and contracts so little that this factor may be disregarded. (4) The face must be quite legible at any time, and as the usual yellow luminous figures, when placed on a white dial, are not readily discernible in moonlight, twilight, or subdued artificial light, a black dial is used, thus making it easy to read the exact hour in any light. A watch fulfilling every one of these conditions, and fitted in addition with a small luminous seconds-hand, has now been on the market for some months, and appears to have before it a distinctive sphere of usefulness.

MOSQUITOES AND THE PLAGUE.

The destruction of plague-carriers has long been a problem of primary importance, especially in countries like India, China, and the Dutch East Indies, where the disease has come to be endemic. At first the rat in general was suspected, until it was found that the field rat must be eliminated, as only the house rat was connected with the spreading of the plague. Finally, it was discovered that even the house rat is, like ourselves, a guiltless sufferer, and that the real culprit is the flea found on the rat. Once public attention was drawn to stinging insects as the immediate agents in plague-carrying, scientists began to wonder whether, as in the case of malaria and yellow fever, mosquitoes might also be responsible for spreading the disease. In the famous Dutch medical laboratories for tropical research at Weltevreden, near Batavia, the capital of Java and of the Dutch East Indies, several series of experiments have been carried out with a view to solving the problem. They have been conducted by Dr Flu, the celebrated sub-director of the establishment. For each series a certain number of female mosquitoes were used, which had been obtained from the larvæ of *anopheles rossi* or of *stegomyia*. Dr Flu first allowed these *imagines* to starve during twenty-four hours, and then fed them on a guinea-pig infected with plague and suffering from plague septicemia. After the mosquitoes had satisfied themselves at the expense of the diseased animal, they were caught and starved for another twelve to twenty-four hours. They were then set on a healthy guinea-pig, which was not taken from the cage before the mosquitoes had satisfied themselves, and had consequently stung the animal several times. After the insects had once more been starved, the experiment was repeated with another healthy guinea-pig. In some cases this process was gone through even three times. At the end of each series of experiments the remaining mosquitoes (the majority had died during the process) were pounded into an emulsion, which was subcutaneously injected into a fresh guinea-pig. The various series of experiments differed either as to the species of mosquitoes used, or as to their number, or as to the virulence of the plague bacilli, or, finally, as to the time of exposure of the guinea-pigs to the infected insects. The investigation was, therefore, conducted with true Dutch thoroughness, and the results obtained can be said to be absolutely definite. One set of experiments, indeed, yielded a negative result. But the others proved convincingly that although plague bacilli can remain for several days in a virulent condition in the gastro-intestinal system of mosquitoes, these insects are

unable to transmit the plague through stinging. This conclusion corresponds with that based on experience of epidemics in plague districts, for no connection has ever been observed between the prevalence of mosquitoes and the breaking out of the disease or its spreading. But the fact that several investigators had discovered virulent plague bacilli in the stomachs and intestines of mosquitoes had given rise to doubt, and made a series of decisive experiments most desirable.

ONE-MAN RAILWAY.

Railway companies that have to give up side-branches of their lines consequent on the new arrangements, or through finding the working expenses of them too heavy, might with advantage to themselves and the districts concerned consider the case of a certain American railroad. A number of years ago the Idaho Southern Railroad was constructed between Gooding and Jerome, Idaho, for use while the great irrigation schemes of the Twin Falls country were being carried out, and used to haul freight and passengers. On the irrigation projects having been effected, the railway was abandoned by the owners, the State Utilities Commission refusing to grant them an extension of their charter unless they put their line and engines in first-class condition. There was not enough money in the business to justify such undertakings, so the owners of the line decided to cease operations. Now, however, an enterprising South Idaho man has seized the opportunity. He leased the line, ordered to be built for him a sixteen-passenger, high-powered automobile fitted with flange-wheels, put it on the rails with two light trailers for freight and express work, and now has all the business that he can handle. Indeed, so heavy is the traffic that he has ordered two other sets of automobiles and trailers. He operates his auto-train on a regular schedule, and keeps time punctually. It is the only one-man railway in existence so far as is known.

INCOME-TAX RETURNS.

The widespread interest aroused by the article on 'Income-Tax Adjustments,' by John Burns, W.S., published in the March issue of *Chambers's Journal*, induces us to draw the special attention of our readers to a little manual written by the same author, and published under the title of *Chambers's Income-Tax Guide* at 1s. 6d. net. In this clearly written volume, the author, while urging upon all the patriotic duty of paying with cheerfulness the income-tax legally due, expounds with 'great plainness of speech' the various abatements, reductions, and reliefs to which most payers of income-tax are entitled, in many cases without their knowing it. By means of specimen forms he shows clearly how Income Returns and Repayment Claims should be filled up, and makes it the simplest matter in the world to obtain the adjustments and reductions of the assessments (or, failing these, the repayments) to which so many people are entitled, but of which they may perhaps be unaware until they read Mr Burns's pages. To the man or woman of moderate invested means; to the doctor, the dentist, the clergyman, the shopkeeper; and generally to the professional, trading, and industrial classes, not forgetting the workman in receipt of more than two pounds ten shillings per week—indeed, to nearly every section of the community—this little manual will prove extremely helpful.

SUBSTITUTES FOR PETROL AND PARAFFIN FOUND IN NEW ZEALAND.

The high prices of petroleum all over the world have led to the introduction of many substitutes for petrol and paraffin. Among the substances from which suitable spirit and oil can be extracted is the peat to be found in North Island, New Zealand. Hitherto this peat has been worked mainly for the abstraction of kauri gum for making varnish, although the fact that spirit and oils could be distilled from it has been known for some years. The yield of oil averages some twenty-five gallons to the ton of peat, of which a quarter consists of a spirit suitable for driving motor-cars and aeroplanes, while the remainder can be split up into various kinds of oils. Very extensive beds of this peat are found in North Island, and a company has recently been formed for extracting oil therefrom.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

NIGHT SOUNDS.

THE wind whips all the budding trees to-night,
And roars among the conifers; the rain
Still drips from eaves; I hear a hinge complain;
And in the dark a hoot-owl, in his flight
Across the water, calls; his eerie sight,
Keen for the hunting that will ease his pain:
The grouse beats whirring wings—a suitor's strain:
The wind, at length, is still; the waves plash light.
Last night deep silence held the wood around,
And ne'er a murmur struggled from the lake;
The very stars in heav'n a more profound
And cosmic silence could not hope to breathe:
Then to my spirit seem'd heav'n's depth awake,
And there was more than earthly life beneath.

FRANCIS EDWARD BROPHEY.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible. ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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OLD LAVERY'S MONEY.

By C. A. NASH.

CHAPTER I.

OLD John Lavery had been for a great many years in the receipt of a more than comfortable income. He was agent for several large landowners in the south-west of Ireland, and, besides, farmed on his own account on quite an extensive scale. He had the name of being an honest man, and he deserved it. He owed no money to any man, and he certainly took good care that no man should owe any to him, without good security.

Old John lent money. He did not advertise the fact in the newspapers, and he courted no business in that line that was attended with risk. He did not care for lending to small farmers, even though he might get two or even three good 'names' on the back of a bill. This kind of business involved too much trouble and book-keeping; besides, in the event of their failure to meet their engagements, he deprecated the unpleasant publicity consequent on going to extreme measures. But if a few thousands were needed by a landlord who had 'outrun the constable' through a prolonged sojourn in London, or among the seductive attractions of Paris or Nice, John was always ready to give the needful aid under certain well-understood conditions. Nothing less than a first mortgage satisfied him, and his terms were always the same—10 per cent. This was much better for the borrower than getting into monetary relations with some of the gentry who did business in an unassuming back-parlour in Westminster. In the latter case, the calculation of the rate of interest charged would tax the analytical skill of an exceptionally well-qualified chartered accountant.

John had never married. Indeed, he had had no time to think of any such distraction; and at the time when we make his acquaintance he had reached the age of seventy-five. His next of kin consisted of an old sister who lived with him, and a niece, the daughter of a deceased brother. To his niece, who at this time might have been some twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, he had shown his generosity by furnishing twenty pounds, the fee required to bind her to a dressmaker in Cork. Upon the completion of her apprenticeship she had asked him for some assistance to help her in starting a business on her own account; but this he had peremptorily refused. The girl, having a spirit of her own, had given her opinion of his churlishness in pretty plain terms, which completely broke off all relations between them. The idea of setting up for herself had thus, for the present at any rate, to be abandoned, and she took a situation in one of the larger houses in Cork, in which her undoubted ability and close attention were rewarded with the success they deserved, and she had now attained the position of chief in her department. As to 'Uncle John,' she tried to forgive him, and succeeded in forgetting him.

Old John Lavery's old sister—they were twins—was somewhat of a 'character.' Both brother and sister were people of a good deal of refinement. They had been for many years in very easy circumstances, and if they did not associate on terms of equality with the 'county' families, as, of course, they did not, they were quite able to hold their own with any of the members of the said families who might visit them. As for themselves, they never paid visits.

'Miss Nell,' which was the name by which the old lady went, superintended the household affairs at Elmvale, as the place was called. She was a perfect housekeeper, seeing that there was enough for every one, but visiting severely anything in the way of waste. She seldom changed her servants. The latter knew when they were well off. She kept her eyes very wide open, and it was a common saying among her dependants that 'Miss Nell could tell what you were thinking of;' such was their belief in what they called her 'cleverality.' One offence she never pardoned, and that was a lie. No excuse availed to avert her sentence. And that was instant dismissal.

I have said that Miss Nell was a 'character;' but perhaps it was her force of character, indeed, that gained her the reputation, rather than any pronounced peculiarity of manner. She certainly would challenge the attention of a stranger by the costume she assumed when superintending the outdoor operations at Elmvale. She retired to her bedroom every morning after breakfast, and reappeared in a few minutes in her working-

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attire. This never varied. It consisted of a man's frieze coat, confined at the waist by a broad leather belt with an immense brass buckle, a man's tall hat—an old one of John's—and a pair of top-boots, a legacy from the days when her brother, on rare occasions, followed the hounds. No portion of the farm escaped her inspection. The hens, the cows, the ploughing or sowing, or reaping, or haymaking, all came under her close scrutiny, with perfect impartiality.

Miss Nell could have posed for what is known as a 'quick-change artiste,' for on being called indoors to receive visitors, she might be seen at three o'clock tramping past the drawing-room windows in field panoply, and at ten minutes past she would be calmly seated in that apartment doing the honours of the tea-table in her black-silk dress and old Limerick lace collar.

I have said that Miss Nell and her niece, Agatha Lavery, were old John's nearest of kin. He had a very distant cousin—indeed, so distant that only in Ireland would the term be applied. And, perhaps, had John been a poor man the relationship might not have been remembered.

This cousin was a certain Mrs Lysaght, who lived with her husband, a fairly substantial farmer, at a place known as Bawnmore, some two miles from Elmvale. There was not much intimacy between the Laverys and the Lysaghts. They met every Sunday at Monaleen Chapel, which was midway between Elmvale and Bawnmore, and where both families attended last Mass. A few remarks were exchanged between old John and Lysaght about the crops and the weather, and Anne Lysaght made a point of asking Miss Nell's advice on some item of domestic interest. This was the extent of the friendship existing between the 'cousins.' The Lysaghts were never invited as guests to Elmvale, and indeed never visited there, except on the rare occasions when some passing indisposition of either its master or mistress rendered a diplomatic assumption of anxiety advisable.

Meanwhile, as time went on, old John, who had always been as hard as iron, began to fail. He had led an active outdoor life, and chafed a good deal when very persistent rheumatism confined him to the house. Still, neither he nor Miss Nell was at all alarmed. Both thought it would mean only less activity, and great was the old lady's distress when one morning John, having failed to answer the usual knock at his bedroom door, was found to have quietly slipped out of the world during the night. He had reached his eighty-first year.

When his will was opened, it was found that he had left everything unconditionally to his sister. Much surprise was expressed that he had not remembered his niece, even to some small extent; and as his will was dated only some two years before his death, it was thought by most people that that young lady's free expression of the opinion she entertained of her uncle had been her undoing.

Mrs Lysaght, in particular, was very indignant with Agatha, and on her first visit of condolence to Miss Nell gave vent to her feelings in very severe terms. 'The ingratitude of some people,' she said, 'passes everything. It was most generous of her uncle to give her what he did. There was nothing before her but domestic service, and he put her in the way of being, I may say, a lady. And then to turn round and abuse him, as if he hadn't a perfect right to do what he liked with his own! And 'tisn't that alone, but the pain she gave you, to hear your brother insulted.'

'Ah, well, Anne dear,' replied the old lady, 'we must make allowance for the impetuosity of young people. You must not expect them to be as wise as their elders, or to love their relatives, like you, I am sure, loved poor John, for his personal qualities solely. And it was only natural that poor Agatha should wish to be independent, and strike out for herself. However, perhaps it was all for the best. She has got on very well, and who knows but she might only have lost any money given to her? She had no experience in the management of a business, and that was why her uncle thought it would not be for her own good to comply with her request; and I'm quite sure she sees that herself now. She wrote me a very affectionate and sympathetic letter when poor John died.'

'Well, Nell, I have no doubt at all that it was all for the best that John wouldn't listen to her; but, as I said before, I can't forgive her for the terrible language she used to her uncle. Why, we heard at Bawnmore that she went next door to striking him, the virago! Anyway, I am quite sure her treatment of him weighed heavily on him. He was one of those men that say little, but think a good deal. Old people feel unkindness more than the young. And if I were you, Nell, I would keep that lady at arm's length. Worry would not suit you, and as sure as you give her the chance, worry you she will, believe me.'

'And you think, Anne, it would not be well that I should do anything for her now? Poor John left a good deal of money, not to speak of the farms; and I am an old woman with few wants. Indeed, since John's death, I have often thought of selling the farms, and ending my days in a religious house. There are many convents where they take ladies as boarders, and there would be nothing to trouble me.'

'For goodness' sake, Nell, don't let any one hear you talking such nonsense! Why, you would not live a week in such a place, you that were always accustomed to such an active life.'

'Ah yes, Anne dear, no doubt I was, as you say, always busy; but you know that cannot

go on for ever, and in my eighty-first year it is time to think of resting.'

'Of course it is,' said Anne, 'and I think you are quite right in what you say about realising the farms, and giving up the trouble they bring. But it is not necessary for you to bury yourself in a convent. Just part with the farms and the land round Elmvale, keeping the house, and amuse yourself looking after the garden and the fowls.'

Anne Lysaght thought it well to leave it at that for the present. She had rather ambitious designs about the old lady's money, but felt that it was necessary to proceed by slow degrees, and with much circumspection. The chief point at present was to prejudice Nell against her niece. And here, too, danger lurked. Nell was terribly suspicious, and had always shown a marvellous power of reading the thoughts of others.

However, Anne had no reason to think that her interview had been other than satisfactory, even if only in a negative way. Nell had not declared her intention of cutting Agatha off; neither had she said that it was her intention to help her. Of course, the most unspeakable danger of all was that a few of her friends had advised her to have her niece to live with her as her acknowledged heiress. But she in no-wise took to this idea. She said she required no company.

'Ah, well,' said Anne to herself, as she drove back to Bawnmore, 'I must just be careful, and work my point by degrees. She is as cute as a fox. What did she mean by that dig about my loving John for his personal good qualities? I wonder was she pulling my leg! Personal good qualities, indeed! The old skinflint! Why, he never did a kind turn in his life!'

Now this was by no means true. Old John Lavery had done very many good turns in his lifetime; and while averse from having his benefactions published, he had helped many a poor, struggling family in ways that were never heard of. But what Mrs Lysaght meant—perhaps she did not analyse her own thoughts—was that neither during old John's lifetime nor after his death had any of his money come *her* way.

Old Miss Lavery did not change her mind as to disposing of the farms and the land about Elmvale. In less than four months after her brother's death this was accomplished, and the proceeds were well invested. She felt the change at first; but rich people are never neglected, and the ladies who formerly visited her once a month were now weekly callers. But no one was so assiduous in looking after her as Anne Lysaght—which was only natural, as they were related.

I have said that this relationship was a very distant one, so distant, indeed, that the so-called 'cousinship' was rather apocryphal. There were two things that Anne feared—first, that old Nell might make a will, and leave her fortune, or the greater part of it, to 'that hussy' Agatha; and next, that she might die intestate, in which case Anne would get, she feared, only a small share of the good things. Talking matters over one morning with her husband, she expressed her anxiety on both these points, and almost fell off her chair in the panic consequent on his view of the subject.

'Why, Anne, woman,' said George Lysaght, 'if Nell dies without a will, you won't get the value of that half-loaf of bread on the table. Do you really forget what the relationship is between you?'

'Well, I know it is not a very near one; but I 'm her cousin, all the same!'

'Cousin, my grandmother!' said George. 'What is the use of making a fool of yourself? Listen to me. Your grandfather and Nell's grandmother were a kind of cousins by marriage—mind, by marriage!—and if *that* makes *you* Nell's cousin, faith! I think I have a claim myself as a cousin by my marriage with you. No; put it out of your head that you will get a penny-piece if there is no will. And I don't know that you are prudent in trying to make her cut Agatha off, either. If you put the old woman's back up against her niece to the extent you desire, the chances are she may leave all her money to charity. But how do you know that she has not made a will already? Old Mr Mathews, her solicitor, has been two or three times with her since John's death.'

'Oh, I know all about that. And I know, too, that except while the maid was waiting at lunch, on those three occasions—for he was there three times—there was no one else in the room with the pair of them. And, you know, a will requires two witnesses.'

'All the same, if I were you, I would be very cautious. She might think more of you if you showed some consideration for Agatha. Remember, she is her own flesh and blood, and, as I said before, even if you succeed in poisoning the aunt's mind against the niece, I don't see how it brings you a bit nearer to the money. Unless, indeed, you have some plan in your mind that I know nothing of.'

'Well, George, I have, and a good plan, too, I think. I go over to see her every day, and a nice journey I've had, some days lately, with the weather what it is. And she is beginning to be a bit lonesome. Of course, I know I have to be cautious. But I have sounded her about coming to live here with us. At first she refused to think of it; but, you know, the constant dropping wears the stone, and yesterday she got so far as to say that she feared if she came here she would miss what is left to her of Elmvale, and the garden and the cocks and hens, and all the rest of it. But, as I told her, there would be no need for all that. She could drive over a couple of times a week, or every day, for that matter, and then

Elmvale would be a real recreation to her. I told her that you had got rubber tires on the "covered car," and that she could have Tom Nolan to drive her, and he could give a hand in the garden while he was there. And do you know what? I really think the thought of the free labour had more effect on her than all I had said before. Wait a while, George; I'm not such a fool as you think! We'll have her here before long. Oh, I'll do nothing in a hurry—you needn't shake your head—but you'll see that before she's here six months her will will be made, and it won't be Agatha, either, that the money will be left to!'

'Surely to goodness, Anne, you're not thinking of forging a will, or giving her some draught, like the people in novels'——

'Oh no! there will be no forgery or draughts. Everything will be open and above-board. But you'll see my words will come true.'

There was little surprise when old Miss Lavery went to live with her cousin, Mrs Lysaght. The few friends the old lady had, indeed, favoured the idea when she announced her intention of doing so. They thought it much better than that she should be dependent on servants.

One of the arguments which George Lysaght had used to his wife was that Miss Nell would miss the visits to which she had been accustomed. 'You know,' he said, 'many of the ladies who visited at Elmvale — old Lady Linley, for instance—may draw the line at visiting at Bawnmore.'

'George,' said Anne, 'I gave you credit for more knowledge of the world. 'Tisn't you or me they'll be visiting, but the rich Miss Lavery, and they'd visit her if she was in jail, if they were allowed to.'

'I suppose you're right, Anne. Money certainly is a wonderful thing. But be careful. I honestly tell you I don't like your plan of hitting Agatha so hard. The poor girl never did us any harm. And nothing will persuade me that you will ever succeed in getting Nell to see things as you wish.'

'Well,' said Anne, 'time will tell. Six months ago, if I had said I should have Nell living in this house, you would have thought me out of my senses; yet, here she is. And now I tell you that before six months more, or even sooner, Nell will have made her will in my favour; and there will be no hugger-mugger or secrecy. Why, every day she seems to be more pleased with herself for having come to live with us. Only this very morning she said she was never so comfortable in her life, or so well looked after. And now I want you to go over on Monday to Ballyforan, to the auction at old Colonel Baxter's. There's a nice, light victoria that will go cheap, and it will be a pleasant change for Nell from the covered car, now that the fine spring weather is coming on.'

The victoria was duly bought, and every fine day the old lady drove over to Elmvale after breakfast, and spent the day there, returning only in time for dinner at six o'clock. She began, too, to pay a few visits on her own account for the first time in her life, and between the calls on her friends and the interest she took in the little distractions of Elmvale, Anne Lysaght had good reason to think that her solicitude had rendered the old lady's declining years very comfortable.

In the beginning of the month of May, while paying a visit to Lady Linley, old Nell sat by an open window, the day being very fine, and on getting up to take her leave she felt somewhat chilled. She did not, however, pay any attention to the matter, never having been an alarmist. Next morning, however, she was quite feverish, and it was thought prudent to send for the doctor. The latter at once pronounced the case to be one of pneumonia. Before leaving he had an interview with Anne Lysaght.

'Pneumonia, I need not tell you,' he said, 'is always dangerous, and in the case of a person of Miss Lavery's advanced age especially so. She should be told—of course, without alarming her—that, in case of any illness, such business matters as she might have to settle should be attended to. I will send you a very good nurse from the County Infirmary, who will thoroughly understand her duties in the sickroom, and I will come over again in the morning.'

(*Continued on page 441.*)

BRITAIN'S OPPORTUNITY.

By E. FEARON.

ONE of the many problems with which this country will be faced when at last the war is over will be the question of labour and production, especially in the engineering and allied trades. Up to the outbreak of war our manufacturers, with few exceptions, had been jogging comfortably along in the same old way that their fathers had done, while other nations, especially America and Germany, had been systematically improving and standardising methods of production, with the result that they were ousting us from the world's markets.

If we take the case of America, we find that one of the reasons of the large output per person employed is standardisation, another is scientific control of all processes, and still another is that

in most cases the factories and works are lofty, well lighted, and well ventilated, with clean and tidy messrooms, lavatories, &c. All of these factors make for efficiency, and have an effect on the men themselves in inducing smartness in dress and appearance; they take a pride in their work, and before leaving have a wash and change their clothes, so that you very rarely see a crowd of grimy men in dirty, greasy clothes turning out of the gate as you do here.

Standardisation in manufacture has been carried to great lengths in the States, with astonishing results so far as cheapness of production is concerned; while in Britain we seem to be just waking up to the fact that it is possible to make a thousand articles all alike at less cost than to make them of varying design. Take almost any manufactured article you like, from motor-cars to typewriters, and you find that American firms, by concentrating on standard methods throughout, can supply them at less cost than British firms; they may not be so highly finished, or last so long, as the British article, but for most purposes that is not essential.

One of the best-known examples is the Ford motor-car; here standardisation has been carried to a fine art—every single part is made identical, and all that has to be done is to assemble the parts. If you care to stand for an hour, say, at the side of a busy main road leading out of one of our big towns, and count the number of motor-vehicles of all sorts that pass along, and notice how many of the total are of this make, it will bring home forcibly to you how much we lose by our antiquated methods.

Nearly every one rides a cycle or a motor-cycle nowadays, and here again the want of standardisation is marked; every maker has his own particular design, his own special thread on bolts, and so on, with the result that if anything goes wrong or breaks, that particular part can only be obtained from the maker, or, if you are lucky, from his agent; and, if you happen to be on a tour in some out-of-the-way place, it generally means considerable delay and annoyance.

The man who, of all others, first saw the remarkable possibilities of system and method was the late J. W. Taylor, who has been called 'the father of scientific management,' and who for many years was employed by the Bethlehem Steel Company, one of the largest concerns in the States.

In Taylor's opinion, 'American and English workmen work at sport and play at work,' and for every person who is overworked there are a hundred who intentionally underwork. Acting upon this belief, he made a systematic study of men and machines, and, with a number of highly trained assistants, went very thoroughly into the whole subject. An instance of his thoroughness may be cited. At the Bethlehem Steel Works were some eighty thousand tons of pig-iron stacked in small heaps near a railway line, and a gang of seventy-five men, under a good foreman, was putting the iron into railway-trucks at the rate of twelve and a half tons per man per day. This was about an average speed for the work in the district, and was considered satisfactory by those in charge, but was not good enough for Taylor. He and his staff began carrying the iron themselves, and also studied the way in which the gang worked; and after some time they came to the conclusion that each man ought to load nearly fifty tons a day instead of twelve and a half. Their conclusion was brought about thus. They noticed that one man in particular left at the end of the day as fresh as when he started, and they asked him if he would like to earn more money by loading more iron. On his signifying his willingness, one of the staff took him in hand, and directed his every movement exactly to time, telling him when to work and when to rest, the aim being to get the man to work at top speed, and then rest his muscles for regular periods. At the end of the day he had loaded forty-seven tons without undue fatigue! Other men were picked out, and in a short time all the iron was being handled at this rate, and the men were receiving 60 per cent. more wages than they earned before. Other forms of labour were systematised, and the results were always the same—lessened cost of production for the employer, and better wages for the employee. Throughout the United States this 'speeding up' has gained adherents, and there is already a large number of books and periodicals devoted to the dissemination of knowledge on the subject, which is attracting attention in every part of the country.

In Great Britain one result of the war has been the remarkable way in which, notwithstanding depleted staffs and the employment of unskilled labour and of women who had never before seen, much less worked on, a lathe or other machine, the output has not only been maintained, but greatly increased. The reason for this is not far to seek. The urgent need for all sorts of munitions has caused us to install thousands of up-to-date machines; to erect factories equipped with canteens, well-lighted, airy structures, planned to secure the maximum output from the ground area; and generally to revise our whole methods of manufacture.

One of the few concerns in this country that have adopted scientific management as it is known in the States is a well-known firm of chain-makers not a hundred miles from Manchester; and they have found that by speeding up machines, and doing everything possible to obviate all unnecessary motions on the part of the operator, they were able to double the output of the factory. This was done by standardising all tools and tool-holders, by having a store in which were kept sets of sharpened tools for every job, and having an electric bell on every

machine, so that whenever a tool needed renewing, all the workman had to do was to ring the bell, and a boy at once took the tool away and supplied a fresh one.

Then, too, they made a close study of the output hour by hour, and noticed that it fell off at certain times, especially during the latter part of the morning. A break of fifteen minutes was instituted half-way through the morning, and milk, &c., provided, with successful results.

The report issued by the Ministry of Munitions on 'Industrial Fatigue and its Causes' cites a very interesting example in which the men working on piece rates in the foundry were made to rest fifteen minutes every hour. The men at first resented the innovation, and thought their earnings would suffer; a foreman was therefore appointed to see that the rule was strictly carried out, and it was found that the output actually increased.

But it is to the installation of automatic machines that we must look for help also, and greater encouragement should be given to invention in our own country in this respect. The writer knows of a case in point, in which a manufacturer who was putting up a gear-cutting shop was compelled, much against his will, to get all his machines from America; not one could be supplied in Great Britain. These machines are capable of cutting the most complicated gears with practically no attention; they are set to cut a certain number of teeth to the required shape, and go on till the job is completed, when a fresh wheel can be inserted, and the whole process started *de novo*. A man of ordinary intelligence can easily attend to three or four of these machines; there is no need for a skilled mechanic except in case of a breakdown.

Referring again to the report of the Ministry of Munitions, we find that an old-established firm built a new shop, designed, on the basis of their past experience, for an output of five thousand per week of a certain standard munition. Now, despite the fact that this shop was manned by new and inexperienced hands, the output was actually nearly thirteen thousand per week, a figure which had not been approached by the older but equally well-equipped shop of the firm! The question naturally arises as to the reason of this difference, and there is only one answer—namely, that the new hands were not hampered by tradition and the 'ca' canny' policy of the old employees; consequently they were doing their best, and, by so doing, more than doubled the output, and, incidentally, made very good wages for themselves.

Here, then, we have undoubtedly one of the causes of our backwardness; the British workman is capable of doing as good work as the workman of any other nation, but, for various reasons, he hardly ever *does his best*. He has not, in the past, been encouraged to do it; he has been bullied by foremen, who are too often 'beggars on horseback;' he has been dismissed if he showed himself too independent or if he had ideas of his own; and in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of one thousand he has accepted the situation and simply done as little as would pass muster in the fifty odd hours or so he has to put in each week.

Now the day of low wages has gone, and it is extremely unlikely that it will ever return, and, that being so, it is absolutely essential that output must be increased accordingly, by the use of every labour-saving device that ingenuity can give us. But there is another factor that is not sufficiently recognised in Great Britain, which is that it pays to encourage workmen to use their *brains* as well as their hands; to look at the daily work from the men's point of view, and if one of them can suggest any improvement, to give it careful consideration, and, if at all possible, give it a trial. Then, if it is found that better results are obtained, let the man who suggested the improvement have a share in the increased profits that ensue, and it will be found to stimulate working methods all round.

When peace is declared we shall have plenty of handicaps in the way of heavy taxation, war pensions, &c., and if we are to win through, it will only be by every one of us doing the best that in him lies, and that best can be accomplished by encouragement of initiative, by better working conditions, and greater harmony generally between capital and labour.

The chance of bringing about a great reform has come through the grim necessity of war's demands, and it remains for us to take advantage of it. If we fail to do so, it is as certain as anything on earth can be that we shall lose our place among the leading nations; if we seize the opportunity that Fate has given us, we can not only remain in the front rank, but can go ahead and become pioneers and discoverers of newer and better methods in science, industry, and commerce.

The importance of our doing so cannot be over-estimated, for it would be nothing short of a calamity to allow a nation such as Germany to become the paramount Power in Europe; we must, at all costs, prevent that, and we *can* prevent it if we shake off the fetters that have bound us hitherto, and resolve to sink our differences and all pull together for the common good.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By JEFFERY FARNOL.

CHAPTER XXVII.—MRS TRAPES UPON THE MILLENNIUM.

MULLIGAN'S was in a ferment. Bare-armed women talked in every doorway, they talked from open windows, they talked leaning over banisters, they congregated on landings and in passage-ways, but everywhere they talked; while men and youths newly returned from work, lunch-can and basket in hand, listened in wide-eyed wonder, shook incredulous heads, puffed thoughtfully at pipes or at cigarettes, and questioned in guttural wonderment. But Ravenslee, lost in his own happy thoughts, sped up the stairs all unheeding, abstractedly returning such neighbourly salutes as he happened to notice. Reaching his lofty habitation in due course, he let himself in, and, seated in his arm-chair, was in the act of filling his pipe when Mrs Trapes appeared. In one hand she grasped a meat-skewer and in the other an open Testament, and it was to be noted that her bright eyes, usually so keen and steady, roved here and there, from pink rug to green-and-yellow table-cloth, thence to the parrot-owl, and so at last to her lodger; finally she spoke. 'Mr Geoffrey, are ye saved?' she demanded in awe-struck tones.

'Why, really, Mrs Trapes, I'——

'Because, Mr Geoffrey, this day it behooveth us all t' think of our souls an' th' hereafter, I reckon.'

'Souls?' said Ravenslee, staring in his turn.

'Fire,' she continued, shaking portentous head—'fire I'm prepared for; a earthquake I could endoor; battle, murder, and sudden death I could abide; poverty is me lot, Mr Geoffrey, an' hardship is me portion, an' for all sich am I dooly prepared, sich things bein' nacheral; but for this—well, there!'

'What is the matter, Mrs Trapes?'

'Matter, Mr Geoffrey? Well, the millennyum's at hand, that's all—the lion is about t' lay down with th' lamb, tigers has lost their taste for blood, an' snakes an' serpents has shed their vennymous fangs! Mr Geoffrey—the day is at hand—beware!'

'What in the world'—— began Ravenslee; but Mrs Trapes stayed him with uplifted skewer, and, laying it down, drew from the mysterious recesses of her apron a folded circular, which she proceeded to spread open, and from which she read in a hollow voice as follows:

'NOTICE.

'1*st August* 1910.

'On and after the above date all tenants soever residing within the tenement house known as Mulligan's are warned that all rents will be reduced by 50 per cent. BY ORDER.'

'Now what,' said Mrs Trapes, refolding the circular very reverently, and shutting it into the Testament—'jest what d'ye think o' that?'

'Quite a—er—remarkable document, Mrs Trapes!'

'Remarkable?' snorted Mrs Trapes.

'Yes,' said Ravenslee, beginning to fill his pipe, 'extraordinary, most extraordinary—er—very much so.'

'Extraordinary? Mr Geoffrey, is that all you got t' say about it?' And Mrs Trapes sniffed loudly.

'Well, what more should I say?'

'Why, ain't it th' wonder o' th' whole round world? Ain't it th' merrycle of all time?'

'Certainly! Not a doubt of it!' he agreed. 'By the way, what do you happen to have for supper? You see, I've been'——

'Supper?'

'I'm quite hungry—I'm always hungry lately, and'——

'Hungry!' ejaculated Mrs Trapes, rolling her eyes. 'Here I tell him of wonders an' omens beyond pore huming understandin', an'—he's hungry! Lord, ain't that jest like a man! A man's soul, if a man has a soul, lays in his stummick. Hungry! But you shall be fed—prompt, Mr Geoffrey. How 'll b'iled salmon an' peas soot?'

'Splendidly! And I think'——

'"On and after,"' said Mrs Trapes slowly and dreamily—"'on and after the above date all tenants soever residin'"—I've learned it by heart, Mr Geoffrey. Then it goes on to say, "within the tennyment house known as Mulligan's are warned"—h'm! I wonder why "warned"?—"are warned that all rents will be re-dooced 50 per cent."! Fifty per cent.!' she repeated in a dreamy rapture, 'which is jest half, ye see. An', Mr Geoffrey, that's jest what's got me plumb scared—it's all so unnacheral. I've heard o' rents bein' rose—constant, but who ever heard of 'em bein' took down before? Well, well! My land! Well, well!' With which remark Mrs Trapes went about her household duties, leaving Ravenslee to lounge and smoke and dream blissfully of Hermione.

'Ye see,' said Mrs Trapes, wandering in with a plate, 'it 'll make things s' much easier for all of us; we shall begin t' feel almost rich—some of us. "Are warned that all rents will be re-dooced by 50 per cent." Well, well!' and she wandered out again.

But presently she was back once more, this time with the tablecloth, which she proceeded to spread, though still lost in dreamy abstraction. 'At first I couldn't an' I wouldn't believe it,

Mr Geoffrey—no, sir!' she continued in the same rapt voice. 'But every one 's got a notice same as mine, so I guess it must be true, don't ye think?'

'Not a doubt of it!' answered Ravenslee.

'But th' burnin' question as I asks myself is —who? It 's signed "By Order," ye see. Well —whose? One sure thing, it ain't Mulligan.'

'But he owns the place, doesn't he?'

'He did, Mr Geoffrey, an' that 's what worries me—continual. What I demands is—who now?'

'Echo, Mrs Trapes, methinks doth answer, "Who?" By the way, it was—er—salmon and green peas I think you'——

'My land, that bit o' salmon 'll bile itself t' rags!' and incontinently she vanished.

However, in due time Ravenslee sat down to as tasty a supper as might be, and did ample justice to it, while Mrs Trapes once more read aloud for his edification from the wondrous circular, and was again propounding the vexed and burning question of 'who?' when she was interrupted by a knocking without, and going to the door, presently returned with little Mrs Bowker, in whose tired eyes shone an unusual light, and whose faded voice held a strange note of gladness.

'Good-evenin', Mr Geoffrey,' said she, bobbing him a curtsy as he rose to greet her. 'My Hazel sends you her love an' a kiss for them last candies; an' thank ye for all th' medicine. But, oh, Mr Geoffrey, an' you, Ann Trapes, you 'll never guess what 's brought me. I 've come t' wish ye good-bye; we 're—oh, Ann—we 're goin' at last!'

'Goin'!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, clutching at her elbows. 'Ye never mean as you 're leavin' Mulligan's, now the rent 's been took down—re-dooced 50 per cent.—by order?'

'That 's just what I 'm tellin' ye. Oh Ann, ain't it just—heavenly?'

'Heavenly!' repeated Mrs Trapes, and sank into a chair.

'Yes, heavenly, t' see th' trees an' flowers again—t' live among them, Ann!'

'Samanthy Bowker, what do you mean?'

'Why, Ann, my Tom 's had a gardener's job offered him at a gentleman's mansion in the country. Tom went after it t'-day—an' got it. Fifteen dollars a week an' a cottage—free, Ann! Hazel 's just crazy with joy—an' so 'm I!'

Mrs Trapes fanned herself feebly with her apron. 'All I can say is,' said she faintly, 'if the world don't come to an end soon, I shall. A gardener's job! A cottage in th' country! Why, that 's what you 've been hungerin' for, you an' Bowker, ever since I 've known ye. And to-day it 's come! An' to-day the rent 's re-dooced itself 50 per cent., by order. Oh, dear land o' my fathers! When d' ye go?'

'T'-morrow mornin', Ann. Hazel 'll sure grow a strong, well girl in th' country; doctor said so last week.—You heard him, Mr Geoffrey, didn't you?'

'I did, Mrs Bowker.'

'And my Tom 's that excited he couldn't eat no supper. Oh, an' have ye seen in t'-night's paper, Ann, about Mulligan's?'

'No; what now?' inquired Mrs Trapes feebly.

'Well, read that—right there!' and unfolding an evening paper, Mrs Bowker pointed to a paragraph tucked away into a corner; and, drawing a deep breath, Mrs Trapes read aloud as follows:

'It is understood that Geoffrey Ravenslee, the well-known sportsman and millionaire, winner of last year's International Automobile Race and holder of the world's long-distance speed record, has lately paid a record price in a real estate deal. A certain tenement building off Tenth Avenue has been purchased by him, the cost of which, it is rumoured, was fabulous.'

'Fab'lous!' repeated Mrs Trapes, and sniffed. 'Well, I never had no use for millionaires, anyway—they 're generally fools or rogues—this one 's a fool, sure. Any one is as would give much for a place like Mulligan's; an' yet, come t' think of it again—"are warned as all rents will be re-dooced 50 per cent., by order"—yes, come t' think of it again, what I say is—God bless this millionaire, an' whatever he is, Ann Angelina Trapes is sure goin' t' mention him before th' Throne this night.'

(*Continued on page 435.*)

THE MOST WONDERFUL ESCAPE FROM PRISON ON RECORD.

By George Pignatorre, B.C.L.

LATUDE, who may very appropriately be styled the Champion Prison-Breaker, seems, like Napoleon in war or Edison in electricity, to have been supernaturally gifted in his own special line. Not but that he was a man of great general intelligence, but he was lacking sometimes in that judgment and self-control on ordinary occasions which he possessed in so superlative a degree when planning his escapes. Above all, he was a man of dauntless courage, of unyielding endurance, and of resourcefulness. Physically, too, he must have been endowed with a remarkable vitality, which alone could have enabled him to survive the hardships and privations of thirty-five years of prison life, the horrors of a dungeon of those days.

Latude had left Huverene in the year 1747 to push his fortunes in the city of Paris. He was then a fine young man, full of high hopes, but of a somewhat too impulsive nature, lacking in experience and in cool judgment, eager to realise those bright dreams of the future which spread like a deceptive mirage before his sanguine imagination. Latude, however, knew that to achieve an initial success, to set his foot on the first rung of the ladder of fortune, a powerful protector or protectress was required, without whom, especially in that most corrupt age, the eighteenth century, no one could hope to emerge from obscurity. France was at that period under petticoat government; she was governed by the notorious Marquise de Pompadour, who ruled the country under the name of Louis the Fifteenth, the Well-Beloved (so misnamed). And Latude bethought himself of applying to the all-powerful favourite to obtain some office or post about the Court which would give him his first step; and this gained, he relied on himself to achieve further success. So far, Latude was right; could he succeed in gaining the ear of the uncrowned Queen of France, he could hope to rise high; but being without a letter of introduction, he would have to introduce himself, and here Latude made the capital blunder of his life by hitting on a device so clumsy in its conception that it is difficult to understand how a man of average intelligence could have hoped to reap any benefit through what might have been called a silly practical joke played off at the expense of the most powerful personage in France. The plan in itself, and the mode in which Latude proceeded to carry it out, betray such incredible want of judgment and reflection that his action can only be explained by one of those momentary aberrations of mind from which even the greatest intellects have not always been exempt. The plan conceived by Latude to gain access to the favourite was to enclose some innocuous white powder in an envelope addressed to Madame Pompadour, which he would post, and then, following on the heels of the enclosure, present himself and demand an audience on a matter which brooked no delay. He would then inform the favourite that he had overheard by chance a conversation between two men, which had convinced him that there was a plot on foot to poison her; that the poison, which was of a very subtle nature, would be sent enclosed in an envelope in the form of a white powder; and that he hoped he had come in time.

The plan was carried out, without let or hindrance. Madame Pompadour, who knew how she was hated, gave credence at first to the tale, and was proportionately grateful. She even offered him a purse of louis d'or in the first flush of her gratitude, which Latude refused to accept. She then asked his name and address, proposing to reward him in a manner more conformable to his appearance and seeming station.

Here Latude committed the grave imprudence of writing out his name and address without attempting to disguise his handwriting. This was a great blunder; for when it was discovered that the fatal white powder was nought but common fine table-salt, the handwriting on the enclosure was compared with that of the address written down by Latude, in the presence of Madame Pompadour, and found to be identical! The lady was furious, and not without reason, at being fooled by a country rustic, and being made a laughing-stock; nor did she allow her wrath to cool. Latude, while indulging, perhaps, in his day-dreams, was forthwith arrested and consigned to the Bastille.

The rigours of imprisonment were at first somewhat softened and the prison rules relaxed in his favour through the kindness of Berryer, lieutenant of police, who allowed him the use of writing materials and books, and who had him transferred from the Bastille to Vincennes, where he enjoyed far greater liberty. There he remained several months, till, wearying of captivity, he resolved on escaping. He laid and carried out his plan with that ingenuity and boldness which Latude possessed in such a superlative degree; but we cannot afford to dwell on the particulars of an exploit which, however remarkable in itself, was mere child's-play to what he could do, to his wonderful escape from the Bastille—truly a masterpiece in its way.

But Latude's knack of getting out of prison only equalled his knack of getting in again. His besetting foible seems to have been his inability to understand individual character, and his proneness to trust the wrong person. Thus it came to pass that he revealed himself incautiously to several individuals, and was promptly recaptured and consigned once more to the Bastille. The captive was allowed, as before, the use of paper, ink, and books. For six whole months he possessed himself with patience, reading and writing assiduously; at the end of this time his ardent and impulsive nature asserted itself, and, in a fit of spleen, he scribbled on the margin of the page of a book the following quatrain:

Without being either witty or pleasant,
  Without being either lovely or new,
In France one may aim at a lover
  The foremost of all, as Pompadour knew.

A turnkey read the lines, and carried the book to the governor, who showed them to Madame Pompadour. These four execrable lines spelt irrevocably lifelong imprisonment; even Berryer had to withdraw his protection and to cease active advocacy of Latude. But the lieutenant of police continued to treat him with much consideration and kindness; he was supplied with good food, given a companion at his own request, and his cell was airy and warm. But if Latude had chafed before at the prospect of a long, though terminable, imprisonment, when

he might reasonably have hoped for a not very distant release, he had now become simply desperate at the far more terrible outlook which was before him, and resolved to attempt an escape from the Bastille.

There remained but one way open, and that was up the chimney, down the wall, over the moat, and through or over the outer circuit; but the chimney was obstructed with stout gratings and bars, the inner wall of the Bastille from turret to the surface of the moat was two hundred feet in height, the water in the moat would be five feet in depth or more, and, finally, the circuit was some twenty feet in height. He and his companion would have to fashion their own tools, to conceal the materials and the rubbish in some secure hiding-place, and, lastly, to work by night, mostly in a cramped position, in the dark or in the semi-darkness of a dimly burning rushlight. No wonder that D'Aligre, the companion of Latude, refused at first to have anything to do with what he regarded as a mad scheme, pointing out the seemingly insurmountable barriers which lay between them and liberty. But Latude refuted D'Aligre's objections one by one, explaining his plan, and at last won his consent.

The first thing was to find a place of concealment wherein they could secrete their appliances and implements. Such a hiding-place Latude believed must exist beneath the floor of their cell. He had noticed in all the cells he had successively inhabited that whenever a cell overhead or underneath was occupied he had always been able to hear distinctly the movements of the occupant, and that now for the first time, although the cell below was inhabited, there was no sound to be heard indicating the presence of the inmate. This could only be accounted for by the greater space intervening between the floor of the upper cell and the ceiling of the lower one. Moreover, he conjectured that the space would be partially, perhaps wholly, void, as otherwise the superincumbent solid mass, perchance four or five feet thick, would have been an overweight for the ceiling below. He managed to verify his conjecture one Sunday morning in returning from Mass, when he dropped purposely on the stairs a small cylindrical case, and asked their warder to pick it up. The man had to run some distance down to where it had rolled, and Latude meanwhile had darted up and looked into the lower cell, and measured at a glance the height, which he reckoned to be about ten feet at the outside; then, counting the steps intervening between floor and floor, the aggregate height of which he ascertained by measuring that of one with his handkerchief, he found that his surmise had been correct, and that there was a hollow or only partially filled space intermediate and underlying their cell. This important point ascertained, Latude began operations immediately. Out of two iron pegs or pins on which their table was supported he and D'Aligre made two pointed chisels by sharpening them on the stone flags of the floor, and with these two tools fashioned by themselves they succeeded in raising a flag. The opening revealed a cavity four feet and a half deep, extending under the floor and amply sufficient to contain and hide from view the various articles they would be obliged to conceal from the turnkeys. The flag was replaced so neatly that no trace remained of its having been removed. Their next operation was to undo the seams and draw out the threads of the linen shirts, stockings, and underwear, of which Latude possessed a plentiful supply. According to his own statement, his wardrobe comprised thirteen dozen and a half shirts, besides other underclothing in proportion. They knotted and rolled up the threads in balls, each containing some sixty feet of twine, out of which they made a ladder twenty feet long, by plaiting the strands of thread, which was to support them while they laboured to detach the bars and gratings fixed in the chimney; and it was on this unsteady ladder, half-standing, half-crouching, stifled by soot against which they had no protection, that the two men toiled six whole months to remove the massive bars embedded in the hard masonry, which they had no means of softening save by squirting water from their mouths over the particular spot at which they were working. But their progress was painfully slow, for in addition to the ordinary difficulties which the task presented of itself, they had to take it in hand and carry it through working at odd hours, almost always in the dark and unprovided with proper tools. Lastly, each bar, each grating, had to be carefully put back so as to present a normal appearance, every speck of mortar cleared away, the ladder stowed away, and the flag replaced before the first morning visit of the turnkeys. The chimney cleared, Latude proceeded to make two more ladders—one of cords two hundred feet long to enable them to descend from the roof of the Bastille to the moat, the other of wood to serve for escalading the outer wall beyond the moat bordering on the governor's garden. To fashion this last ladder they had to provide themselves with a saw and a blade, which Latude contrived to manufacture with much ingenuity—the sharp blade out of a steel for striking a light, the rude saw out of a candlestick, which he notched with the cutting edge of the steel. These two new instruments served to cut the logs of firewood which were supplied to them in winter by M. Berryer into billets of a uniform length. These were then dressed and made to fit into each other by grooves and turning joints—'*tiroirs et charnières*' are the rather confusing terms used by Latude; but this he explains farther on by substituting the words '*mortese*' and '*tenen.*' Then each section was pierced with two holes, wherein the rungs were secured with wooden pegs, to which some strong twine was attached, so that the ladder—which, by

the way, had but one arm—could be easily and quietly pieced together. Finally, they plaited a stout auxiliary cord, and fashioned a rude pulley. The cord was to serve to lessen the oscillations of the long ladder. Several smaller additional cords were made to lower or pull up the articles they would have to carry with them. Their preparations were now complete after eighteen months of labour, and it only remained for them to wait for the first dark, windy night to make their attempt. Latude, on reflection, had been obliged to modify his original plan in one respect—that is, to abandon his intention of making their exit over the wall and through the governor's garden, and to choose a more toilsome but less dangerous way by piercing the wall from the side of the moat. True, they would have to work immersed in icy water, but this would be better than exposing themselves to the certainty of recapture, in attempting to cross over the wall, by the sentries posted on the parapet.

On the 25th of February 1756, there being no moon and the weather overcast, Latude and D'Aligre resolved to start on their perilous venture. No sooner had they been locked up for the night by the turnkey who had brought their supper, and who, after the customary inspection, had retired, than they collected their parcels containing their tools, cords, ladders, and two bars which they wrapped round with the flannel lining of two coats, to enable both men to haul them noiselessly up the chimney. These iron bars were to be used in boring the wall. Latude's valise was filled with two changes of raiment and their remaining spare linen, the wooden ladder pieced together, the tackle packed up, and then Latude started up the shaft leading to the roof, working his way up without any help. His progress was retarded by his position; and he does not explain how he managed to reach the top, but merely tells us that he emerged coated with soot and with an excoriated shin. The gratings must have been removed, but one or two of the transverse bars may have remained to help him in his ascent. Latude now let down some strong twine, to which D'Aligre knotted a strong cord, with which the former successively drew up his valise, tools, and other articles, including the wooden ladder, which they were loath to leave behind. This done, Latude lowered down the shaft of the chimney the short ladder which they had used while working, which he secured above by a strong pin of wood placed crosswise against the stack; and this enabled D'Aligre to mount with far greater ease than his companion. The two fugitives, who were now on the platform forming the roof of the Bastille, made their preparations for descending. Lashing the ends of the long ladder to a gun, they let it down the wall and fixed up their pulley, through which they rove the steadying cord. Here again Latude leaves us in the dark regarding the *modus operandi* of planting and securing the tackle, save stating that it was placed against one of the turrets. Anyhow, it was stable enough for the purpose it served; for Latude, winding one end of the cord round his waist, while D'Aligre paid out the cord above, began his descent of two hundred feet. Notwithstanding the help of the cord, the ladder, buffeted by the wind, swung to and fro along the surface of the ashlar wall, and poor Latude, who was always to the fore to smooth the way for his mate, met with some bruises and more excoriations ere he reached the ground. The spot on which he alighted was fortunately a mound emerging from the water of the fosse, and consequently dry. D'Aligre next lowered everything, and then descended in his turn, Latude steadying the ladder below, thus rendering his comrade's descent much easier than his own had been. D'Aligre arrived uncontused and ungrazed.

So far, they had met with no impediment—they had reached the moat safely; but they were still far from being out of the wood. They had both, in spite of Latude's opinion, clung to the hope that perhaps, after all, the way over the wall and through the governor's garden might be practicable; but now, when they heard the sentinels pacing above along the parapet, they perceived clearly enough that egress in that direction was impossible. They saw once the glimmering lights of the links or lanterns carried by the round. To mount the wall would be simply to give themselves up. There was no help for it—they would have to bore through a wall of unknown thickness and strength before daybreak, standing in water up to the waist or the armpits, or abandon the enterprise at the eleventh hour, when on the point of probable success. They had but the choice between two evils; and they chose the lesser of the two. Indeed, it would not have been a choice of evils at all had they been able to calculate the thickness of the wall and their own power of endurance. As it was, they would have to run the double risk of their strength failing and of encountering an impervious obstacle in the thickness and hardness of the material of the wall.

Eleven had struck when Latude and D'Aligre, slipping into the water, commenced boring through the wall, relieving each other at irregular intervals after they dislodged the first block with their improvised crow-bars, for they feared they might injure one another in the dark, or that their limbs would be numbed by the cold. During these long hours of weary toil they were in constant fear of being discovered; the splash of a stone would have led to inevitable detection; the curiosity or vigilance of an extra-watchful sentinel or of the round would have the same result; and, indeed, twice during that bleak February night they were, or feared they were, within an ace of discovery by a sentinel, who

stopped in his beat right over their heads, peering down into the moat. They gave themselves up for lost; but the man had not stopped for any particular reason, and to their immense relief, after gazing around him idly, he resumed his walk. Later on, the patrol, going their rounds, one man holding his lantern, passed by. As he flashed his light over the moat Latude and D'Aligre instinctively ducked, and were saved by the skin of their teeth, their presence of mind alone preventing them from being discovered at work. At length the wall, about four feet and a half thick, was pierced, after six hours of unremitting toil. Their task had been somewhat facilitated by the less resisting nature of the cement, which had been softened by the action of the water; had it been otherwise they would hardly have finished their operation before daybreak. They soon enlarged the opening sufficiently to give passage to themselves, their valise, and their tools; but they had to leave behind, to the great regret of Latude, their ladders and the pulley, the creations of his ingenuity and industry.

They now stood outside the Bastille, weary, chilled to the bone, encrusted with mud, but free men at that. It was still dark, and the street solitary, and it was a fortunate circumstance, for their sorry plight would have led to their recapture by the first city-patrol. They could not attempt to leave the city then and there, for the gates were closed at that early hour, and by the time they would be open their flight would have been detected, and the gates would be watched; so they decided on seeking some safe refuge where they could lie low until the hue and cry was over. A humble friend, a tailor, received them under his roof, where they stayed unmolested for a month. By then the police, assuming that the fugitives had left Paris, had relaxed their efforts to capture them, although spurred on by Madame Pompadour and by the governor of the Bastille, whose *amour propre* had been touched by the fact that the two prisoners had dared to escape from the strongest prison in France. But the police spies kept a watchful eye over the borders. The frontiers of Belgium, where Latude was known to have friends, were especially watched. But of this fact he had no knowledge; and having ascertained that the police were no longer searching for him in Paris, he proposed to D'Aligre that they should both set out for Belgium, but separately, D'Aligre preceding him, as being less likely to be shadowed. D'Aligre started accordingly, and Latude followed a few days later. They had agreed to meet at Brussels; but when Latude arrived, he found that his comrade had been arrested and delivered to the French authorities in virtue of a demand for his extradition. He now evaded the police for some time, and, being thus forewarned, might have made his escape overseas to England. This seems to have been his intention, when he committed a fresh imprudence, the greatest of his life, for his wits appear to have always deserted him when out of prison. He wrote to his family, giving his address, and asking for a remittance of money. The letter was, of course, opened by the police, then deftly reclosed and forwarded to its destination. The father of Latude sent a draft drawn on a Belgian bank, payable to Latude at Brussels. This second letter also passed through the hands of the police, so that when Latude presented himself at the bank he was arrested by the police agents, and kicked with great brutality by the French police spies, who, like the governor of the Bastille, were incensed at having been outwitted and subjected to reprimands for having let Latude slip through their hands.

The unfortunate man was now to taste the full horrors of incarceration as inflicted in those days, at once so near and so remote from us. Consigned to an underground and noisome dungeon, Latude passed forty miserable months, at the end of which he had become a ghost of his former self. No one would have recognised in the spectre before them the handsome, brilliant young man who had entered Paris some thirteen years before—bald, half-blind, bowed, and emaciated, he might have moved to pity even Madame Pompadour had she seen him; but she never did see him, and she remained inexorable, turning a deaf ear to all pleadings. He was, indeed, removed to another cell, where there was more light, though no warmth; but this slight amelioration was due to the fact that the jailers objected to enter a cell sometimes half-flooded, and not to any compunction on the part of the authorities. No real alleviation of his sufferings, no abatement of the rigours of his prison cell, was experienced until the death of the relentless mistress of Louis the Fifteenth in 1764. In that year he was again transferred to Vincennes, and on his escape in the following year was recaptured for the third time. Removed to a madhouse in 1775, he was discharged on condition that he returned to his native village; but, being found in Paris, he was again flung into prison. It was only in 1784 that he obtained his release, which he owed entirely to the persistent exertions of a courageous woman of the middle class, who took up his case, visited him in prison, undeterred by the loathsomeness of his dungeon and the squalor of the prisoner, and supplied him with decent clothing and with money to enable him to purchase those creature comforts which were never refused, as a rule, to prisoners who could afford to pay for them, but without which the prisoner's life was a hell on earth. Madame Legros, as this noble woman was named, by dint of knocking at every door, reached at length the king's antechamber, wringing from Louis the Sixteenth a reluctant order for the liberation of Latude, who

was set free in 1784. He had entered the Bastille a youth of twenty-five; he left a man of sixty, racked with rheumatism, with impaired sight; it is a wonder he left it alive.

But our story ceases with Latude's release from the Bastille. His remaining years were passed in peace, and he lived to see the great Revolution which avenged him on his enemies and brought a tardy but terrible retribution on the perpetrators of the horrors we have mentioned, but which, exceeding the limits of justice, was in its turn productive of violent reaction.

AN OFF DAY.

A TALE OF THE CAMEROONS.

I.

A LARGE camp that has recently been almost emptied is one of the most cheerless sights that can be imagined, especially when such a camp consists of grass huts instead of tents, and is placed in the heart of an African forest. The feeling of loneliness is enhanced by the absolute silence of the surroundings, when only a few hours before it had been humming with the usual noises associated with a large collection of human beings, all packed into a comparatively small area.

Such, then, were the remains of the camp at Noiga after three of the four companies that had halted there had resumed their advance, and the greater part of the fourth had been sent in another direction to find a ford in the Laffia River near Nkwor, and to protect the road for the passage of the transport convoys.

The column had moved out of camp two hours before daybreak, accompanied by its transport, hoping to secure a passage over the same river higher up without opposition, and to cross and get in touch with the enemy's outposts before nightfall. The searchers for the ford had gone off an hour or so later, fully expecting to find the enemy waiting to contest its possession; and as the neighbourhood of the camp was believed to be absolutely free from the Germans, only one weak section and the sick men had been left behind to guard it. When the ford had been found, and the opposite bank secured, one other section would return to Noiga to act as escort to convoys to Nkwor when they began to filter through from the rear.

A subaltern named Beechwood had been left behind in command at Noiga, which was now the foremost of the fortified posts on the line of communications, the next in rear lying a good day and a half away to the south, with two formidable, unbridged rivers in between. The camp was in the bush a mile or more up-stream from the village from which it took its name, and was intended to guard the crossing, though the thick bush completely hid the river from view.

Beechwood's billet was looked upon by his brother-officers as a sinecure, and several had chaffed him upon the rest cure that he was about to enjoy. He, however, was far from being contented with his lot, having already had more than he considered was his fair share of guarding the lines of communication, so that it was in no very charitable frame of mind that he had watched the tail-end of the column filing out of the camp that morning. He had really very little to do, as two small blockhouses had been made before the column had left; so all that was left for him to do was to clear away the now deserted huts that had formed the camp. The river was far too rapid to be bridged, and could only be crossed by wading waist-high and bearing on a stout pole to prevent one's self from being carried away to certain destruction on the rocks below. The villagers from Noiga were already at work clearing the camp and improving the so-called road to Nkwor.

At eleven they knocked off work until one; so, having breakfasted at the grisly hour of 4.30, Beechwood sat down to a solitary lunch, consisting of a very bony fish that his cook had caught in the river, and some baked yam. This done, he stretched himself on his camp-bed, with a cigarette and a months-old magazine, and presently went to sleep.

At one he awoke, and gave the order to resume work; but a few minutes later his sergeant announced that not a single native had returned since the morning, and that none were to be seen on the path to the village. Cursing heartily, he sent his interpreter post-haste to summon them; but that worthy returned, reporting that the village was deserted. Evidently there had been a panic, as the fires were still burning, and cooking-pots and various odds and ends had been left lying in all directions. Two old men and an old woman, who had remained in their huts, accompanied him, and were eagerly questioned as to the cause of this stampede, the most remarkable thing about which was its rapidity and its silence. Terrified African natives are usually the reverse of quiet.

'What for they run away, go?' asked Beechwood of the interpreter, who, after much shouting and palaver, ejaculated, 'Jarmans.'

'Where?'

More palaver. Answer, 'Not so far away, sah.'

'Damn your eyes, where are they?' roared

the officer, who had lost his temper early that morning, beyond all hope of finding it for some time to come. But both villagers and the interpreter were far too panic-stricken to do more than gibber, so that nothing intelligible could be obtained from them.

Meanwhile the native sergeant had mustered the soldiers, who were standing in front of the nearest blockhouse, awaiting orders; while the officer's orderly and his cook were busy packing away his scanty belongings, and pulling down the sides of his hut, in order not to interfere with the field of fire. Released, the old natives scuttled away as fast as their ancient legs would carry them, and were about to be followed by the interpreter, when he was seized firmly by the collar of his bush-shirt and pulled into the blockhouse.

'Not so fast, young feller-me-lad,' grunted Beechwood; 'you come along with me;' and, despite James's frantic efforts to escape, and his appeals to the Almighty to assist him, he was told to stop his infernal noise, and to stand by for orders at once, if not sooner.

The soldiers were all bursting for a fight, as they had experienced many fruitless patrols when the enemy had never been found where he was wanted, much marching, and many arduous fatigues; now it seemed that here was a Heaven-sent opportunity for a scrap on their own, so they looked to their officer expectantly. He, on his part, was every bit as eager; but he realised his responsibilities, his weakness, and his absolute ignorance of the enemy's strength, object, or movements. Beyond the clearing in which the camp had been erected, it was impossible to see anything, as the bush was dense all round.

While James and his cook—the only non-combatants present—were bemoaning their fate, and calling on their Maker to deliver them, Beechwood looked at his following, and thought—hard. His own section consisted of thirty men, of whom three were unable to walk owing to cut feet; but unfortunately a dozen of them were away on escort duty with the carriers between Noiga and the post to the south. He had also sixteen sick men belonging to his own and the other companies, none too sick to defend themselves, but none fit to move any distance. He had, too, four native runners; but, on looking for them, he discovered that they had justified their calling and run away! He was perfectly confident that he could hold out against a very much larger force so long as his ammunition lasted; but that was distinctly limited, and the native soldier has a happy knack of blazing off every cartridge he has got in the shortest possible time. There was also a possibility that the other section might return from Nkwor; but it was equally possible that the enemy might ambush them, and he could not give them any warning, as no one knew the way, now that the runners had disappeared.

Nevertheless, something had to be done, and at once; so he sent three of his best men to patrol the village and report, while two others were sent along the path by which the column had left that morning. The sentries at the edge of the bush were told to move about and to watch for the first sign of any one approaching through the undergrowth; they were to pay particular attention to any paths that they might find. The remainder were allowed to fall out, but were told to keep close to their alarm-posts, to fill their water-bottles, and to cook an emergency supply of food in case it was required. This done, he lit his pipe, and, after a short walk round the edge of the clearing, returned to his dismantled shelter, and pretended to read his magazine, though really his nerves were all agog with excitement and anticipation. A moment or two later his orderly ran up and announced the welcome news that a white man was coming, and a sweating figure appeared, remarking, 'Hallo, old bird! Got such a thing as a drink about you?'

II.

'Where the blazes have you sprung from?' asked the astonished subaltern, after he had shouted to his cook to bring some whisky.

'I?' answered the new-comer. 'Oh, I've come up from the base.'

'Not alone?'

'Lord, no! I'd better introduce myself. My name's Scott, timber concession by trade, soldier by desire, and a blasted drover of condemned carriers by authority. They've stuck me on the transport.'

'Don't you worry; you'll have plenty of fighting soon.'

'I thought so; that's why I've hurried on, in case I was wanted. I've brought four of your men with me, too.'

'Splendid!' said Beechwood. 'But where are the carriers?'

'I left them on the other side of the river; thought they would be safer. There's a doctor man with them; he was full of war when we met half Africa shrieking down the road, but I persuaded him to stay behind and look after the carriers.'

'Did you hear anything about the Germans?'

'Nothing of any use. The apes were yelling "Jarmans! Jarmans!" for all they were worth; so, after we had quieted the carriers, I took these four men and came on to help.'

'Well, I'm jolly glad to see you, anyhow,' said Beechwood. 'I hope they will stay where they are until this palaver is settled one way or the other.'

While Scott was finishing his drink Beechwood roughly outlined the events of the day, explaining his difficulties. It might all prove a false alarm, or there might really be something in it. His conjectures were, however, suddenly brought

to an end by a series of muffled reports from the direction of the village, then silence, then more reports.

'Well, they're there, anyhow,' said Scott; 'those aren't bush guns.'

The noise of the firing seemed to be coming from the village, but as sound is very deceptive, especially so near to a river, the return of the patrol was eagerly awaited. The two blockhouses were manned, each European taking charge of one; though for the nonce they waited together between the two. The firing continued, if anything more energetically than before; but, as there were no signs of the three scouts, it was feared that they had come to grief.

'If they don't turn up in another five minutes,' said the subaltern, 'I shall go and look for them myself.'

This did not prove necessary, as two minutes later one man returned and said that the Germans were firing into the village, but had not discovered them.

'They think man live for town, sah,' added the warrior.

'How much man you see?'

'No reach one section, sah.'

'Any man follow behind?'

'Myself I no see.'

Beechwood and Scott conferred—how good it seemed to the former to have another white man to turn to!—and after a while they decided on a plan.

'Look here, Scott,' said the subaltern; 'I'll take half-a-dozen of my heroes and go and meet them; you stay here with the rest and hold the camp. If it's only a small raiding party we'll soon drive them away, as no doubt they think we are sitting down in the village; that's what they always do, you know.'

The subaltern's party disappeared down the path; and Scott, after rearranging the remainder of his force, went to the edge of the clearing to listen. The firing into the village was still going on merrily, but after ten minutes it stopped, the enemy doubtless having at last discovered that place was empty. After leaving the camp Beechwood made a detour round the village, and soon reached a point from which he could see a little of it, though keeping himself concealed in the bush. The enemy, or such of them as he could see, were searching among the deserted houses for loot, while others were setting fire to the mat roofs as they passed them. At this moment some one must have stumbled upon the hidden patrol, for rifle-shots rang out, which were promptly answered by the enemy, who disappeared from view, and opened a rapid fire in the direction of the camp.

Still keeping hidden among the plantain-trees that surround the majority of villages in those parts, the subaltern and his party worked their way towards the enemy, who were now firing into the bush at the end of the village. So far as he could make out, Beechwood estimated their strength at one European and twenty native soldiers, so that they were obviously a mere patrol or raiding party. As their fire gradually slackened, the patrol must have started retiring towards the camp, so Beechwood judged that the time had come for him to strike. Still keeping among the plantains, he extended his men, and as the enemy collected to follow up the path, they poured a rapid fire on them at murderously short range.

Despite the excitement of his men, the distance was far too short for their bullets to go wide, and several of the enemy were knocked out. The remainder, taken absolutely by surprise, fled at top speed through the village, where a sharp skirmish took place among the burning huts. The heat and the thick smoke made pursuit difficult, but pursued they were for a mile beyond the village; and then the subaltern's party returned to count the casualties.

The three scouts had joined their comrades when the enemy retired into the village, so one of them was sent across the river for the doctor, and was told to bring the carriers and loads into camp at once; while another was sent with a message to Scott telling him what had happened, and that he was to expect the carriers very shortly. The enemy were found to have lost seven of their number either killed or severely wounded, and it was possible that others had been less seriously hurt, but had escaped, as three extra rifles were picked up; the officer had evidently got away. The British casualties were one man killed and one badly hurt. This poor fellow had been pinned under a flaming roof that had fallen on him as he lay helpless on the ground, and so was in a very bad way. Sentries were left at the end of the village; while the rest returned to camp, taking with them the wounded—both friend and foe—and all the captured rifles. The dead were placed in one of the houses that had escaped burning, to be buried later in the evening.

It was after four by the time they returned to camp, but all anticipated a strenuous couple of hours before the carriers would be safely across the river. Scott hurried down to the beach as soon as Beechwood returned, taking with him a few soldiers to help to guide the carriers; but the other satisfied himself that the camp was adequately guarded before following.

III.

By the time he had joined Scott, the doctor had arrived; but the carriers, who had reached the sandy beach on the far side of the river, were hesitating to cross.

It certainly was a formidable obstacle. Picture a hundred and fifty yards of swiftly flowing, brown water, parted in three places by large, slippery-looking rocks, in between which the water boiled at a tremendous pace. From the

beach on the Noiga side a short bridge had been built out to the first rock, thereby spanning the worst of the sluices; but the remainder was totally innocent of bridging. Two soldiers rapidly stripped, seized long poles, and, running along the bridge, dropped into the water, and began to wade out towards the carriers, the water never being less than waist-high. After a few minutes they reached the opposite bank, and, thus encouraged, the carriers armed themselves with poles from the heap lying on the beach, and plunged into the water. Scott, dressed in a helmet and a pair of boots, stood in the middle of the river directing operations, while several soldiers waded in to help.

All went well for some time, and the dripping carriers gradually reached the bridge, and began to climb the steep hill leading to the camp. It was surprising to see how they managed to bear up against the current, though no doubt the sixty-pound load that each carried on his head helped to keep them from being swept off their feet. Some hundred and fifty—rather more than half—crossed in safety, and Scott was slowly becoming less profane. Loads of rice were being brought over, and perhaps these were harder to balance than boxes; but, whatever the reason, one unhappy carrier slipped in the very worst place, and, despite frantic efforts to recover his footing, dropped his load and was washed away. Everything humanly possible was done to save him, but without avail, and he was carried off in the swift flood, doubtless to reappear battered out of all recognition on the rocks below.

Panic seemed to infect the carriers, for the one in front of him turned to see what had happened, and lost his footing. A soldier made a gallant effort to save him, and succeeded, though almost at the cost of his life. Other carriers stopped, and some loads were dropped and lost. Those nearest to the shore turned back and started wading for the bank that they had just left; but Scott's profanity and the soldiers' sticks eventually restored order among them, and the crossing continued, and went on until sundown. Finally, just before dark, the convoy was reassembled in the camp, when it was found that one man and eleven bags of rice had been lost.

By nightfall the camp had settled down almost as if nothing had happened, though an extra watch was naturally kept after the events of the afternoon. Beechwood, Scott, and the doctor were all congratulating themselves that nothing more serious had occurred, when shots were heard on the Nkwor road. Instantly every one sprang to arms, a stampede of the carriers being averted only by a miracle and the activity of Scott and his orderly.

This time, however, it proved to be a false alarm, the sentries at the edge of the bush having fired on some natives who were bringing a message from the company commander. As soon as this was definitely ascertained, the garrison fell out to go on with their normal pursuits, and the messengers were brought to the officer. They carried a note saying that Nkwor had been occupied without resistance, and that not only was there an easy crossing, but there was a far shorter road to the post to the south; consequently the camp and defences at Noiga were to be destroyed, and the garrison were to move to Nkwor the next day. Beechwood was in the meanwhile to send the messengers south at once to warn the transport officer that the new road, which avoided crossing the Laffia River at all, was to be used. The detachment must reach Nkwor before noon on the morrow, as the rest of the company had to go forward to join the advance; all who were too sick to walk were to be carried in litters, but on no account was he to delay.

Mournfully Beechwood, who had been looking forward to a good night's rest, read these orders over to the others, growling in a disgusted voice, 'And that's what those blighters called a rest cure!'

FACES IN THE FIRE.

THE trauchle o' the lang, dreich day is dune,
And snug beside the chimley-lug I doze;
My kingly calabash, wi' 'Luntin' rare,
Exhales the fragrance o' a new-blawn rose.
The storm-wind whustles roun' the gable-end,
And wrecks its wrath wi' wild an' frantic ire;
I draw me closer to the glowin' hearth,
And picture auld-world faces in the fire.

I see them in the jinkin', dancin' lowe—
The leal and true, the cantie an' the kin'—
Wi' love-lit eyes that gleam and speak to me
O' dear and hallowed days o' auld lang syne.
Their hamely sangs keep ruggin' at my hert,
And touch a chord on memory's gowden lyre;
And wi' a pride inspired frae sacred hours,
I kneel before the faces in the fire.

In bygane times, when life was free and gay,
Some buirdly chiels forgathered in my den;
Their crack was halesome, and their rousin' laugh
Wad wake the drowsy echoes o' the glen.
But noo they 're scattered owre the braid world's stage,
And court Dame Fortune's smile among the brave;
While some in Flanders, wi' a prood disdain,
Have found an early but an honoured grave.

I sit alane; but still their sunny smiles
Break through the mist on life's tempestuous way;
I hear them call, while 'yont the eerie miles
They hail me wi' their burnin' hopeful ray.
And wi' their beacon-licht before my een,
God grant that I 'll be steered into the bay,
And anchored safe within a haven o' rest,
Where dawns the peaceful and the perfect day.

The rievin' blast comes roarin' doon the lum,
The priest at vespers wails a holy prayer,
The foamin' Tweed gangs tumlin' owre the cauld,
While I, 'bune a', am blest beyond compare!
My reekin' pipe blaws ilka care awa';
I ne'er wad fash wi' listenin' to a choir—
My shrine 's the great high altar o' the soul,
Where burn the dream-land faces o' the fire!

JAMES HOPE BROWN.

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OF KINGSHIP AND DEMOCRACY,

AND BRITISH BRIDES FOR BRITISH PRINCES.

By VALENTINE HEYWOOD.

IT is the unenviable lot of the sovereigns and potential sovereigns of this realm that their marriages are matters of public interest and importance. It is part of the price of royalty, the privileges attaching to which, at any rate in regard to our own constitutional monarchy, are in no way commensurate with the obligations and responsibilities. It is not possible for a King of England or a Prince of Wales to bestow his hand and affections in whatever direction he pleases, having no regard to the wishes of others, and cold-shouldering the many who would fain have a voice in the matter. His marriage is an affair of State, and must be considered in regard to the policy of the State and the good of the realm.

It is not a nice position, and it is one which, particularly during the last two hundred years, has resulted in many marriages which have been purely unions for State reasons, and into which the question of affection has not entered in the slightest. On the whole, it is not even defensible, and that which has most aggravated the evil is the old shibboleth of the effectiveness of dynastic ties.

Recent British rulers have held that their royal state, so far from making them by divine right lords of all they survey, merely installs them as first servants of the State. It is quite conceivable that there may be strong ground in any one case for holding that the public good is better served by the feelings of the individual being subordinated to the obligations of the public servant. Admittedly it is a violation of the 'made-in-heaven' view of marriage, but in a world of human failings it is not always possible to attain the ideal. But admission of such possibilities does not mean adherence to the belief in the political benefits of dynastic ties. Within limits it should be possible for a British king or prince to offer his hand where his heart dictates.

As such, the belief in the effectiveness of dynastic ties is absolutely groundless; more often than not marriages with this end in view have been wholly bad in their results.

In the course of the bitter comment made in the Press recently, on the Kaiser's birthday, on the comparison between the detestation in which he is held in this country to-day and the popular feeling of enthusiasm which the announcement of his birth aroused fifty-eight years ago, some one recalled a couplet which followed every verse of a song heard in the streets of London during the celebrations occasioned by the arrival of the Queen's first grandchild:

> Queen Victoria's lovely daughter
> Has a bouncing little boy.

The lines were recalled to give point to a somewhat obvious satire, but in their origin and meaning they epitomise the utter refutation of that touching belief in the efficacy of dynastic ties in regard to international relationships which was so widely held.

With the birth of the then Prince William of Prussia in 1859 it was felt that the friendly feelings engendered by the marriage of Britain's Princess Royal with the Prussian Crown Prince were made more or less permanently enduring. Never, said optimistic idealists joyfully, would there be danger now of the two countries going to war; with the reigning houses so closely united it was unthinkable. Even before the war it was patent to most people how little reliance was to be placed upon such bonds so far as the Prussians were concerned. The war has rudely dispelled any illusions which survived.

Inter-related as are most of the royal houses of Europe, there has not been one instance during this war of dynastic ties affecting the policy of a country one way or the other. King Albert is married to a Bavarian princess, but that fact influenced not an iota the Belgian outlook when Germany so criminally violated her pledge; nor did it mitigate in the slightest the horrors of the vengeance which Prussian and Bavarian soldiers inflicted upon that heroic little country. The Dukes of Cumberland, Brunswick, and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha are by descent British as well as German princes, holding British titles; all are fighting in the enemy ranks.

King Constantine's pro-German proclivities are popularly assumed to be due to his Hohenzollern marriage, but against that tie can be set

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those of his blood relationship with both King George and the Tsar. The Crown Prince Danilo of Montenegro has a German wife. Tsar Ferdinand of Bulgaria is related to the British royal house. Nor can it be supposed that the marriage to a British princess of King Ferdinand of Rumania has influenced that country in joining the Entente, for King Ferdinand is a Hohenzollern, German and not Rumanian born and trained.

The evidence is too strong to resist the conclusion that dynastic ties count for as little as the claims to national gratitude which were generally assumed would prevent Bulgaria or Greece entering the field against the Allies.

Heaven alone knows why such a belief should have been so generally entertained. It finds little or no support in history. The marriage of Charles I. with a French princess did not prevent his making war on his wife's country almost immediately after his accession, nor did Napoleon's union with the Austrian emperor's daughter save him from the active enmity of the Hapsburg monarchy when changing circumstances again made it possible for Austria to take the field against him. There are other instances innumerable, not the least illuminating being the marital alliances between the English and the Scottish royal houses. As Mr James Douglas recently remarked so caustically on the same subject, 'The Scripture says, "Love your enemies." It does not say, "Love your relatives."'

These are matters which are being publicly discussed, and it is because of this public discussion that so much importance attaches to a suggestion regarding the marriage of the Prince of Wales made recently in an article in a morning paper by the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell, himself an ex-minister of the Crown.

'The Royal Marriage Act,' says Mr Russell, 'limiting the free choice of English princes and princesses by artificial restrictions, was one of the most indefensible statutes which Parliament ever passed. It put difficulties, often insuperable, in the way of such alliances as had linked the Plantagenets, the Tudors, and the Stuarts to the English people; and it helped to impress a foreign stamp on two generations of the House of Hanover. There is to-day a well-beloved young prince, as English in character as in face, who is serving England on the soil of France. Let Providence grant him an English wife, and the last murmur of disaffection will be drowned in the thundering chorus of national rejoicing.'

Mr Russell has stated what most people have been thinking privately. The war has brought to the forefront again, but in a saner, sweeter form, the old cry of 'Britain for the British,' and public sentiment and policy alike demand its extension to British wives for British kings and princes. The marriage of the Prince of Wales is a matter of deep concern to three hundred millions of people, inhabiting a fifth of the earth's surface, people and lands which he will one day probably rule, and which in all likelihood will be ruled by the offspring of his marriage.

For, whatever may happen to the Hohenzollerns, the British monarchy will endure, despite the recrudescence of that unthinking disaffection to which Mr Russell has directed attention. It is not monarchism, as we know it here, which has failed in the events of the last few years. In no sense is this a war of the dynasts. Hohenzollernism alone could not have brought about the war. The fault lies with the psychology of an entire caste certainly, maybe of an entire nation. To a certain extent the Kaiser has been as much a tool as was his grandfather in the hands of Bismarck and Von Moltke.

Hatred of, and fierce opposition to, Hohenzollernism and its conception of kingship is not merely compatible with our British ideas; it is the very essence of British monarchism. Freedom, democracy, and monarchy are in no sense conflicting terms in this country. 'The characteristic of the English monarchy,' wrote Bagehot in his monumental essays on our Constitution, 'is that it retains the feelings by which the heroic kings governed their rude age, and has added the feelings by which the constitutions of later Greece ruled in more refined ages. . . . A republic has insinuated itself beneath the folds of a monarchy.'

This is the strongest prop of our monarchy, that it combines that which is best in both systems. Neither France nor America, with all their greatness, can show anything in its governmental records to improve on or even equal our own sane, intelligent, democratic monarchism. There was a time, admittedly, when even under the limited monarchy royal influence here was distrusted; but the evolution of the Constitution has proceeded apace since those times, and now, to quote Bagehot again, 'the best Liberal politicians say, "*We* shall never know, but when history is written our children may know, what we owe to the Queen and Prince Albert." The mystery of the Constitution, which used to be hated by our calmest, most thoughtful and instructed statesmen, is now loved and reverenced by them.' Succeeding sovereigns have not departed from that high ideal.

There is a wider, an Imperial, aspect, in which, if possible, the Crown looms higher even than in home affairs. Its sentimental value in the evolution of the present status of Dominions, Colonies, and Empire is undoubted. Would the bonds have held equally well with a republic? One wonders. Our Imperial relations were not always so happy as now. There was a time when even foremost British statesmen saw no more satisfactory prospect than separation when the indi-

vidual Dominions felt themselves strong enough. That phase has passed, never to return; but can one doubt that in a large measure it is due to the unifying influence of the Crown, claiming a common loyalty, a common allegiance, from all, in times when conflicting interests and blundering statesmanship were alienating influences? In the new Imperial life which should spring from the new Imperial bonds which have been forged in the furnace of war, the Crown should play a still larger part.

There is India. To vast multitudes there the King-Emperor's name is everything. Would the proud princes and chiefs there bear cheerful allegiance to a republic? One can hardly imagine it. 'Dizzy's' 'peace with honour' part in the Berlin Congress has brought us much tribulation, but his Indian policy, in this aspect of it, should atone for much.

Anything which strengthens the hold of the Crown upon the affection and interests of the people makes for national well-being, because it makes for national unity, holding up before all a common bond which rises superior to all conflicting creeds, interests, and politics. Fortunate circumstances have eliminated all whose claims of descent from the British Stuarts are superior to those of the present royal house, and thus, despite the foreign origin of the Hanoverian dynasty, purely political and partly accidental, we are happily back to conditions in which, divorced from the evil theory of kingship by divine right, it is possible for the occupant of the throne to fill it by hereditary right, subject to the free choice of a free people.

It is because of these things that the question of the marriage of the Prince of Wales becomes vital. For generations now the choice of royal brides for British princes will be confined to the narrowed circle of Allied houses. But since dynastic ties have proved so signal a failure in affecting international relationships, has not the time arrived when we can revert to the old rule of our royal house that its members may choose British wives and husbands? Edward IV., Richard III., Henry VIII., and James II. all married British wives.

There are more modern instances which form happy precedents. Princess Louise married the heir to the Duke of Argyll. Princess Arthur of Connaught, great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria, married to that queen's grandson, and having a son who, in default of other heirs, could succeed to the throne, claims an Aberdeen merchant as ancestor on her father's side. Abroad, King Alphonso's queen, sharing as proud a throne as any, is the granddaughter of a morganatic marriage.

There should be no lack of choice for British princes and princesses. The British aristocracy, titled and untitled, is equal to any in Europe, embracing families with pedigrees as long as that of the royal house itself, and in many cases claiming direct descent from Plantagenet and Stuart kings. The direct line of descent in the male from the royal Stuarts, both Scottish and British, is to be found not in any royal house, but among the British aristocracy.

Events in Russia which have occurred since this article was written have only one moral to point in regard to British monarchism—that of its complete effectiveness. Romanoff autocracy has gone; Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs must see it as the writing on the wall, Tsar Ferdinand as the beginning of the end of the Teutonic edifice he has imposed upon what is naturally a democratic people. Here, but for its effects upon the Alliance and the course of the war, the revolution would be of academic interest only, tinged by the warm sympathy which one free people must feel for another struggling towards the same goal.

King George's throne remains unshaken, unaffected in its democratic strength by the cataclysm which is sounding the knell of other dynasties. Like the Italian and the three Scandinavian monarchies, the British monarchy can have no fear of revolution, because it is the form of government which a free people has evolved as being the best suited for its own particular needs, and because it rests solely on the broad basis of the people's will.

The Russian throne as we have known it has fallen because of its failure to recognise the march of progress and its own responsibilities. In a utilitarian age, that which refuses to evolve naturally, and so outgrows its usefulness, cannot be allowed to remain to clog the wheels. Of all the lessons which the Russian revolution teaches, none is clearer than that a well-intentioned but weak and vacillating man has needlessly thrown away a great possession and an opportunity for well-doing which comes but once in many centuries.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—WHICH SHOULD HAVE RELATED DETAILS OF A WEDDING.

'IT'S all very, very wonderful, Ann dear! But then—everything is so wonderful—just lately!'

'Meanin' what, Hermy?'

Hermione was darning one of Spike's much-mended socks, while Mrs Trapes sat drinking tea. 'Meanin' jest what is wonderful, my dear, and—since when?' she persisted.

'Oh—everything, Ann!'

'Yes, you said everything before. S'pose you

tell me jest the one thing as you find so wonderful? An'—why an' wherefore that blush?'

'Oh, Ann—Ann dear!' Down went sock and needle, and, falling on her knees, Hermione clasped her arms about Mrs Trapes and hid her glowing face in her lap. 'Ann dear, I'm so happy!' she sighed—her speech a little muffled by reason of the voluminous folds of Mrs Trapes's snowy apron.

'Happy?' said Mrs Trapes, setting down her teacup to fondle and stroke that shapely head. 'Sich happiness ain't all because of the rent bein' re-dooced, by order, I reckon. Is it?'

'Dear Ann,' said Hermione, her face still hidden, 'can't you guess?'

'No, my dear,' answered Mrs Trapes, her harsh tones wonderfully soft, 'I don't have to—I guessed days ago. D'ye love him, Hermy?'

'Love him!' repeated Hermione, and said no more, nor did she lift her bowed head; but, feeling the quick, strong pressure of those soft embracing arms, the quiver of that girlish body, Mrs Trapes smiled, and, stooping, kissed Hermione's shining hair.

'When did he speak, my dear?'

'Last Monday, Ann.'

'Did he say—much?'

'He asked me to—marry him.'

'Spoke of marriage, eh? Did he happen t' mention th' word—wife?'

'Oh, many times, Ann.'

'Good f'r him! An' when s it t' be?'

'Oh, Ann dear, I—I'm afraid it's—to-night!'

'T'-night! My land, he's sure some hasty!'

'And so—so masterful, Ann!'

'Well, ye sure need a master. But t'-night—land-sakes!'

'He wrote and told me he would fix things so he could marry me to-night, Ann!'

'Then he's sure out fixin' 'em right now. Lord, Hermy, why d'ye tremble, girl—ye sure love him, don't ye?'

'So much, Ann, so very much—and yet'——

'You ain't scared of him, are ye?'

'No—and yet, I—I think I am—a little.'

'But you'll marry him, all the same?'

'Yes.'

'An' t'-night?'

'Yes. But, Ann dear, when he comes in I want you to keep him with you as long as you can—will you?'

'Why, sure I'll keep him, jest as long as—he'll let me! Lord, t' think as my little Hermy'll be a married woman this night!'

'And—oh, Ann, I haven't any—trousseau.'

'Shucks! You don't need none. You're best as you are. You won't need no fluffs an' frills, I reckon.'

'But, Ann dear,' said Hermione, lifting her head and shaking it ruefully, 'I have—nothing! And my best dress—I made it in such a hurry, you remember—it needs pressing, and'——

'He ain't marryin' you for your clo'es, Hermy—no, sir! It's you he wants, an'—oh, shucks! what do clo'es matter t' you, anyway? You was meant to be one o' them nymphs an' goddesses as went about clad—well, airy. You'd ha' done fine with them soft arms an' shoulders an'——

'But I'm not a goddess, Ann; I'm only poor Hermy Chesterton—with a hole in one stocking and the lace on her petticoat torn, and her other things—well, look here!'—and up whirled gown and petticoat—'see what a state they're in—look, Ann!'

'My dear, I am,' nodded Mrs Trapes over her tea-cup, 'an' what I say is, it don't matter a row o' pins if a stockin's got a bit of a hole in it if that stockin's on sich a leg as that! An' as for'——

'But,' sighed Hermione, 'don't you understand?'

'My dear, I do. I was a married woman once, mind. An' I tell you "beauty doth lie in the eye o' the beholder," my dear, an' the two eyes as is a-goin' t' behold you this night is goin' t' behold so much beauty as they won't behold nothin' else.'

'But—he loves dainty things, I'm sure.'

'Well, ain't he gettin' a dainty thing? Ain't he gettin' the daintiest, sweetest, loveliest'—— Here Mrs Trapes set down her cup again to clasp Hermione in her arms.

'Do you think he'll—understand, Ann?'

'He'll be a fool if he doesn't!'

'And make allowances? He knows how poor we are, and how busy I have to be.'

'He does so, my dear. But, if it's goin' t' comfort you any, there's that corset-cover you made me last Christmas. I ain't never wore it; I ain't dared to with all them trimmin's an' lace insertion, an' me s' bony here an' there. You can have it an' willin', my dear; an' then there's them'——

'Ann, you dear thing, as if I would!'

'Why not? That corset-cover's a dream! An' then there's them'——

'Dear, I couldn't—I wouldn't! No; I'll go to him just as I am; he shall marry me just like I am.'

'An' that's a goddess!' nodded Mrs Trapes; 'yes, a young goddess—only, with more clo'es on, o' course. I'm glad as he's quit pea-nuts. Pea-nut men don't kind o' jib in with goddesses.'

'Ann,' said Hermione, sitting back on her heels, 'I think of him a great deal, of course, and, just lately, I've begun to wonder'——

'My dear,' said Mrs Trapes, blowing her tea, 'so do I. I been wonderin' ever since he walked into my flat, cool as I don't know what; an', my dear, when I sets me mind t' wonderment con-

clusions arrive—constant! I'll tell ye what I think. First, he ain't s' poor as he seems—he wears silk socks, my dear. Second, he 's been nurtured tender—he cleans them white teeth night an' morn. Third, he ain't done no toil-an'-spinnin' act—take heed t' his hands, my dear. He 's soft-spoke, but he 's masterful. He 's young, but he 's seen a lot. He ain't easy t' rile, but when he is—my land! He don't say a lot, an' he don't seem t' do much, an' yet—he don't seem t' starve none. Result—he may be anything!'

'Anything! Ann dear!'

'Anything!' repeated Mrs Trapes. 'An' havin' studied him good an' heeded him careful, I now conclood he 's jest the thing you need, my dear.'

'Then you like him, Ann—you trust him?'

'I sure do.'

'Oh you dear—dear—dear thing!' And once again Mrs Trapes was clasped in those vigorous young arms and kissed with every 'dear.'

'Though, mind you,' said Mrs Trapes, pushing cup and saucer out of harm's way—'though, mind you, he 's a mystery I ain't found out—yet. D' ye s'pose he made any money out o' them blessed pea-nuts? Not him! Mrs Smalley, as lives down along 'Leventh, she told me as she 's seen him givin' 'em away by the bagful t' all the children down her way—repeated.'

'How sweet of him!' said Hermione, her red mouth all tender curves.

'Yes; but how did he live? How does he? How will he?'

'I don't know, dear; I only know I would trust him always—always!' And, sitting back, chin in hand, Hermione fell again to happy thought.

'When he give up the nuts,' pursued Mrs Trapes, draining the teapot and sighing, 'he tells me some fool tale o' makin' a deal in real estate, an' I—ha, real estate!' Mrs Trapes put down the teapot with a jerk. 'A deal in real estate!' she repeated, and thereafter fell to such unintelligible muttering as 'Record price! Fab'lous! No, it couldn't be! An' yet—silk socks! "On an' after above date all tenants soever residin'—will be re-dooced 50 per cent"!' Suddenly Mrs Trapes sat bolt-upright. 'My land!' she ejaculated; 'oh, dear land o' my fathers, if sich could be!'

'Why, Ann,' exclaimed Hermione, roused from her reverie, 'whatever is the matter?'

'My dear,' said Mrs Trapes, laying gentle hand on Hermione's blooming cheek, 'nothin'—nothin' 't all. I 'm jest goin' over in my mind sich small matters as silk socks an' tooth-brushes, that 's all.'

'But you do mean something—you always do.'

'Well, if I do this time, my dear, I 'm crazy; but the Bowkers have gone, mind that! An' him so fond o' little Hazel!' Here Mrs Trapes nodded almost triumphantly.

'The Bowkers! Why, yes—I 've been wondering'——

'I guess you know he went t' O'Rourke's an' give that M'Ginnis the thrashin' of his dirty life?' said Mrs Trapes rather hastily. 'Nigh killed the loafer, Spider Conolly told me.'

'He 's so strong,' said Hermione softly, her eyes shining. 'But, Ann, what did you mean about—about tooth-brushes and socks?'

'Mean? Why, socks and tooth-brushes o' course! An', my land! here 's me guzzlin' tea, an' over in my kitchen th' finest shin o' beef you ever saw, a-b'ilin' f'r his supper. But now the question as burns is, if a married man this night, will he be here t' eat? An' if him—then you? An' if man an' wife suppin' in my parlour—where will ye sleep?'

'I—oh Ann—I don't know. His letter just said that when I came home it would be our—wedding-night.'

'Why, then, it sure will be. An' f'r a weddin' supper ye couldn't have nothin' better 'n shin o' beef. I 'll go an' watch over that stoo with care unfailin', my dear; believe me, that stoo 's goin' t' be a stoo as is a stoo! What! half after five? Land-sakes, how time flies!'

(*Continued on page 453.*)

THE INDIA HOUSE AND ITS STORY.

By Captain OWEN WHEELER, Author of *The War Office Past and Present.*

OF all the Government buildings in London, the present India Office, in spite of its comparative modernity, is perhaps the most attractive to the casual visitor. Apart from the solemn magnificence of the Council Chamber and the romantic significance of the business transacted in the multitudinous rooms, one is struck by the comparatively clothed look of the India Office, as compared with the bare corridors of other great departmental headquarters. Everywhere there are pictures and statues, and the great Inner Court, with its wonderful floor, is a special and arresting feature. But the historical associations of Sir Gilbert Scott's noble pile, which overlooks St James's Park, and was completed only some forty years ago, cannot of course be reckoned on the same plane as those which cluster round the old home of the East India Company in Leadenhall Street, known for two centuries as the India or East India House. Some interest, too, is attached to 'John Company's' previous connection with

other and still older houses, of one of which, Crosby House, there is still a remnant standing. The following brief account, derived from a variety of sources, may be of interest, more especially as India is just now passing, in various ways, through what may prove an epoch-making stage of transition.

The India House in Leadenhall Street was vacated in 1860, but for the two previous years it had no longer been occupied by the East India Company. The Government of India had been transferred to the Crown, as a result of the Mutiny, in the autumn of 1858. Up to that date the directors and proprietors—the number varied, but in 1848 there were twenty-four of the former and eighteen hundred of the latter—of the Honourable East India Company exercised unlimited authority over the Government of India, except that in matters other than patronage the Board of Control at Cannon Row might, and continually did, intervene with, practically speaking, mandates which the Company more or less cheerfully obeyed. Much of the real power lay with the president of the Board, who was a member of the Cabinet, and who, outside the ordinary relations between the Board and the Company, was able at any time to communicate with the Governor-General direct by means of letters marked 'secret,' of which the Company had no cognisance. For the rest, the ordinary despatches conveying orders for the Government of India were for a great many years previous to the Mutiny prepared by the Board of Control in Westminster, and sent down to the India House for signature by the directors, who used, by a quaint survival, to subscribe themselves as the Governor-General's 'affectionate friends.' This dual government lasted from 1784 to 1858, and was at times productive of much inconvenience, especially to the Governor-General, who, between his affectionate friends and the president of the Board of Control, must often have found his position an extremely trying one.

Still, with all this interference, the East India Company, if only because it appointed the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief, and maintained a very considerable army, was an immensely important institution outside its vast commercial undertakings and responsibilities. Very imposing, too, must the India House have been, especially since 1799, when a fine new front was added to an older building dating back to 1726. The India House of the nineteenth century had a stone façade two hundred feet in length, and a portico of six large Ionic fluted columns on a raised basement. The pediment was adorned with an emblematic sculpture representing the Commerce of the East, protected by the King of Great Britain, who stood in the centre of a number of figures, holding a shield stretched over them. On the apex of the pediment was a statue of Britannia, with Asia on a dromedary at the left corner, and Europe on horseback at the right.

The ground floor of this great building was occupied chiefly, we are told, by court and committee rooms, and by the private rooms of the directors, the ornamentation throughout being very rich and striking. The courtroom is said to have been an exact cube of thirty feet, the effect of the excessive altitude being modified by the placing of the windows at a considerable height from the ground. The principal offices of the Company, and the library and museum, were upstairs. The library contained an extremely valuable collection of books and manuscripts, now housed at the India Office. The museum, previous to 1851, was only thrown open to the public once a week; but in that year daily admission was granted, and a catalogue published, of which there is a copy in the British Museum. Most of the collection of curiosities was afterwards transferred to South Kensington, including the famous model with which Tippu Sultan used to amuse himself, representing a tiger eating an English soldier, the former being made by hidden mechanism to growl, while the latter uttered what were supposed to be shrieks of terror.

The India House of the first half of the nineteenth century is no doubt a mine of memories in which patient digging may reveal enough precious metal to satisfy individual cravings. But the proportion of metal to quartz is not large, and the latter is mostly of an uncompromising hardness. To many the most important association with the House is that of Charles Lamb, who entered the accountant's office as a clerk in 1792, and retired in 1825 with a pension of four hundred and fifty pounds a year. The manner in which the pension was granted is described with evident fidelity—with the exception that the East India Company figures as a firm of private merchants—in Elia's essay, 'The Superannuated Man.' The pension was a generous one, being two-thirds of the salary Lamb was then receiving, and it was probably more than he expected, as clerks not infrequently remained forty or fifty years in the Company, and he had served thirty-three only. Canon Ainger surmises that the directors may have wished to pay some compliment to literature in the person of their distinguished clerk, but points out that there is nothing to show that Lamb did not do his work faithfully and well during the very considerable period in question. The story that when reproved for habitual late arrival in the mornings he stuttered out, 'But then, you see, I always go away very early,' is certainly Lamb-like; but there does not seem to be any solid authority for it.

Lamb, who had previously served in the South Sea House, the subject of one of his most delightful essays, was only seventeen when he first entered the India House, with a salary of

seventy pounds a year. There are not many allusions to the latter office in his writings; but he used to declare that the really serious work of his life was done there, and that his literary pursuits were mere recreations. He seems to have chafed against the monotony of his work, which at times, especially in view of his terrible domestic affliction, must have been dispiriting to the last degree. But he realised the importance of a regular salary, and was grateful for the fact that there was 'corn in Egypt while there was cash in Leadenhall.'

One of the extant portraits of Lamb is an etching in copper by a friend in the India House—Brooke Pulham. Canon Ainger, too, draws an interesting pen-picture of him in 1825, sitting at his desk in the office, and looking—he was of notably small stature—the more diminutive for being perched on a very high stool. With his head apparently out of proportion to his slender frame, his Jewish cast of nose, his long hair, and 'almost immaterial legs,' and the queer blackness of his general appearance—his complexion was so dark that in his tight-fitting clerkly suit he is said to have resembled, like Fuller's negro, an image cut in ebony—the figure he presented must, indeed, have been a curious one. But it is pleasant also to remember that this peculiarity of personal appearance was modified by 'a pervading sweetness and gentleness which went straight to the heart of every one who looked on it,' and we may be sure that among his fellow-workers the gentle Elia's charm of manner was duly appreciated.

Of these fellow-workers we have unfortunately only the very scantiest record Indeed, the 'upstairs' of the India House seems to have harboured very few besides Lamb with any sort of claim to distinction. Among the handful may be mentioned James Mill, the historian of India, and Hoole, the translator of Tasso; and the interval which separates these from Elia in the minds of posterity is indeed a long one.

But there are interesting personal associations other than literary with the East India House. Neither the chairmen nor deputy-chairmen of the Court of Directors, though they may have loomed large in the eyes of their contemporaries, were persons of any historical consequence; and from the long lists available it is not possible to select a single name which carries any significance to the great bulk of the present generation. But the case is, of course, different with the great Indian Governor-Generals and Commanders-in-Chief, all of whom must on appointment and return have visited the India House. Portals honoured by the passage of men such as Clive (who, by the way, was never Governor-General, but Governor of Fort-William in Bengal), Warren Hastings, Cornwallis, Minto, Bentinck, Ellenborough, Hardinge, Dalhousie, Lake, Gough, and Charles Napier have a clear claim to the consideration of posterity, apart from that which rests upon the history made in the East India Company's courtroom before the Regulating Act of 1773 subjected the directors to parliamentary control. There were some notable figures, too, among the members of the Governor-General's Council—Macaulay, for example, who held office from 1834 to 1838, and in the interval laid the Company and its successor, the British Government, under an imperishable debt of gratitude by the construction of the Indian Penal Code.

An interesting India House function must have been the appearance before a committee of directors of candidates anxious to obtain a cadetship in the Company's army. In Kaye's *Life of Sir John Malcolm* an account is given of the manner in which the future Governor of Bombay went through this ordeal, which is very pleasant reading. The boy was only twelve years old when, towards the end of the year 1781, he was taken by his uncle to the India House, and he was in a fair way to be rejected; but one of the directors said to him, 'Why, my little man, what would *you* do if you were to meet Hyder Ali?' 'Do, sir?' said little Johnny Malcolm stoutly. 'I would out with my sword and cut off his head.' And the directors were so pleased with the spirited reply that they gave the youngster a commission forthwith.

It was noted above that the nineteenth-century India House was really an older building with the addition of a new front. The eighteenth-century India House appears to have been built in 1726 on the site of Craven House, of which the East India Company had previously been tenants from 1648. The tenancy was a somewhat chequered one, as the estates of the Earl of Craven, an ardent Royalist, were sequestrated by the Parliamentarians in 1651, and for an interval the Company paid rent—one hundred and forty pounds per annum—to other landlords. But the Earl came again to his own at the Restoration, and at the beginning of the eighteenth century we find his successor granting the Company a new lease of the 'large house in Leadenhall Street and a tenement in Lime Street' for twenty-one years at one hundred pounds a year only. The rent of similar premises in that locality at the present day is somewhat higher.

In Strype's revision of Stow's *Survey of London* (1720), the East India House on the south side of Leadenhall Street is described as 'a very large building with spacious rooms very commodious for a public concern. It hath a large hall and courtyard for the reception of people who have business here to attend on the court on their court days. There belongs to it also a garden, with warehouses in the back part towards Lime Street, into which there is a back gate for the entrance of carts to bring their goods into their warehouses.'

During the decade 1638–48 the East India Company resided, at first merely as lodgers, in a building next door to Craven House, which belonged at the earlier date mentioned to the then Governor of the Company, Sir Christopher Clitherow. Sir Christopher, to whom the Company paid one hundred and fifty pounds a year rent, died in 1641, and his widow became the Company's landlady, and a reasonable landlady, too, for she reduced the rent to one hundred pounds only. About this time King Charles I. was one of the Company's customers. Being badly in want of money, he bought up the Company's stock of pepper—then a really valuable commodity—on credit and sold it for cash, an artless method of raising the wind of which he was probably not the first and certainly not the last exponent.

Between 1621 and 1638 the East India Company was handsomely accommodated at the historic Crosby House, which they leased from the Earl of Northampton at a yearly rental of two hundred pounds. They evidently became attached to this building, for they made efforts to renew the lease; and later, when they had decided to leave Lady Clitherow's house, they negotiated for a return to their former palatial quarters. But the price asked was more than they cared to pay, and accordingly, as we have seen, they moved next door, and stayed there until officially they died two hundred and ten years afterwards. There is an early allusion to Crosby House in the Company's records for the autumn of 1622, in which mention is made of 'the East India House, commonly called Crosby, in Bishopsgate Street.'

During this period the Company had a dockyard covering ten acres at Blackwall. They had also hired from the Crown a cordage-making establishment at Woolwich, but had thrown up the lease after three years' tenure. In 1626 they had been given a license to manufacture gunpowder; but this experiment also proved a failure, and was discontinued in 1627.

Where the Company transacted their business from 1608 to 1621 the present writer has been unable to discover. There is a tradition that at one time the meetings of the court of directors were held in the great room of the Nag's Head Inn, opposite Bishopsgate Church, where later there was a Quakers' Meeting-House or Institute, and this may have been the period in question. If tradition be founded on fact, there is indeed a distinction with a difference between the character of this early metropolitan centre from which the destinies of India were shaped and that of the present India Office. But the connection is not at all more incongruous than that of the Foreign Office, Privy Council, and War Office with the old Cockpit in Whitehall. The 'Nag's Head,' too, was doubtless a most reputable hostelry, corresponding, perhaps, in contemporary eyes with places like the present-day Cannon Street Hotel. In the latter building directors' meetings have been held which at any rate have disposed of a great deal more money than the early East India Company's Court ever handled, and possibly the ultimate result of the gatherings in question will be the addition of other jewels—though hardly of such size and lustre—to the British Crown.

Still working backwards, an entry in the Company's Court Minutes for February 1608, to the effect that 'Founders' Hall is not to be used after Lady Day next,' brings us to the last stage in our little chronicle. Founders' Hall, in which the Company was now holding its meetings, was not the later home of the Founders' Company in St Swithin's, but their previous local habitation in Lothbury. The Founders were not incorporated until 1614, and may not, before that date, have had their subsequently granted powers of testing all brass weights and brass and copper wares within the City and three miles round. But they were clearly an important guild, and the 'Adventurers for the East India Voyage,' who later blossomed out into the East India Company, probably accounted themselves fortunate in securing Founders' Hall as a temporary rendezvous. The first charter of the East India Company was, as most schoolboys know, granted by Queen Elizabeth in 1600, and one of the earliest of the Company's papers is a warrant dated 27th October of that year 'to summon all the Adventurers to meet on the 30th at Founders' Hall to take notice of the Queen's pleasure signified by a letter from the Privy Council.'

Our story ends here. It may not be a thrilling one, and there is at least one *hiatus valde deflendus* in it. But it represents an industrious effort to present in a compact form what at present can only be arrived at by a somewhat laborious collation of a number of books and pamphlets with the court minutes of the East India Company so admirably calendared in a series of volumes by the late Mr Sainsbury and his daughter. In passing, the hope may be expressed that the learned Registrar of the India Office, who has lately been editing the aforesaid Calendar of Court Minutes, may some day tell the tale summarised above in the expanded form in which it ought to be told by the light of special knowledge and privileged research.

OLD LAVERY'S MONEY.

CHAPTER II.

FOR the first time since making her plans Anne Lysaght was nervous and excited. Things had not turned out at all according to her calculations. However, it was now neck or nothing. On the departure of the doctor she returned to the sickroom. The patient was somewhat restless, but apparently not suffering much.

'Well, Anne,' she said, 'I fear I am going to be a trouble to you. You had enough to do without having the bother of nursing an old woman.'

'Now, Nell, you know very well you should not say that. Doctor Brand is sending an experienced nurse over as soon as he gets back, and you must not worry. All you have to do is to get well.'

After the arrival of the nurse, the old lady seemed to become more composed; but towards evening her temperature rose, and it was thought advisable that the doctor should see her again.

After the doctor's visit, he told Anne that the rise of temperature was only what might be expected, but that up to now it did not indicate any immediate danger. 'However,' said he, 'one can never be sure in pneumonia. I hope you have spoken to her about making any arrangements that might be necessary.'

'Well, no,' said Anne. 'The truth is, I did not wish to alarm her; but as you think it my duty, I will do so.'

'I certainly do think so,' said Doctor Brand; 'and Miss Lavery has always had much more than the average amount of common-sense, and will quite understand the necessity of settling her affairs, if they are not already settled.'

'Well, Nell dear,' said Anne on her return, 'is there anything you would wish to do in the way of giving any instructions? Sickness often takes queer turns, and the doctor thought there might be some little matters you would wish settled. But perhaps you have already done so.'

'No, indeed, Anne; though the last time Mr Mathews was with me over at Elmvale he advised me very strongly to make my will; but I have always put off doing so. But does it matter much? There is no relation of mine living that I know of, except Agatha and yourself, and, of course, you would share whatever I leave behind.'

'Good heavens!' thought Anne; 'this is awful! Can she be so ignorant as not to know that I have no claim to a penny? Or is she just torturing me? She would be quite capable of it.'

'However, Anne, perhaps you are right, and the proper thing would be for me to make my will. It is very unfortunate that Mr Mathews is in London. Lady Linley told me so yesterday.'

'I don't think, Nell, it matters much. Surely you know old John Devine. He was for many years a clerk of Mr Mathews's; and, indeed, Mr Mathews was most kind to him, and makes him an allowance that keeps him comfortably. Devine lives with his married daughter, the widow Mahony, below at the "cross," and he could do your business as well as the Lord Chancellor.'

'Very well, Anne, send for Devine. I feel rather drowsy, and will, perhaps, sleep a little.'

Old Devine came over about eight o'clock that evening, and was told by Mrs Lysaght the business on which he had been summoned.

'Well, Mrs Lysaght,' said he, 'there won't be, I suppose, much difficulty in doing what is needful. I take it the old lady is perfectly in possession of her senses?'

'Oh dear, yes!' said Anne. 'She is a bit drowsy, and requires rousing from time to time, but she is perfectly capable of making her will. I will go up and tell her you are here.'

When Anne Lysaght went into the sickroom she told the nurse she might go downstairs to her tea, and that she might take her time, as Miss Lavery had some business to transact with Mr Devine, who had just come.

'How is she going on, nurse?' said Anne in a low tone.

'Well,' whispered the nurse, 'I think she seems to be getting more drowsy; but I suppose Mr Devine's business will not take long.'

'Oh, not at all!' said Anne; whereupon the nurse left the room.—'Well, Nell, how have you been since I left you? John Devine is below, ready to take your instructions about the will.'

'The will!' said Nell. 'Oh yes, the will, to be sure! Are you going to make your will, Anne? Are you ill?'

'My God!' said Anne, 'she is rambling,' and hurried out of the room to summon Devine.

When they reached the bedroom door Anne hesitated for a moment. She then drew Devine into the adjoining room. 'John Devine'—— she said, and she had to sit down. She felt faint for a moment. 'John Devine, this old woman is fast losing her senses. She told me that she intended to leave me all she had, with the exception of two hundred pounds to her niece, Agatha Lavery. Sit down at that table and write that down as quickly as you can, and'——

'But, Mrs Lysaght, this is too serious a matter'——

'Don't be a fool; do as I tell you. I have fifty pounds in the house. This I will give you, and I will draw another hundred out of the bank in the morning, and that you shall have, too. Have what I told you written down by the time I come back with the money, and Tom Nolan to witness the will with you. Now, not another word!'

Devine sat down and began to write.

'I will give you ten minutes,' said Anne; 'surely that should be enough;' and she left the room.

She returned in a quarter of an hour with Tom Nolan, who had been appointed Miss Lavery's coachman, and addressed Devine.

'Well, Mr Devine, did the old lady give you her instructions?'

'Oh yes, Mrs Lysaght. A few minutes only were necessary. I have drafted the will. It's only a few lines. She simply left'——

'I would rather, Mr Devine, you did not tell me anything about it. Come, if you please, to her room.'

The three entered, and Anne Lysaght, approaching the sick woman, said, 'Now, Nell, Mr Devine has brought the will for your signature.' She raised Miss Nell up in the bed, and Devine placed the brief document, laid on a book, before her, and put the pen into her hand.

'This is to be signed, Anne, I think you said. Your will?'

'Yes, *your* will, Nell.'

The old woman wrote her name, Devine guiding her hand to the proper spot on the paper.

'Now, Tom,' said Devine to Nolan, 'this is Miss Lavery's will that you have seen her sign, and you and I have to sign here as witnesses.' They both signed their names. The will was perfected.

The witnesses left the room; and Anne said, 'Now you will be easier in your mind, Nell, that that is done; and when the nurse comes and gives you your medicine, you will have a good sleep, and wake up much better.'

Never was prophecy fulfilled less to the satisfaction of the prophet. When the doctor came next morning, Miss Nell was decidedly better, and in ten days more was enjoying her cup of tea, sitting in the drawing-room; while Doctor Brand promised her a short drive next day if the present beautiful weather kept up.

'And, indeed, Miss Lavery,' said the doctor, 'you are a pattern to the young people. I'd like to see the young lady of the present day who would be in bed on the fifth of May with bad pneumonia, and would be anxious for her drive on the eighteenth.'

Anne Lysaght had put in a bad fortnight. Did the old woman forget all about the will? She never made the faintest allusion to it. Or was she quite aware of the whole business, and satisfied with what she had done? If so, one would suppose she would have asked for the will, and sent it to her solicitor and general man of business, Mr Mathews. He had all her papers, even the certificates of her various investments. To him were sent the dividends as they accrued for lodgment in the bank in Cork, and such reinvestment as she should determine. Why should she keep him in ignorance of this most important disposal of her substance? The whole thing was most bewildering, and many times, when lying awake at night, Anne fully determined that the following day should see the end of her uncertainty, and that she would by some adroit allusion come at the truth. But daylight brought fresh courage, and she resolved to let sleeping dogs lie.

So things went on during the remaining days of May. The old lady's drives were always over to Elmvale, where she sat in the garden when the sun shone, and returned to Bawnmore within three or four hours. But when the long, fine days of June arrived, Doctor Brand considered that she might now begin to return the visits of the ladies who had called on her frequently during her convalescence.

There was a certain routine observed in these visits. Miss Lavery would leave home about midday, and call, perhaps, on her old friend, Lady Linley. Her coachman, Tom Nolan, on depositing her at Roxton, as Lady Linley's place was called, would go on to Elmvale, and put in two or three hours' work in the garden, returning for 'Miss Nell,' who might proceed home, or, perhaps, pay a visit to Elmvale before doing so.

About the middle of June she set out one day as usual, without indicating any particular person on whom she intended to call. This, indeed, was her usual custom, and she disliked very much that any questions should be asked as to her intended movements. Nor was there any reason why Anne Lysaght should be inquisitive, as she could always hear from Tom Nolan where they had been. Indeed, she seldom asked, as her mind was full of matters of much more importance than Nell's visits.

On the day in question the old lady had left Bawnmore about eleven o'clock, and when some half-mile from home she ordered Nolan to pull up. She then told him to get off the box, and stand at the side of the carriage to hear what she had to say.

'Tom Nolan,' she said when he had followed her instructions, 'I believe you are to be trusted.'

'Well, I hope so, miss,' said Tom, wondering what was to come next.

'And so,' she proceeded, 'I have made up my mind to trust you in a matter of very great importance. I want your solemn promise—I do

not ask you to swear—never, while I live, to betray the confidence I am about to place in you. Your doing what I am going to ask you to do will be the best day's work you ever did in your life—much better than you can imagine.'

'Well, miss, I most solemnly promise never to reveal whatever it is you wish me to keep secret; and that is as good as if I swore it on the Bible. But I will swear if you wish'——

'No, there is no need. Now listen. It is now a quarter-past eleven. I want you to drive me to Stonecross Station. That is, I suppose, about two miles beyond Elmvale?'

'Yes, miss, about that.'

'Very well. I want to be there at twelve o'clock.'

'Certainly, miss; there is plenty of time.'

'Get up, then, and I will give you the rest of your instructions as we go along.'

Tom Nolan resumed his seat on the box, and they proceeded on their way.

The old lady continued: 'Now, I want you, when you leave me at Stonecross, to go on as usual to Elmvale. There is no one there to ask you any questions. And I want you to meet me again at Stonecross at four o'clock exactly. I think that is all quite plain?'

'Surely, miss, nothing could be plainer.'

'And you will never, while I live, mention to any human being that you drove me to-day to Stonecross Station?'

'Never, miss, I promise you before God.'

Old Nell returned that evening to Bawnmore in time for dinner, having paid a short visit to Elmvale, and brought home an unusually large quantity of flowers, of which she was extremely fond.

Anne Lysaght had become somewhat calmer in mind. Of course, the perplexing puzzle about the will was never absent from her thoughts; but she tried to banish, so far as she could, the unsolvable question—Did the old woman forget all about it, or did she remember it, and feel satisfied with what had been done?

Old Nell entered on her eighty-second year in October, and as the weather was both cold and wet, she was confined a good deal to the house. For the first time, too, she ceased to take much interest in the reports which were brought daily from Elmvale.

The Lysaghts saw that she was much changed; and the change seemed to come all at once. During the early part of November she was confined to her room, and towards the end of the month to her bed.

On Christmas Eve the end came. Doctor Brand, who had been in attendance for more than a month, had warned Mrs Lysaght that the old lady's heart had become very weak, and might at any moment fail altogether. She had been sitting up for an hour; and when the nurse thought it time that she should go back to bed, it was found that she had died in her chair.

Well, it was all over now. The money, and Elmvale, and all the rest for which she had schemed, would be Anne's. And yet she did not feel safe. Would Mr Mathews make any very searching scrutiny into the circumstances under which the will was made which had been kept so secret? Would he advise Agatha to contest it? And if he did, was Tom Nolan to be depended on? He had no interest in telling anything but the truth. Would he be asked whether he thought the old lady knew what she was doing when she signed the will? Did he remember the words of old Nell: 'This is to be signed, Anne, I think you said. Your will?' And Anne's implied correction, 'Yes, *your* will, Nell'?

Devine, of course, was safe, and would swear that she was in her perfect senses; and surely his word would have more weight than that of an ignorant farm-hand like Nolan? And she herself! Suppose the will should be contested! She, too, would be examined and cross-examined. She had been present at a trial once, of a case in which George was interested. It was not nearly such a serious matter as this trial would be. George had taken her to Dublin with him as a treat. She had heard one witness rolling off his evidence so smoothly, so glibly, that the case seemed to Anne already settled. But, the cross-examination! Would she ever forget the big, burly barrister with the eyeglass who tackled that unfortunate man? Or how a pin might be heard drop in the silence of the court when he asked, shaking the eyeglass slowly, which he now held in his hand, like a ghostly truncheon, 'Now, remember, you are sworn to tell the truth! By the virtue of the solemn oath, for the truth of which you are answerable to God in heaven, *have* you told the truth?' No! she would die of fright before the trial came on.

And George! George had not the slightest suspicion of what had occurred. He had been told the fable of how Devine had taken his instructions from Miss Lavery herself. George Lysaght was an honest man, and would have his right hand cut off rather than stoop to any trickery of this kind. And now the truth would come out! Her own husband! Why, he would never again spend a day under the same roof with her!

Before night on Christmas Eve Doctor Brand was again in attendance at Bawnmore, this time on its mistress, and he pronounced her suffering from brain-fever. She was altogether incoherent and raving. It therefore fell to George to write to Agatha and Mr Mathews announcing the old lady's death, and asking Mr Mathews to telegraph as to whether the twenty-seventh of the month would suit them to attend the funeral.

The reply was in the affirmative, and added that they would come on the evening of the twenty-sixth. They were much shocked, on their arrival, to find that Anne's illness, of which George had informed them, had taken such a serious turn.

Agatha went up to see her at once, but found that Anne failed altogether to recognise her. Indeed, the nurse said that the doctor had grave fears that Mrs Lysaght might never return to her normal senses.

'No one,' the nurse added, 'would have thought that Miss Lavery's death could possibly be such a shock, as the doctor had for some time prepared them all for the possibility of a sudden termination.'

From the time the doctor had been called in, three days ago, her temperature had been increasing, and he said plainly that unless there was a decrease within the next twenty-four hours there would be a second funeral from Bawnmore.

Old Nell was laid beside John in the old graveyard at Doora, and on returning to Bawnmore Mr Mathews informed George Lysaght that under Miss Lavery's will he would benefit to the extent of a thousand pounds. Thomas Nolan, his man-servant, was down for five hundred pounds. It was also ordered that Mrs Lysaght should receive remuneration at the rate of four guineas per week for the time the testatrix should have been an inmate of the house at Bawnmore. There were various small legacies for charitable purposes, and the residue was bequeathed to Miss Agatha Lavery, who was also appointed executrix to the will.

'I will send you a copy of the will, Mr Lysaght, in due course.'

'Thank you, sir,' said George. 'May I ask you what is the date of the will of which you speak?'

'Certainly. It is dated the 17th of June of the present year, and was signed by the late Miss Lavery on that day in my office in Cork.'

George Lysaght had nothing further to say. He was out of his depth. One thing was certain: the will of the 4th of May—George remembered the date well; it was Anne's birthday—was waste-paper.

No hint was ever given by Mr Mathews—if, indeed, he was in a position to do so—as to the cause of Miss Lavery's sudden change of mind. The secret was never revealed.

. . . . . .

George Lysaght has been dead for more than twenty years now. Mrs Honan, formerly Miss Agatha Lavery, lives with her husband and children at Elmvale. She goes over often to Bawnmore to see a feeble old woman who lives there, and who sometimes recognises Agatha, but more often calls her 'Nell.' As a rule she gives little trouble; but if at any time she becomes restless, the nurse never fails to calm her with, 'Have patience now; we 'll go over to Elmvale to-morrow, and search for Miss Nell's will.'

THE END.

FORTUNES FROM WASTE PRODUCTS.

By 'B.Sc., F.I.C.'

IN the offices of a certain London chemical firm there is an attractive-looking diagram. It is a large tree; but upon close inspection it is plain that it is not an ordinary tree. Each branch is labelled with a chemical name, and many of them are coloured. Upon the trunk one may read 'coal-tar,' and the mysterious diagram is explained. Every branch represents a substance derived from coal-tar, and one is astonished at the large number of the branches, although as a matter of fact these branches represent only the main derivatives, and form a very small proportion of the total.

If we read carefully over the branches, we shall find examples of dyes (represented by the coloured ones), drugs, flavouring substances, disinfectants, photographic chemicals, explosives, solvents, &c.

At one time coal-tar was looked upon as an unpleasant by-product of gas-making, difficult to deal with, and difficult to get rid of. The number of chemists who have investigated this substance is of course enormous, and they have come from every country; but we are always proud to remember that it was an Englishman, W. H. Perkin, who produced the first dye that could be made on a technical scale. He was a business man as well as a chemist, and he ran a very successful factory for dye-making in England. Unfortunately we have been beaten in this industry, but there are signs that the coming of the war is effecting a renascence.

Tar must be looked upon as the king of the waste products. It is not likely that we shall find anything that will furnish such an enormous number of useful substances. But there are numerous interesting cases of waste products that have proved gold-mines to the men who have found ways of turning them to usefulness. The volatile substances given off in the making of charcoal from wood, for example, have become very important. In the old way of making charcoal all these valuable products (wood spirit, acetic acid, acetone, &c.) were entirely lost, but to-day they are the most important of the substances obtained.

All the great industries give us examples of the finding of uses for waste products. In the cotton trade we have the cotton waste, which consists of the short and unsuitable fibres left over from the spinning. At first this found very few uses, and could be obtained for next to nothing. Then, as more uses were found for it, its value went up. It was largely used as a packing and cleaning material for engines. At the present time it has an extremely important use in the making of gun-cotton. Baron von Lenk, in Austria (about 1847), was the first man to use cotton successfully on a large scale for making gun-cotton, although he was not the inventor of the process. The cotton was dipped in a mixture of strong sulphuric and nitric acids, and subsequently washed and dried. Sir Frederic Abel, in England, made many improvements upon this process, and since then cotton waste has been very largely used, and many explosives firms have got riches from it.

Silk waste, too, has proved very profitable, chiefly for working up into cheap silk materials. There was a paragraph recently in the daily papers reporting the death of Lord Masham of Swinton Park, Masham, Yorkshire. He was the son of the first baron, Samuel Lister, who made a large fortune from silk waste.

It is the agricultural world that seems to get the benefit (doubtful sometimes) of a large number of the odd and end waste substances of various industries. If you can find no other use for a waste material, you can probably work it off either as a cattle food or as a fertiliser. At least this is what one might be led to believe, after learning about the disposal of large numbers of waste materials.

Amongst the foods we have linseed cake (the waste after pressing out the oil from linseed); cotton cake, &c.; brewers' waste (brewers' grains, &c.); cocoa-shells (the waste husks got in the preparation of cocoa).

The most noteworthy of the waste products that have been used as chemical manures is that known as basic slag. In the early days of the famous Bessemer process for making steel great difficulty was experienced in removing the phosphorus, which, if present in more than extremely minute quantities, spoils the quality of the steel. Messrs Thomas and Gilchrist found a very simple method for removing it. They simply lined with magnesia and lime the vessel in which the molten steel was to be prepared. The phosphorus left the steel, and formed a compound with the lime and magnesia. When the lining was unable to take up any more phosphorus, it was removed and thrown away as waste, the accumulating heaps being a great nuisance. But it was discovered that this basic slag, as it was called, would make a very good artificial manure, as it contained phosphates in considerable quantity. It was ground fine, and sold for this purpose with very great success.

Sometimes waste products have become the salvation of the processes to which formerly they were great nuisances. A good example is found in what is called the Leblanc process for making soda. At one stage in this process hydrochloric acid gas is given off. This gas is very irritating and objectionable, and as it was allowed to escape into the air the neighbourhood of a soda factory was anything but a pleasant place. Actions were constantly being brought against the manufacturers, and great trouble was always occurring. Moreover, here was a valuable product going to waste. The problem was soon tackled, and ways of condensing the gas were found, and also methods for turning it into another gas—chlorine—that could be used to make bleaching-powder. This greatly increased the profits, besides doing away with the nuisance. Then, about fifty years after the introduction of the Leblanc process for making soda, a rival process sprang up, and has been very successful—so successful, in fact, that were it not for the former waste product, hydrochloric acid, it is doubtful whether the Leblanc process could survive.

The investigation of waste materials is often very fascinating, and sometimes leads to startling results. This was the case with the waste earths obtained in the making of incandescent mantles. Small mountains of these wastes were piling up, and Baron von Welsbach set himself to investigate them. By means of electricity he obtained lumps of metal from them. He was cutting one such lump with his knife, when he found that there was a remarkable sparking effect. He soon saw that this had commercial possibilities, and the outcome of it was the preparation of those wonderful lighters that have become so common now. Welsbach sold his German patent for thirty thousand pounds, and also got large sums for patents in other countries. This was truly a profitable waste product.

As the years go on waste products are constantly disappearing from industry. The great competition in trade and the lowering of prices have made it essential for factories to utilise or dispose of all their waste material, and processes that leave large margins for waste have not much chance of success. This is more than ever necessary now that we have to make up for the enormous wastage of war.

Perhaps most of what one may call the sensational discoveries with regard to waste substances have already been made, but there is still a great field for research-work, and a lot of money still to be made. There is the wood-pulp industry, for example. A Bulletin issued by the Forestry Branch of Ottawa in 1913 stated that over one hundred and forty-five thousand cords of pulpwood, valued at eight hundred thousand dollars, were lost annually in Canada, and also large

quantities of sulphur from the chemicals used. The waste liquors containing these substances have been discharged into rivers or the sea. A lot of work has been done, but the profitable working up of all this waste has still to come.

Then, again, there may be a good opportunity to utilise sawdust, and to get more value out of it than has been got in the past, especially in Britain. It has been used in America for making artificial silk, and also, curious as it may seem, for manufacturing alcohol. If alcohol should come to be used in place of petrol for motor-cars, this would in all probability prove a profitable means of obtaining it.

There is the tanning industry, too. It would be a very great advantage to this industry if really good uses could be found for the spent tan and the various waste liquors.

There are a great many more problems of a similar character; and it is certain that the future of industry in Britain depends largely upon reducing waste products to a minimum.

THE MESSAGE.

By G. Trevor Roller.

'HAVE a subaltern officer go out to-night and reconnoitre enemy's wire in front of your position AAA.* Report to be in by two-thirty AAA. Warn positions on your R. and L. not to draw Turk fire AAA. Headquarters —— Brigade Reserve Trench AAA.'

This had been buzzed along the wire that went along the communication-trench, and ended in the front-line fire trench signal-station; from thence it had been carried twenty yards or so to 'Lovers' Walk' by orderly, and into the hands of the Adjutant of the Blankshires. He was standing chatting to the ammunition-supply officer. They were in 'Lovers' Walk,' a front trench, so named because it was the last place in the world lovers would care to walk in.

The adjutant read the message, put it in his pocket, and said to the officer in charge of ammunitions, 'Well, anyway, for goodness' sake steal some more "Mills" bombs, if you can't draw 'em! We must have something to amuse the men with.' So saying, he turned and strolled to the regimental headquarters' dug-out. No, we will take back the word strolled; one does not stroll along a four-foot-six trench —one 'steals' along. Passing the colonel's dug-out, he told him the contents of the message.

The colonel said, 'Hang it! why do they always insist on sending out officers? I want my officers to lead my men when we push, not to go out sniffing round wire like a lot of rabbits —and get shot like 'em. However, they know best, and want the best information; so I mustn't grouse. It's these infernal flies.' He broke off and strafed round with his fly-switch, lit a cigarette (ration), and went on: 'Flies, and—er —other things, make this very beautiful spot quite unpleasant. Well, you'd better tell off somebody—somebody good.'

The adjutant went on his way, thinking whose turn it was to go out. As he reached his dug-out he remembered it was young Summers, a bit of a child; but he'd do the job. The adjutant sat on his sand-bag bed, and took the message from his pocket; then gazed at the sunset over the parados. His mind went back home —to home and Sylvia, the girl with the dreamy eyes and dimpling mouth; the girl he loved, and who loved him not. Oh, they were pals—frightfully good pals; but nothing else. Smiler Cray—he was the fly in the jam-tin. Smiler, with his everlasting grin, his perfect good nature, his most engaging manner. Win any girl. And yet there was nothing definite. Smiler possessed not a cent; so he never went ahead. The adjutant knew he was second best; and Smiler—— Suddenly his thoughts changed. A hard look came into his eyes. He spread the message over his knee, read it, and to himself he said, as the colonel had said not ten minutes before, 'Somebody good.'

Smiler happened to be in his regiment—a subaltern, and distinctly good when it came to a show. Smiler—— and he crumpled the message in his hand. Then for about ten minutes a whole lot of thinking went on in that particular dug-out.

Imagine a long pause, and then a short, 'Orderly!' answered by a boy—well, eighteen or nineteen, in a pair of slacks and a vest, neck and arms almost black from the sun. 'Send Mr Cray round here; and, I say, don't dodge across the open, but keep to the communication-trench up on to Green Hill.' And the boy went.

Time passed slowly, and the man of thoughts with the message crumpled in his left hand squirmed. He lit a pipe (Ocean Wave Ration, ounce one), and did a bit more thinking.

Then came Smiler. 'Hallo, adj.!' he grinned. 'Do you want me?'

The adjutant coughed. 'Yes,' he said. 'Sit down, old thing.'

'Where?' asked Smiler.

'Oh, on the floor, you ass, or the end of the bed; I only quoted a platitude.'

So Smiler sat.

'Look here,' said the adjutant, 'they want an

* AAA is the signalling way of ending a sentence; it means 'full stop.'

officer to go out to-night to find out something about the old Turks' wire. I spoke to the C.O., and he said, "Send somebody good." The most reliable man I could think of was yourself. I know it's not your turn; but I consider you are the best man for the stunt. So you're "for it."'

'Right-o!' grinned Smiler; 'but it's a blighted shame, 'cause old Mackay sent me a bottle of whisky from Mudros to-day, and we were going to have a beano to-night. However, duty comes before a "blind;" so get ahead with the details. Will the "bullet-food" each side of us know I'm out, or will they strafe and amuse themselves with star-shells?'

'Great Scott!' the adjutant cried; 'do you suppose I'm not going to warn these people and our own? Don't be a fool! I want the information the same as H.Q., because we may attack, and I want you to have every chance. It's all right for you,' he added; 'the Turks won't get busy unless we snipe, and I give you my word we won't.'

Then they went into details; and, everything settled, Smiler returned to his dug-out to prepare and wait for the dark.

. . . . . .

Seven-thirty, a sap; and at the end of it Smiler, wearing gloves, his face blacked, talking to the adjutant.

'I think it's dark enough,' he said.

'Yes, go ahead, and good luck, old thing,' said the adjutant.

'So-long!' said Smiler. 'Get the kettle boiling, and we'll have some toddy when I get back, and "thank your mother for the rabbits!"'

This last an insane remark, but quite like Smiler. He was off on a four-to-one chance of ever seeing the regiment again. So he talked drivel; but he was careful. He slid over the parapet lengthways, so as not to silhouette against the skyline behind him, and started to crawl. A random bullet went 'thug' beside him. He rolled laterally four times, and lay still. Nothing happened. He crawled again; then he reached scrub, and for fifty yards he walked, doubling himself. At the edge of the scrub he lay down. Before him was W Hill; he could see the shape of the W against the sky. The Turks' front-line trench lay at the foot, nearly one hundred yards from him; the wire would be only about twenty yards in front of them.

Smiler looked about him; he could distinctly see objects within twenty yards. It was not dark enough; he would wait till it was. He crawled a bit farther, and fell into a hole; not a big one, but an excellent place to find in 'No Man's Land' if you wanted to put in a spare twenty minutes or more.

So Smiler rolled over on his back, and gazed up into the glowing stars. His thoughts ran weirdly, as men's thoughts will run under peculiar circumstances. First he thought of 21st August; he had had a nasty reminder or two of that on his crawl out, which we won't talk about. Then his thoughts slipped to the dinner he would have when he got back; the much-prized bottle of whisky. Could he build a sand-bag bed like the adjutant had got? Fancy sleeping on sand-bags. By Jove! what would that bed at home feel like now, with the frilled pillow-cases—silly things, so womanish! Wonder if Sylvia has frilled pillow-cases! Wonder what Sylvia is doing now! What a shame he was not in a position to marry! But, hang it! everybody would be in a position to marry at the end of the war. Everything would be on a much lower standard; it would be one's duty to marry. Heavens! if he could get home for a month, that would be——

Then it started. Have you ever sat in a tent when the wind is really blowing, and heard the canvas flapping? If you have, multiply that sound by one thousand and you've got it. Officially it is called 'heavy rifle-fire.' Tommy calls it a 'blinky awful strafe.'

But it was coming from his, Smiler's, side; not from his regiment, but the What's-the-name-shires on his left. Of course, the Turks started at once, and a beautiful strafe ensued. Smiler lay low in his cubby-hole, while star-shells flew everywhere.

Meanwhile the adjutant was carefully writing a message to the units on each side of him to hold all fire, as a patrol was out. When the racket began he felt like a sick dog; but he sent the message out late.

The strafe lasted about fifteen minutes, and then silence. The adjutant walked down to the sap, feeling like nothing on earth. He knew he had done a real dirty trick, and he would have given his soul to take it back; but he thought it too late. He asked a sentry, 'Is Mr Cray in yet?'

'No, sir; he's only just gone out—at least, half-an-hour ago. He won't be back until he's done the job. That's to say, sir, if he dodged the firing.'

'Report to me if you hear anything,' said the adjutant, and went back to his dug-out.

Meanwhile Smiler was working. He crawled out, and found the wire, sideways; and every way he squirmed along, feeling with his gloved hands at the apron, lying on his side, and looking up to see the strands against the sky. When he was satisfied he started for 'home,' the dinner, and the priceless whisky. He felt pleased; he had attained his object in spite of the strafe, and now he was heading for home.

The adjutant was still feeling like mud.

Smiler reached the scrub, his slacks worn through, his knees bleeding, but quite 'bucked' with life. An occasional shot would come fairly near now and then, but he felt confident; that was the trouble—confidence. He got up on his

hind-legs, and walked right through the scrub, and to within twenty yards of the sap, when he suddenly fell forward on to his face, with a blow on his right shoulder that felt like a kick from a mule. He lay quiet, thinking—wondering, rather, if any more were coming; then he made inquiries with his left hand. He felt for his first-field dressing, got it out, and dropped it. He hunted for it, with no result; looked at the trench, and made a dash for it. A staggering dash, but he succeeded, rolled over the parapet, and fell on his hands and knees with a funny sort of grunt, because it had hurt him. He looked up, and saw the adjutant. The sentry grabbed him, and sat him on the fire-step.

The adjutant stood staring. Then he asked, 'How bad?'

Smiler had got his breath back; he was in no great pain now.

Somebody shouted, 'Stretch-er-bear-er!'

'Oh, shut up!' said Smiler; 'I can walk.—I'm not bad, adj.; shoulder somewhere. Give us your arm, and I'll push along to the dressing-station.'

So together they went slowly.

'I blame myself for this, old man,' said the adjutant.

'Oh, rot! Mind the step. Ugh, that hurt a bit!' and Smiler reeled. 'Don't you worry,' he went on; 'I'm all right. I never wanted to get hit. *Now* I am, I know it's a first-class ticket for home.—Hallo, doc.! I've stopped one.'

They reached the dressing-station, and for a while Smiler collapsed.

Then the adjutant put in a bit more thinking. For the smallest excuse he would have jumped over the parapet and got himself killed. He did not know which way to turn. He was feeling it; but Smiler, for the moment, was the chief thing to worry about, and between them—the doctor and the adjutant—they fixed him up.

Then they gave him a 'Gold Flake,' and that was a comfort to him. And as all men who are hit get a reaction, some minutes after he got the reaction too, and talked. He told them what he had done and found out. This was taken down, and reported to headquarters. Then he went on talking of what would happen—home, rest, a good time, and Sylvia.

'Of course,' he said, 'I shall have a free hand, and I have something to go on. She is sure to be sympathetic, and, after all, that is the chief thing; and in spite of the fact of my being a pauper, I think she will chance her luck and do the trick.'

The adjutant thought so too, and what he went through then was just as near the lower regions as any one can go. So they patched Smiler up, and sent him home. Down that horrible communication-trench from the front line to 'Chocolate Hill;' from there he went on an Indian mule-cart to Suvla Bay, and on to a hospital-ship. Then he was surrounded with comfort and full of smiles. He talked to the nurses about Sylvia and the heaven that was coming to him.

And the adjutant sat in his dug-out, gnawing his nails, and thinking what Hades was coming to him.

Some months later the Blankshires were back again in the front line.

The adjutant sat in his dug-out, strafing flies. A signaller entered with a private cable and an official message.

The cable read: 'Sylvia and I married to-day. Awful happy. Cheer-o everybody.—SMILER.'

And the message read: 'Turkish sap in front of your section; must be bombed and taken to-night AAA. Send one officer and thirty men AAA. They must be well supported if counter-attacked AAA. Brigade Headquarters AAA.'

'I'll tell myself off for that,' said the adjutant. Honour is satisfied; or, at least, atonement has been made.

MORE LINES TO MY MOTHER.

SOME days it's nice to be just eight,
And own a rabbit-hutch,
But oftener there are others when
I do not like it much;
When these are here I sit and think
How very nice 'twould be
If I could only just be you,
And you could just be me.

If I could say when nurse came round
With 'Seven o'clock, Miss Gwen,'
'She isn't here; please go away,
My time is half-past ten;'
Then you'd be me, and so, of course,
You'd have to go to bed,
While I'd put on an evening gown
And dine at eight instead.

When breakfast came I'd be myself
If we'd a holiday,
Then you would stay and mind the house
While I went out to play;
But later on, when school-time came,
I'd change, and I'd be you,
While you would go off with my books
And learn enough for two.

Whenever some one called to say,
'We hope you'll come to tea,'
Of course I'd want to go myself,
So then I'd just be me;
And I'd be me—oh, lots of times!—
Quite half the day, I think;
What fun to pop from me to you
As quick as any wink!

But things like that don't happen now.
Where have the fairies fled?
I don't believe what nursie says;
She says that they are dead.
I'm sure they're hiding out of sight;
Let's ask the honey-bee;
Perhaps he'd chase them out again
To change you into me.

EDITH L. ELIAS.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

THE LADY IN THE RED MASK.

By TAFFRAIL, Author of *Carry On! Stand By! Pincher Martin, O.D.*, &c.

I.

GEORGE PONSONBY BUCKLE, one of our junior midshipmen in the gunroom of the cruiser *Warwick* in China some years ago, was the smallest 'snotty' in the ship. I am not certain that he was not also the tiniest young officer of his rank in the Navy, for he must have stood barely more than five feet in his socks, while his hands and feet were small in proportion. He had curly, flaxen hair, blue eyes, and rather a penetrating voice, and had not even started to use a razor. He was nearly eighteen, but looked at least two years younger, and was one of those very rare, cherub-faced, angelic 'snotties' of fiction — not 'middies,' please—who are popularly supposed to break the hearts of every woman they meet. I am not aware how many feminine hearts Master George broke in his day, but I do know of one lady, an elderly spinster, who had the temerity to call him a 'little darling,' and added that he so reminded her of a nephew at a preparatory school at home in England. She, poor dear! received the shock of her life when the 'little darling' waxed indignant, and though she was not so much upset by what he said, it was the nasty way he said it which completely flattened her out. She never used endearing epithets to 'snotties' again. On the contrary, being a lady of strong religious convictions, she became convinced that they were brands to be snatched from the burning. I am not certain she was not right.

George was always touchy about his size and apparent age. In the gunroom they used to call him the 'White Maggot' when they wished to annoy him, and 'George' at other times. The first nickname riled him to the last degree, particularly as his chief enemy, a black-haired youth slightly larger than himself, named Moore, went by the name of the 'Black Maggot.' It was necessary for Moore to shave at least twice a week. It was unnecessary for George to use a razor twice a year. Hence the antipathy between them, and the gladiatorial combats which used occasionally to take place after dinner in the gunroom on guest nights.

I well remember the rage in the heart of George when he was arrested by the police in the railway station at Tokyo for smoking in public. There is a law in Japan under which nobody below the age of twenty is allowed to use tobacco, and though the regulation is generally waived so far as Europeans are concerned, the appearance of George was so extremely youthful that a rather officious policeman with a sword, apprehending him then and there, marched him off to the police station, with a large crowd following behind. On his arrival all his smoking utensils were confiscated, while before being liberated he was informed by an inspector in broken English that 'childrens ees not permeet to smoke in Cha-pan, so you mos' nod do eet again.'

The incident subsequently found its way into the English newspapers, where George, in rather inapt journalese, was referred to as 'a sucking Nelson through whose whiskers the wind did not whistle.'

'Poof!' snorted the hero of the story when he read of his doings months afterwards. 'What rot! Every one knows that Nelson hadn't a beard!' He could not see the joke; but we could, and he never heard the end of it.

But George, in spite of his cherubic appearance, was anything but a saint. He was about the most mischievous little imp imaginable, and well do I remember his bringing his cutter alongside under full sail bows on into the accommodation ladder. The forepart of the boat and the accommodation ladder broke into several pieces in righteous indignation; while the commander, in like condition and purple about the face, danced upon the quarter-deck.

'Please, sir, I couldn't help it,' explained the culprit when he came on board. 'The fore-halyards jammed.'

'Fore-halyards be jiggered, you silly little juggins!' spluttered the commander. 'Why didn't you let fly the fore-sheet and bring her into the wind? Why didn't you—— You've smashed up your boat; you've carved my brand-new accommodation ladder into chunks—— Oh, damn my whiskers! Lord knows what you haven't done! No wonder the naval estimates are so high, with young officers like you in the Service! I don't know what the deuce the Navy's coming to!'

'I'm sorry, sir,' piped the offender.

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'Sorry! I should think you were! You'll stay on board till the boat and the ladder are mended; and meanwhile you will go down to the gunroom, give the sub-lieutenant my compliments, and ask him from me to give you a dozen of the best! Understand?'

'Yes, sir.'

George got his dozen; though, as the sub. afterwards explained, he hadn't the heart to lay them on really hard.

On another occasion George caused some excitement by going ashore to a tennis-party in Hong-Kong in a pair of pink-striped pyjama trousers. He was soon discovered by the unmistakable cut of the garments; whereupon he explained his quaint attire to his astonished hostess by saying that he had two excellent reasons for appearing in such a garb. First, one of his messmates had offered to bet him the sum of five Mexican dollars that he dared not do it; and, second, his only respectable pair of flannel nether garments were in the wash, and he had been unable to borrow others. He added that he was quite certain that his hostess would prefer him to come *sans cérémonie* than that he should not come at all.

The lady, broad-minded and with sons of her own, was amused, and the young officer in night attire enjoyed his afternoon; but somehow the commander happened to hear of it, and George, who was really rather pleased at his own seaman-like ingenuity, was informed that he was a disgrace to the ship. The commander, one of the best of officers, whom we all loved, did not really mean to be severe. Indeed, he enjoyed the joke as much as any one, and I heard him telling the story soon afterwards in the smoking-room amidst shrieks of laughter on the part of the other wardroom officers. But, as the executive officer of the ship, he could not permit such goings-on on the part of the young gentlemen for whose upbringing he was primarily responsible.

There was no doubt that Mr Midshipman Buckle was the commander's *bête noire*, and taking all things into consideration, I hardly wonder at it. George, as I said before, was the wickedest little devil in creation. He was always in hot water, and even when his leave was stopped he used to while away many weary hours by shooting at scantily attired Chinese sampan-men through the gunroom ports with an air-gun or a catapult. It became quite a hobby of his, and his marksmanship was all that could be desired.

II.

We were spending the winter at Hong-Kong, and anybody who knows that most pleasant colony in winter will realise that we were having an excellent time. People fond of games played hockey, football, or golf; while the club habitués devoted themselves to billiards, bridge, or skittles in the American bowling-alley. The ladies' men, or 'poodle-fakers,' as we called them, had their tea-parties, dinner-parties, and dances oftener than was really good for them; while on Sundays there were the usual mixed picnics to neighbouring islands in one of the large steam-launches belonging to one or other of the big firms established in the place.

I remember that I, the junior watch-keeping lieutenant but one, was always trading on some one else's good nature to look out for my 'days on,' while every officer in the ship, the 'snotties' included, had numerous friends ashore. The people of Hong-Kong are nothing if not hospitable, and if one took them at their word and turned up to dinner without being asked, it was generally understood that one took one's suit-case and stayed the night. We were hard put to return their attentions, but did our best by giving concerts and dances on board, and became, I believe, rather a popular ship. At any rate, our entertainments were always well patronised.

St Andrew's Day, 30th November, was celebrated by the usual ball ashore, at which practically every British man and woman in the colony was present. The Scotsmen and pseudo-Scotsmen—there was a great deal of the 'pseudo' about some of them—appeared in kilts. The rest of us were in evening-dress, and we danced reels and generally enjoyed ourselves until the small hours of the morning. Certain members of the Highland fraternity continued their revels until long after the ladies had departed, and I still treasure the recollection of one elderly and portly Sassenach gentleman who was compelled, at three o'clock in the morning, to stand upon his head among the whisky-bottles on the bar counter, there to recite 'Scots wha hae' before he was allowed even so much as a glass of soda-water.

Then came Christmas, with all its usual gaiety; and six days later, on New Year's Eve, we arranged to give a masked ball on board the ship. It was to be a great affair, quite the largest and the most pretentious ball we had yet given, and for days beforehand we were busy preparing for it. There were pot-plants to be borrowed from the Botanical Gardens for decorative purposes; steam-launches to be chartered to assist the ship's boats in bringing off our guests; chairs to be hired for the sitting-out places; and arrangements to be made for supper, light refreshments, programmes, ladies' and gentlemen's cloakrooms, and a hundred and one other things. I verily believe we forgot nothing, and, as one of his Majesty's men-of-war does not carry such articles, we even went so far as to purchase a supply of powder and puffs, lip-salve, two pairs of long-handled hair-brushes, and packets of hair-pins and safety-pins of all colours and sizes. Neither did we forget to hire an *amah*, or Chinese maid, for duty in the ladies' cloakroom.

I did all the secretarial work, and a difficult job it was; for when I had arranged supper for

so many, officers were constantly coming to me to ask if I could manage just one more guest. If it was a man I hummed and hawed before consenting, for dancing ladies are comparatively rare in Hong-Kong, and we already had about three men to every one girl.

It was the commander and the fleet paymaster who really delighted my heart, however, for by dint of paying assiduous calls a few days before the ball, they collected no fewer than fourteen dancing ladies who had not already been invited. Even on the morning of 31st December the commander produced another, for soon after breakfast he bearded me with a note.

'Can you squeeze in another female, Carfax?' he wanted to know.

'Dancing or otherwise, sir?' I asked.

'Dancing,' he said. 'Here's the note. You might send her an invitation. She's a friend of the Stanley-Wetheralls, and has turned up at the last moment. They've been very civil to me, and I should like to oblige 'em.'

I acquiesced at once.

'DEAR CAPTAIN MOSTYN'—the missive ran—'My mother wonders if we could possibly bring another girl to your ball to-night. A cousin who is a very good dancer has just come to stay, and she would, I know, very much like to come. I have said nothing to her, of course, but we should so like to take her to a naval ball. She adores sailors.—Yours very sincerely,

'ENID STANLEY-WETHERALL.

'*P.S.*—Her name is Angela Rathbone, and she is quite young, and very pretty and fascinating.'

Enid was the elder of the two Miss Stanley-Wetheralls, whom I knew slightly. They were both nice girls and good dancers, so I repaired to my cabin, found a crested, printed invitation-card, filled in the name, sent it ashore by special messenger, and so informed Miss Angela Rathbone that the captain and officers of H.M.S. *Warwick* requested the pleasure of her company at a masked ball at 9 P.M. on 31st December. The card also told her that boats would be leaving the landing-place every five minutes between 8.35 and 9.30 P.M., and that ladies and gentlemen were desired to remove their masks at midnight.

Thirty heated bluejackets, spurred on by promises of liquid refreshment, scrubbed the quarter-deck until the teak planking was as white as driven snow. We planed off any knots and irregularities we could find in its surface, wiped it over with hot water and cloths, rubbed it with bottles, and finally powdered it with French chalk and induced the sailors to dance upon it in their socks to the wheezy strains of an accordion to rub it well in. A ship's deck is always trying to perform upon on account of its solidity, but ours, at any rate, was as slippery as ice.

We raised the canvas awning on spars until it was twenty feet off the deck, draped its underside with huge foreign ensigns, and set canvas screens, covered with more bunting, round the sides to keep out the draughts. With planks, biscuit-boxes, and capstan-bars we erected a dais in the stern for the dowagers and non-dancing chaperons; furnished it with sofas, arm-chairs, and carpets from the captain's cabin and wardroom; placed a zareba of pot-plants before it, and flanked the mass of greenery with a brightly polished Maxim on its tripod and a burnished 12-pounder on its field-carriage.

We made a bandstand on the top of the after turret, with its pair of gray-enamelled, burnished-muzzled 6-inch guns pointing mildly to the ceiling. With the assistance of the torpedo lieutenant and his myrmidons we placed coloured electric lights here, there, and everywhere. We gave the final instructions to the bandmaster; arranged the sitting-out places; supervised the supper, refreshment, and smoking arrangements; placed trays of programmes in conspicuous places; chided a Royal Marine corporal of the watch who was discovered pacing heavily up and down our ballroom floor in a pair of hob-nailed ammunition boots; and then, our preparations complete and our collars in a state of pulp, repaired to the wardroom in a condition of partial collapse to snatch a hasty dinner before going to our respective cabins to dress.

(*Continued on page 473.*)

A GIGANTIC WORK COMPLETED.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE MURMAN RAILWAY.

AS the result of a statement made to its Petrograd correspondent by the engineer-in-chief of that—for Russia—highly important artery, the Murman Railway, the Christiania paper, *Tidens Tegn*, has been enabled to publish the truth with regard to the line in question, and the extent to which it is now available for traffic. The following is the gist of the statement.

'The terminus of the Murman Railway,' began M. Gorjatchkovski, 'is not, as has been so frequently stated, either Kola or Alexandrowsk, but quite another spot on the same fjord, situated half-way between these two places. In the meantime, at least, it is known as Romanov.* It stands on the shore of ice-free water deep enough for the largest vessels. The first thing

* The name has now, it is reported, been changed to Murman.

we did was to lay out a regular plan for the town, with harbour lines and quays. Part of the town is already built, and more than half of the large quays have been completed and brought into use.

'The foundation-stone of the new town was laid by the then Minister of Communications, M. Trepov, in 1915. The climate there is not so severe as might be imagined. We have never had more than 22° of cold; and, owing to the proximity of the sea, we have even in the middle of winter periods of mild weather. The situation of the town is a sheltered one, and it is protected by ridges on both sides of the fjord. The railway, which connects Petrograd with the new town, may be divided into four sections. The first portion, from the capital to Petrosavodsk, on Lake Onega, already existed before the war. The remainder, which is of completely new construction, has a length of nine hundred and eighty-seven versts, or about six hundred and sixty miles. The section Petrosavodsk to Soroka is about two hundred and forty miles long. It was begun in March 1915, and was completed in December of the same year. The next section, from Soroka to Kandalax, passes along the shores of the White Sea, and has offered the greatest difficulties. It is nearly two hundred and fifty miles long, was begun in September 1915, and finished in November 1916. The most northern section is over one hundred and seventy miles long, and was constructed between June 1915 and April 1916.

'The first through-train to Petrograd ran at the end of November 1916. Traffic is now conducted over the whole length of the line, but only for military purposes; for ordinary traffic it will not be opened until after the war.

'On the Murman Railway the Russian broad gauge has been adopted, and the line is now completely finished in so far as the permanent way is concerned. It is anticipated that in summer a good many repairs will be required at different points, but the traffic can nevertheless be carried on without interruption. It thus appears that between March 1915 and November 1916 a line has been constructed which is nearly twice the length of that between London and Berwick. It is to be remembered, also, that the work has not been carried out under easy conditions. The climate is somewhat severe, and the line runs through desolate tracts without roads of any kind or other means of communication. Everything that we required we had to convey to the spot ourselves.

'The fact that the country is comparatively flat was of some advantage; even in the northern section, which is ridgy and recalls north Finmarken, we have been able to carry the railway along the bottom of the valleys. On the other hand, the vast tracts of bog often caused great difficulties. Under normal conditions the permanent way is built first, and then the rails are laid upon it; but, on account of the circumstances, we were obliged to lay the rails first! That is to say, we had to lay a field-railway along the future line in order to bring forward what we required—provisions, material, machinery, &c. The cold was of considerable assistance to us. We often laid the rails merely on the frozen earth; for months we had railway-lines on the ice of rivers and lakes; in the morasses we laid them on logs of wood, which were easily obtained in the forest districts. Never before, probably, have such huge quantities of material been transported by such provisional means.

'We began, of course, at the greatest possible number of places at the same time. From the south we got what our own industries could provide; along the whole of the White Sea we were in connection with Britain and America during the six summer months; while in the north we were in touch with the outer world throughout the entire year.

'The most important, and perhaps the most difficult, question was that of labour. In all, seventy thousand men have been constantly employed, and literally everything which they required had to be brought from Russia or from abroad. Most of the men were Russian workmen; but in addition there were people from our Asiatic possessions, who performed their military service as labourers. There were also thirty thousand German and Austrian prisoners, and nine thousand Chinese.

'We endeavoured to accommodate the various nationalities in accordance with the habits and customs of each. The Chinese, for instance, received all their requirements from China. It was awkward for the Mohammedans, who could not eat their principal meal until after sundown. By an unlucky chance they reached the Murman coast at the time of the midnight sun, and they suffered the most frightful religious qualms.

'From Siberia there were brought twenty thousand head of cattle; vast quantities of salted beef and pork came from America; while eight thousand horses were employed.

'We had a little scurvy, but not more than five hundred cases in all. Our own Russian people seemed assured that they were taking part in a great patriotic undertaking, and even the prisoners carried out their share of the work well. They were selected, powerful men, and they received exactly the same food and treatment as our own. They were paid in accordance with what they did, as it was necessary to get the line finished at any price. A prisoner of war could make as much as four roubles a day, in addition to receiving everything else free.

'The importance of the Murman Railway as regards imports to Russia during the war is so apparent that it would be superfluous to dilate upon it. The question as to whether it will be

of value in the future under peaceful conditions is one of no small interest. As to this, in my opinion,' said M. Gorjatchkovski, 'there can be no doubt whatever. The line passes through districts which possess many possibilities. There are vast forests of ancient growth, and waterfalls which can supply the power for exploiting them. For the conveyance inland of fish, too, the line will be of great assistance; while most important of all will be the existence of a first-class harbour for the export of Siberian butter.

'A connecting line with the Siberian railway system has already been planned, and is to be commenced next year. The route from Siberia to the new port is one hundred and ninety miles shorter than to Libau, while the voyage by steamer to New York occupies twenty-four hours less than the voyage from Libau. The new railway thus effects a real saving in distance.'

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXIX.—IN WHICH HERMIONE MAKES A FATEFUL DECISION.

WHEN Mrs Trapes was gone, Hermione stood a long time to look at herself in her little mirror, viewing and examining each feature of her lovely, intent face more earnestly than she had ever done before; and sometimes she smiled and sometimes she frowned, and all her thought was, 'Shall I make him happy, I wonder? Can I be all he wants—all he thinks I am?'

So, after some while, she combed and brushed out her glorious hair, shyly glad because of its length and splendour; and, having crowned her shapely head with it, viewed the effect with cold, hypercritical eyes.

'Can I, oh, can I, ever be all he wants—all he thinks I am?'

And now she proceeded to dress. The holey stockings were replaced by others that had seen less service, the worn frills and laces were changed for others less threadbare; which done, Hermione, with many supple twists, wriggled dexterously into her best dress, pausing now and then to sigh mournfully and grieve over its many deficiencies and shortcomings, defects which only feminine eyes, so coldly critical, might hope to behold.

Scarcely was all this accomplished when she heard a soft knock at the outer door, and at the sound her heart leapt, she flushed and paled, and stood a while striving to stay the quick, heavy throbbing within her bosom; then breathlessly she hastened along the passage, and, opening the door with trembling hands, beheld Bud M'Ginnis.

While she yet stared dumb and amazed, he entered, and, closing the door, leaned his broad back against it. 'Goin' away, Hermy?' he inquired softly, looking her over with his slow gaze.

'Yes.'

'Goin' far, Hermy?'

'I don't know.'

'Goin'—alone, Hermy?'

'Why are you here? What do you want?'

'T' save ye from—hell!' he answered, his voice rising loud and harsh on the last word. 'Oh, I know,' he went on fiercely—'I know why you 're all dolled up in your best. I know as you mean t' go away to-night with—him. But you ain't goin', girl—you ain't.'

'To-night,' she said gently, 'is my wedding-night.'

M'Ginnis lifted a hand and wrenched at the silken neckerchief he wore, as though it choked him. 'No!' he cried, 'you ain't a-goin' t' get no weddin', Hermy. He don't mean t' give ye a square deal. He 's foolin' ye—foolin' ye, girl! Oh,' said he through shut teeth, 'ye thought I was safe out o' the way, I guess. You ought t' known better. Th' p'lice couldn't hold me; they never will. Anyway, I 've kept tabs on ye—I know as you 've been meetin' him—in a wood. I know '—here M'Ginnis seemed to choke again—'I know of you an' him—kissin' an' cuddlin'—oh, I've kept tabs on ye.'

'Yes,' she said gently, 'I saw your spy at work.'

'But ye can't deny it. Ye don't deny it! Say, what kind o' girl are you?'

'The kind that doesn't fear men like you.'

'But ye can't deny meetin' him,' he repeated, his hoarse voice quivering; 'you don't deny—kissin' him—in a wood! Only deny it, Hermy; only say you didn't, an' I 'll choke th' life out of any guy as says you did—only deny it, Hermy.'

'But I don't want to deny it. If your spy had ears he can tell you that we are going to be married. Now go.'

Once more M'Ginnis reached up to his throat and wrenched off the neckerchief altogether. 'Married!' he cried; 'an' t' him? He 's foolin' ye, Hermy; by God, he is! Girl, I 'm tellin' ye straight and true, he 'll never marry ye. His kind don't marry Tenth Av'ner girls—Nooport an' Fifth Av'ner 's a good way from Hell's Kitchen an' Tenth Av'ner, an' they can't never come t'gether, I reckon.'

'Ah!' sighed she, falling back a step, 'what do you mean?'

'Why, I mean,' said M'Ginnis, twisting the neckerchief in his powerful hands much as if it had been the neck of some enemy—'I mean as this guy as comes here bluffin' about bein' down an' out, this guy as plays at sellin' pea-nuts, is—Geoffrey Ravenslee the millionaire.'

'But—he is—Arthur's friend!'

'Friend—nothin',' said he, wringing and wrenching at the neckerchief. 'I guess you ain't found out how th' kid an' him came t' meet, eh? Well, I'll tell ye—listen! Your brother broke into this millionaire's swell house through the winder, an' this millionaire guy caught him.'

'Oh,' said she, smiling in bitter scorn, 'what a clumsy liar you are, Bud M'Ginnis!'

'No,' he cried eagerly; 'no, I ain't tellin' ye no lies—it's God's own truth I'm givin' ye.'

'No, you're just a liar, Bud M'Ginnis!' and she would have turned from him, but his savage grip stayed her.

'A liar, am I?' he cried. 'Why, then, you're sister to a crook, see! Your brother's a thief—a crook! You ain't got much t' be s' proud over.'

'Let me go!'

'Listen! Your brother got into this guy's house t' steal, an' this millionaire guy caught him—in the act! An' havin' nothin' better t' do, he makes young Spike bring him down here—just t' see th' kind o' folks as lives in Hell's Kitchen—see? Then he meets you—you look kind o' good t' him, so he says t' th' kid, "Look here," he says, "you help me game along with yer sister, and we'll call it quits."'

Breaking from his hold, Hermione entered the little parlour, and, sinking down beside the table, leaned there, hiding her face, while M'Ginnis, leaning in the doorway, watched her, his strong hands twisting and wrenching at the neckerchief.

'Ah, leave me now,' she pleaded; 'you've done enough, so—go now—go!'

'Oh, I'll go. I come here t' put ye wise—an' I have! You're on to it all now, I guess. Nooport an' Fifth Av'ner's a good way from Hell's Kitchen an' Tenth Av'ner, an' they can't never come t'gether, I guess; there's sure some difference between this swell guy with all his millions an' a Tenth Av'ner girl as is a—thief's sister.'

Slowly Hermione lifted her head and looked up at him, and M'Ginnis saw that in her face which struck him mute; the neckerchief fell from his nerveless fingers and lay there all unheeded.

'Hermione,' he muttered, 'I—girl, are ye—sick?'

'Go,' she whispered—'go!'

And, turning about, M'Ginnis stumbled out of the place and left her alone. For a long time she sat there motionless and crouched above the table, staring blindly before her, and in her eyes an agony beyond tears, heedless of the flight of time, conscious only of a pain sharper than flesh can know.

Suddenly a key was thrust in the lock of the outer door, footsteps sounded along the passage, accompanied by a merry whistling, and Spike appeared. 'Hello, Hermy, ain't tea ready yet?' he inquired, tossing aside his straw hat and opening a newspaper he carried. 'Say, the Giants are sure playin' great ball this season. What! are ye asleep?'

'No, dear!'

'Why, Hermy,' he exclaimed, dropping the paper and clasping an arm about her—'oh, Hermy—what is it?'

'Oh boy—dear, dear boy—you didn't, did you?' she cried feverishly. 'You are a little wild—sometimes, dear, just a little; but you are good—and honourable, aren't you?'

'Why, yes, Hermy, I—I try t' be,' he answered uneasily; 'but I don't know what you mean.'

'You're not a thief, are you? You're not a burglar? You never broke into any one's house? I know you didn't, but tell me you didn't—tell me you didn't!'

'No—no, 'course not,' stammered Spike, and, averting his head, tried to draw away; but she clung to him all the closer.

'Boy—boy dear,' she whispered breathlessly—'oh boy, look at me!'

But seeing he kept his face still turned from her, she set a hand to his cheek and very gently forced him to meet her look. For a long moment she gazed thus—saw how his eyes quailed, saw how his cheek blanched, and, as he cowered away, she rose slowly to her feet, and into her look came a growing horror; beholding which, Spike covered his face and shrank away from her.

'Oh boy'—her voice had sunk to a whisper now—'oh boy—say you didn't!'

'Hermy—I—can't!'

'Can't?'

'It's—it's all—true. Yes, I did! Oh Hermy, forgive me.'

'Tell me!'

'Oh, forgive me, Hermy! forgive me!' he cried, reaching out and trying to catch her hand. 'Yes, I'll tell ye. I—I got in—through th' winder, an' Geoff caught me. But he let me go again—he said he 'd never tell nobody if—— Ah, don't look at me like that!'

'If—what?'

'If I'd—bring him back here with me. Hermy, don't! Your eyes hurt me—don't look at me that way.'

'So it—is—all—true!'

'Oh, forgive me! forgive me!' he pleaded, throwing himself on his knees before her, and writhing in the anguish of remorse. 'They doped me, Hermy. I didn't know what I was doin'; they didn't give me no time t' think. Oh, forgive me, Hermy! Geoff forgave me, an' you must—oh, God, you must, Hermy!' Again he sought to reach her hand, but now it was she who shrank away.

'I loved you so! I—loved you so!' she said dully.

'Hermy, he cried, catching hold of her dress, 'forgive me—just this once, for God's sake! I ain't got nobody in the world but you. Forgive

me!' And now his pleading was broken by fierce sobs, and he sought to hide his tear-stained face in the folds of her dress, but she drew it from him, shrinking away almost as if she feared him.

'A thief!' she whispered. 'Oh God—my brother a thief! I don't seem—able to—think. Go away—go away; I—must be—alone!'

'Hermy dear, I swear—oh, I swear I 'll——

'Go away!'

'Oh Hermy, I didn't think you 'd ever—turn away—from me!'

'Go away!'

'Oh Hermy—won't you listen?'

'I can't! Not now. Go away.'

Sobbing, the boy got to his feet, and, taking his hat, crossed slow-footed to the door; there he paused to look back at her, but her staring eyes gazed through him, and, turning hopelessly away, he brushed his sleeve across his cheek, and treading slowly and heavily along the passage, was gone.

Dry-eyed, she stood a while, then sank again beside the table, and crouched there with face bowed between outstretched arms, and hands tight clenched.

Evening began to fall, but still she sat huddled there, motionless, and uttering no sound, and still her eyes were tearless. At last she stirred, conscious of a quick, firm step near by, and, thrilling to that sound, rose and stood with her back to the fading light as Ravenslee entered.

'Dear,' said he, tender and eager, 'I found the door open; did you leave it for me? Why, Hermione—oh, my love, what is it?' and he would have caught her to him, but she held him away, and questioned him, quick-breathing.

'You are—Geoffrey Ravenslee—the millionaire—aren't you?'

'Why—er—I—I 'm afraid I am,' he stammered. 'I 'm sorry you found it out so soon, dearest; I wanted to tell you after we'——

'Oh, why didn't you tell me before—why didn't you? No; please wait! You—you caught my—brother, didn't you?' she went on breathlessly. 'He had broken in—was burgling your house, wasn't he—wasn't he?'

'How in the world'—— began Ravenslee, flinching. 'Who told'——

'He broke into your house to—steal, didn't he—didn't he?'

'But, good heavens—that was all forgotten and done with long ago! They 'd made the poor chap drunk; he didn't know what he was doing. It 's all forgotten long ago! Dear heart, why are you so pale? God, Hermione, nothing can alter our love?'

'No, nothing can alter our love,' she repeated in the same dull tones; 'oh, no, nothing can ever alter that. Even though you deceived me, I shall always love you. I can't help it. And just because I do love you so, and because I am a thief's sister, I—oh, I can never be your wife—I couldn't, could I?'

'By God, Hermione, but you shall!' As he spoke he caught her in his arms—passionate arms that drew and held her close. Very still and unresisting she lay in his embrace, uttering no word; and, stooping, he kissed her fiercely—her lips, her eyes, her white throat, her hair; and, silent still, she yielded herself to his caresses.

'You are mine, Hermione—mine always and for ever! You are the one woman I long for—the wife nature intended for me! You are mine, Hermione!'

Very softly she answered, her eyes closed, 'I felt at the first there was a gulf dividing us—and now—this gulf is wider—so wide, it can never be crossed by either of us. Your world is not my world after all; you are Geoffrey Ravenslee, and I am only—what I am. Newport and Fifth Avenue are a long way from Hell's Kitchen and Tenth Avenue, and they can never—never come together. And I—am a thief's sister, so please, please loose me! Oh have mercy, and let me go!'

His arms fell from her, and, shivering, she sank beside the table, and the pale agony of her face smote him.

'But you love me, Hermione?' he pleaded.

'If I had only known,' she sighed, 'I might not have learned to love you—quite so much! If I had only known!' Her voice was soft and low, her blue eyes wide and tearless, and, because of this, he trembled.

'Hermione,' said he gently, 'all this week I have been planning for you and Arthur—I have been dreaming of our life together, yours and mine, a life so big, so wonderful, so full of happiness that I trembled sometimes, dreading it was only a dream. Dear, the gates of our paradise are open; will you shut me out? Must I go back to my loneliness?'

'I shall be lonely too,' she murmured brokenly; 'but better—oh, far better—loneliness than that some day'—— She paused, her lips quivering.

'Some day, Hermione?'

'You should find that you had married not only a scrub-woman, but—the sister of a—thief!' Suddenly she sprang to her feet, her clinging arms held him to her bosom, and, drawing down his head, she pressed her mouth to his; and, holding him thus, she spoke, her voice low and quick and passionate. 'Oh my love, my love! I do love you with every thought, with every part of me—so much, so very much, that my heart is breaking, I think. But, dearest, my love is such that I would be everything fair and beautiful for you, everything proud and good and noble for you, if I could. But I am only Hermy Chesterton, a Tenth Avenue girl, and—my brother—— So I 'm going to send you away back to your own world, back to your

own kind, because—because I do love you so! Ah, God, never doubt my love, but—you must go.'

'Never, Hermione—never!'

'You must! You will, I know, because your love is a big, generous love; because you are chivalrous and strong and gentle; because I beg and implore you, if you have any pity for me—go!'

'But why? Why?'

'Oh, must I tell you that—can't you understand?'

'Why must I go, Hermione?'

'Because,' she murmured, her yearning arms close about him, her face close hidden against his breast, 'because I'll never—marry you—now; but I love you—love you so much that I'm afraid—ah! not of you. So I must be alone—quite alone to fight my battle. And now—now that I've shown you all my heart, told you all my weakness, you'll go for my sake—just for my sake—won't you?'

'Yes—I'll—go!' he answered slowly.

'Away from here—to-night?'

'Yes,' he answered hoarsely—'yes!'

Then Hermione fell suddenly before him on her knees, and, before he could stay her, had caught his hands, kissing them, wetting them with her tears, and pressing them passionately to her bosom. 'I knew,' she cried—'I knew that you were strong and gentle and—good. Good-bye—oh, my love, good-bye!'

'Hermione,' said he, kissing her bowed head—'oh, my Hermione, I love you with a love that will die only when I do. I want you, and I'll never lose hope of winning you—some day, never give up my determination to marry you—never, so help me God!' Then swiftly he turned away, but, reaching the door, stooped and picked up M'Ginnis's neckerchief, and, recognising it, crumpled it in fierce hand. So, with it clenched in griping fingers, he hurried away, and left her there upon her knees.

(*Continued on page 469.*)

THE WINES OF SPAIN.

By Bart Kennedy.

IF you are to get them at their best, you must drink them on the spot. Travel doesn't agree with them. They sulk and lose their delightful flavour. I have tasted Rioja in London, and I am bound to say that it is by no means so good as the Rioja in Spain. It is dearer, to be sure; but the dearest wine is by no means the best wine. The best red wine in the world is not for the rich man. It is for the peasant who makes it. If the rich man wants it, he must journey to the place of its birth. For no magic of the power of gold will transport it to his cellars. Travelling kills the delicacy of its flavour.

The best red wine that I have ever tasted I got for a penny a pint. It was full, and strong, and soft, and delicious. And at the same time its flavour was as clean as the flavour of spring water. A noble wine at a penny a pint! A stout old Spanish woman drew it for me from a black pigskin. And this wine had a name as fine and as glorious as itself. It was called Argando. You couldn't have got this wine in London for a sovereign—or even a hundred sovereigns—a pint. For if imported it would have to be fortified, and every one knows what the fortifying of red wine means. In this sense, fortification might well be likened to a sword that is double of edge. You get the wine, but you don't get the flavour.

You will look in vain on the map for the place where I got this wine. And still it is in Spain as indubitably as is Madrid. It is a little village in the province of Guadalajara, of the name of Torija. Three hundred people live in it, and there is in it the ruins of a splendid Moorish castle. Tourists don't get there, for it is saddled with none of the conveniences of civilisation. It is now even as it was centuries ago. The traveller would have to accommodate himself to the medieval manner and atmosphere. But—and it is a very big but on the right side—he would have the Argando.

The *posada* (inn) where I got this wine was little, and dark, and weird of aspect. It had in it but one feeble oil-lamp. Night was just closing in when I got there, after a tramp of twenty miles on a wet, gloomy day.

But the Argando changed everything. After a couple of pints of it, I began to see the world from a standpoint of light and cheer. The interior of the little *posada* lost its weirdness of aspect. The light of the oil-lamp took on a big glow of effulgence. O magical Argando! How you cheered me after that hard day's tramp through the gloom and the rain! It would be worth going forth again to far Torija to quaff you once more!

Of course, I am not going so far as to say that all the wines I encountered in Spain were as this Argando. But in life one must take the rough with the smooth. To have everything one's way would mean that one would have no enjoyment in life.

Some of the wines I met with in Spain were as rough as the edge of a rusty saw, and how the throats of the natives negotiated them puzzles me still. There was a wine in Castile that had the taste of particularly awful medicine. That it was wine was clear, for it came from the grape.

But the soil that the grape came from was soil that had in it rasping and acrid elements. The wine was said to be very healthful, but all that I can say was that a little of it went a long way—as far as I was concerned. I was pleased indeed when I got from out the radius of that fearsome wine.

I say radius, for as I went along, of course, the flavour of the wine was always changing. The end of a day's march meant the encountering of another kind of wine. Each day had its particular wine.

Perhaps on the whole I liked best the wines on the great plain in the province of Aragon. But I must confess that the Argando—the best wine of them all—belonged to the province of Castile.

In Catalonia the wines were rough, but they had a good flavour, and they had much power in them. Near Lerida I struck a wine of a particularly exalting character. After I had armed myself with a pint or so of it, I felt that I could perform deeds of valour. Though rough, it was noble and big. It was a wine with teeth in it; but, for all that, it was not unpleasant to negotiate. And, as I have suggested, after you had negotiated it, it made you feel that you were a person difficult to conquer. It was what might be described as a good, big, fighting wine.

The wines of the south of Spain were utterly different from the wines of the north. They were usually white, and had a kind of Sherry flavour. The wine that the people of Granada drank I did not care for very much. Its flavour was not defined enough. But I liked the Valdepeñas. It was smooth and well-defined of flavour, though not very strong. Its colour was near to the colour of Barsac. In character, however, it was in no way allied to it. There was no hint of sweetness, but it had a peculiarly nutty after-taste.

In Toledo I made the acquaintance of a wine that had the curious redness of colour characteristic of Hungarian claret. Its flavour was delicious, but it was very thin. It would have taken a good deal of it to impel one to the doing of deeds of valour. It was at the opposite pole from the big, rough, fighting wine that I got near Lerida, in Catalonia. Still it was well worth sampling, even though it was a wine eminently fitted for quiet, respectable persons. I remember it with interest as a wine at once delightful and safe. Its name I forget.

It must be said that the fact of wine being kept in a skin gave to it the suggestion of a certain flavour because of that. But the suggestion was very slight. One soon got used to it. And, in my view, the slight suggestion of this flavour, outside the wine, was more than made up for by a general roundness of flavour such as the wine would not have were it kept in bottles. My belief is that red wine, at least, is at its best when kept in a cask or in a skin. It retains its individuality better.

These fine and generous and wholesome wines of Spain! I will always remember them—from the white, or, rather, light-yellow, wines of Andalusia to the very dark-red wines of Catalonia. Going along, and sampling them, as they came after the march of the day, was most soothing and satisfying. To get them here in England would be impossible—impossible even though I possessed the wealth that I neither possess nor care to possess. To get them, I should have to go again and wander through delightful Spain. I should have to go again amongst the peasants.

Yes, again I would like to wander into Torija—Torija, the little place where lives the glorious Argando.

THE FAIR ROMAINE.

By B. Paul Neuman.

I.

ARTHUR ROMAINE had from his boyhood been a trouble and a puzzle to his family, or at any rate to his father. His physique had always been excellent, and he was quite good-looking, though Mr Romaine grumbled at his flaxen hair.

'It's the dark Romaines,' he said, 'that make money and do things. The fair ones—thank God, there aren't many of them!—are never any good. The eldest, too!' he would add, with a groan.

He himself was a dark Romaine, or, rather, had been, for his black hair was pretty well snowed under. True to his version of the Romaine tradition, he had made money; indeed, under him the family fortunes, prosperous for many generations, had reached their highest point so far. Oak Mount, his Wimbledon house, was a really imposing place, designed by a big architect, put up by a big builder, and furnished regardless of expense. Here he lived in great style, dispensing a wide but discriminating hospitality, and fulfilling, as he understood them, all the obligations of *noblesse oblige*.

To this successful, masterful man Arthur had been a heavy cross, though the trouble developed slowly. At his preparatory school the boy's reports were very satisfactory, though a certain slackness in games was noted and deplored. It

was at the public school that the real difficulties began.

'Your boy's all right in the big things, Mr Romaine,' said his house master. 'He's as straight as a dart, his work's not at all bad, and I don't believe he's ever had an evil thought. But he's so confoundedly cantankerous. It really seems as if he laid himself out to be unpopular. He calls himself a Radical Socialist, and a free churchman—so free that the other boys call him an atheist—a Home Ruler, and a Suffragist. Whatever the others abhor he stands up for, and the consequence is he has a pretty bad time. He's got plenty of pluck—I will say that for him; but he really brings his troubles upon himself. Then his attitude towards games is simply lamentable. He doesn't seem to know the meaning of *esprit de corps*. He could have been the slow bowler of the eleven if he would have taken the trouble—he's got a lovely action, and a faster ball that wants a rare lot of watching—but he prefers to mess about with his newspapers and magazines and reviews.'

'I'll have a straight talk to him,' said Mr Romaine; and he kept his word, and lost his temper, so stoutly did Arthur hold his own.

'Games are all very well,' said the young philosopher, 'but when they're made a fetish of, you can't help getting fed up with them. Half the boys and more than half the masters can't talk about anything else. To hear them, you'd think Lord's was the Holy of Holies.'

'When you go to Rome, you must do as the Romans do,' answered Mr Romaine. 'There's a time for everything, and at your age it's natural and right to be keen on games. The trouble with you is that you won't take trouble. It's easier to read those vile Radical rags, and stuff your vacant mind with their ribald rubbish. No wonder the boys send you to Coventry. I meant you to go to Oxford, but I tell you quite plainly that there's no Oxford for you unless you give me your word that you'll put aside all this nonsense, and behave like any other decent young Englishman of the upper classes.'

'I haven't the least wish to go to Oxford,' Arthur replied, in his eager, impulsive way that always annoyed his father, whose own manner was studiously deliberate and dignified. 'I'd ever so much rather take up stinks in London.'

Mr Romaine was disconcerted. He had kept the Oxford threat as his trump card, and to find it treated so cavalierly was an unpleasant surprise. He began to bluster—a rare occurrence, to do him justice.

'You really are a hopeless young fool,' he said angrily. 'What use would what you call stinks be in a profession like ours? The 'varsity polish might be a real asset; but I suppose we shall have to do without that. As soon as you leave school you shall come to the house in Mowbray Street. I'm not very sanguine about it, but, after all, you *are* the eldest son, and you shall have your chance.'

The 'profession' of which he spoke was that of a picture-dealer, and the big shop in Mowbray Street had been famous under three generations of Romaines, all of them astute, suave, dignified, and dark of hue. The 'house'—Mr Romaine never spoke or even thought of it as a shop—was to him what, according to his graceless son, Lord's was to the masters and the schoolboys—a holy place. Arthur's first suggestion was a shock; his second was an outrage.

'Do you know, father,' he said, looking that stately gentleman full in the face, 'I think I'd much rather take up something quite different. I'm sure I should never be happy spending my life in trying to get people to buy, for much more than they're worth, a lot of luxuries which they could just as well do without.'

At this speech, delivered with all the fervent solemnity of callous youth, the colour rose to Mr Romaine's cheeks; for the moment his dignity deserted him, and he fairly shouted, 'Go out of the room, you impertinent young cub! No—not another word, or I'll give you the thrashing you ought to have had, long ago, at school. And remember—the day after you leave school, you start at the house in Mowbray Street.'

II.

Mr Romaine had his way, and—after an interval of six months or so—Arthur had his. As soon as he left school, he was brought into the Mowbray Street 'house.' In some ways he surprised and pleased his father. He was extremely orderly, furiously energetic, and he showed a remarkable capacity for detail-work. This fair beginning, however, was soon clouded. When once he had fairly found his feet, he startled and dismayed his superiors by a series of the most unheard-of, revolutionary proposals, which he supported with a fluency and an ingenuity that drove them to distraction. This was bad enough; but when his conscience asserted itself, and he declared that some of the time-honoured practices of the firm were clear breaches of morality, and that it was quite impossible for him to adopt them, Mr Romaine thought it time to interfere.

'You have,' he told his son, 'the tongue and the brains of a tub-thumper, and I believe that's about the only business you'll ever make a living at. You won't do for the house, that's clear. Dick's three years younger than you, but he'll have your birthright—thank God, he's the right colour! They tell me he's just about as popular at school as you were the opposite, and that's saying a good deal.'

'Dick's jolly fine,' said his brother. 'He'll be a favourite wherever he goes.'

He spoke so heartily that his father was touched. 'You've got your good points too,' he said, 'if only you weren't so obstinate and so

ridiculously opinionated. Now what is it you want to do?'

'I'd like to work at science for a bit, and then try to do something practical with it.'

'Well,' said his father, 'young fools that won't learn in any other way must learn by experience, so you shall have your fling. But mark my words — you'll be another Uncle Charles.'

'Is he a fair Romaine?' asked Arthur, who had never seen Uncle Charles, but had occasionally heard him spoken of, always depreciatingly.

'No; I'm glad to say he isn't a Romaine at all. He's a relative of your mother's, and I'm really afraid you're a bit like him. He had a good business at one time—dyes, or something of that sort, and he'd always got a stock of wonderful ideas. He's been losing money as long as I've known him, and it's a wonder he's out of the workhouse—if he is. He's by way of being scientific too, now I come to think of it. He might really know something about where to go. I haven't seen the old man for years. He took offence in some absurd way. I'll go and see him. It'll be an excuse for breaking the ice.'

A few days afterwards, Mr Romaine returned to the subject at dinner. 'Arthur,' he said, 'I saw Uncle Charles to-day. I told him about you, and he seemed absurdly pleased at your showing a fancy for science. He wants you to go and see him. I've got his address—somewhere Regent's Park way. He says University College, Gower Street, is your place, and he has written a note to a friend of his, who is professor of physics, I think it is. He says that if you take it down with you and tell him what you want to do, you'll get the best advice in London.'

'Thank you, father,' said Arthur. 'I'll take it to-morrow.'

'Uncle Charles!' exclaimed Mrs Romaine. 'You don't mean to say he's buried the hatchet?'

'I didn't give him time to think about it. I started about Arthur at once, and as soon as he heard the word "science" he pricked up his ears, and in two or three minutes he was as keen as a boy.'

'How's his business getting on?'

'I didn't ask; but the look of the place was enough. It's big but ramshackle, and there's precious little doing. Under-staffed, under-manned, under-financed, I should say. But the old man was in high spirits. He thinks he's found out some of the German secrets, and he's going to make a huge fortune—after he's in the workhouse, I expect.'

III.

For three years Arthur worked hard at the college, specialising in physics and chemistry. Unfortunately, he developed a hypersensitive conscience with regard to examinations, declaring that competitive distinctions pandered to the worst vices of modern civilisation. On this ground he refused to try for class prizes or for honours in the university examinations. After a good many heart-searchings, he consented to sit for the pass degree, and took his B.Sc. with consummate ease. His father, of course, was intensely annoyed by his refusal to seek honours, but was a little comforted by hearing, through Uncle Charles, that at the college Arthur was considered one of the most brilliant students of his standing. Uncle Charles himself was delighted with what he called 'the great renunciation.' In his eyes the boy could do nothing wrong. The old gentleman, a childless widower, lived in a small house at the foot of Primrose Hill. Here Arthur was a constant visitor, and the two were the best of friends.

Just as Arthur finished his course at Gower Street, Uncle Charles fell ill, and passed away, cheered and sustained by the thought that his own forecast of the issue had been more correct than the doctor's. And when his will was discovered—in the receiver of a superannuated air-pump—it was found that all his property, including the dye-works at Shadwell, was left to his dear great-nephew, Arthur Romaine.

At first Mr Romaine was inclined to be facetious over the gift; but when it appeared that, apart from the Shadwell premises, the estate would realise at least ten thousand pounds, he changed his tone, went down to inspect the dye-works, and then issued his instructions.

'You're an exceedingly lucky young man,' he said, 'and I hope you appreciate your good fortune. I've been over those dye-works. They're practically moribund, but the site's valuable. Shut down the works at once, and sell the land. It'll bring in a very tidy sum.'

By this time Arthur was well over twenty-one, and even his father admitted that, but for his unfortunate hair and complexion, he would have been an uncommonly good-looking young fellow.

He hardly waited for his father to finish. 'Oh no,' he answered, 'I sha'n't do that. I couldn't throw all the work-people out. Besides, I feel sure that with some new plant I shall soon be able to make it a paying concern.'

'Why, you're as bad as the old man!' exclaimed Mr Romaine angrily. 'But if you choose to throw away as fine a chance as a boy ever had, mind you don't come to me for another start.'

'There'll be no need for that,' replied Arthur cheerfully. 'Uncle Charles was fine on the scientific side, but he'd no commercial instincts.'

'And you're fine on both sides, I suppose?'

'Passable, I hope,' Arthur returned, with a confident smile.

'If I did my duty, I should get you certified,' said his father, walking to the door. 'Any number of men would do it.'

This was meant to be a Parthian shaft, but Arthur just had time to answer it. 'Not when

we 've reformed the Lunacy Laws,' he called after the retreating figure.

IV.

When Arthur had been some three months at Shadwell, he announced his intention of leaving home and going to live nearer his business. By this time his face and manner had begun to show signs of hard work and anxiety. Shadwell had become a family joke, and his father's sarcastic inquiries tried his temper and sometimes provoked him to reprisals, of which he afterwards felt heartily ashamed. Mr Romaine strongly disapproved of the move, but he was too proud to own, what he felt to be the truth, that it was largely his own doing, and he had learned to respect the strength of his son's will, or rather, as he put it, to deplore his obstinacy.

Six months passed, with only a rare visit to Wimbledon, and an occasional letter or card. Then, one Sunday afternoon in May, the young man appeared, looking unusually smart, and radiantly happy. His shabby clothes had long been a joke against him, and Dick greeted him with an admiring scrutiny of his lounge suit.

'Is this the dye,' he asked—'the baffling, blue serge secret, wrung from the Shadwell vats by the Wimbledon B.Sc.? If the cut and fit were as good as the colour'——

'The things might be worn by a blood in the Sixth.' Arthur finished the sentence with perfect good humour.

'Well, how 's the business?' his father asked.

'Oh, hard work, and slow work; but I think we 're turning the corner.'

'Ah!' said his father, 'some people spend their lives turning the corner, and never get into the next street. What are you grinning at?'

'It 's such a glorious day, and things are so jolly,' answered Arthur, leaning back in his chair, with a broad and happy smile.

'I 'm glad you find them so,' said Mr Romaine, looking hard at him; 'but you might be a little more specific.'

'Well, I 'm introducing the co-operative system'——

'Good heavens! More madness!' ejaculated his father, with a groan.

'And I 'm going to get married.' A dye of a very becoming colour tinged Arthur's cheeks as he spoke.

'Married!' cried the family, with a rich variety of tone and expression.

'Who is the young lady, Arthur?' asked Mrs Romaine eagerly. 'Don't keep us on tenter-hooks, there 's a good boy.'

'Kitty Fairbanks, I say,' Dick interposed. 'I 've seen you, myself, making eyes at each other.'

Doris, aged fourteen, shook her head. 'No,' she said; 'she 's too frivolous.'

'Be quiet, children!' said Mrs Romaine. 'Now, Arthur.'

'The young woman'—— Arthur began.

'Oh Lord!' exclaimed Dick.

Mr Romaine stood up, his face tragic, his voice hollow. 'Arthur,' he said, 'come into my room, and tell me about it. Now then, who is she?' he demanded, as soon as they were alone. 'What is her name, first?'

'Her name is Sara Bolton.'

Just the faintest shake of the head was Mr Romaine's receipt for this piece of information. 'And what is her father?'

'She has none.'

'Her mother, then—what is her position? How does she live?'

'She is a most admirable woman,' said Arthur enthusiastically.

'What does she *do?*' thundered his father, losing hold of the reins for a moment. 'Does she keep a car, or does she take in washing?'

'Neither the one nor the other. She is caretaker at a Wesleyan chapel near the works.'

'And the young woman—it is your own expression—does she also scrub the floors?'

'No,' answered Arthur, still provokingly good-tempered. 'She has been attending on a sick lady. She loves nursing.'

'I hope she makes a speciality of mental cases,' said Mr Romaine, with a rather ghastly attempt at polite sarcasm. Then, before Arthur could say another word, he broke out, 'Now, look here. I 've had enough of this fooling. You 've been a vexation, a worry, and a disappointment from the first. I 've put up with what no other father would have tolerated for a moment. This is the end of the chapter, and, if you 're really as mad as you make out, we 'll close the book. If you choose to marry this servant-girl, neither you nor she shall ever cross this threshold. Now then, what do you say?'

'I 'm really awfully sorry you should take it like this, father,' said the young man; 'but, of course, I can't give up Sara. You 'd never have done it if you 'd been in my place.'

'Very well,' said his father, pointing to the door; 'take your hat and go straight out of the house.'

But Arthur drew himself up, and squared his big shoulders. 'No, father,' he answered, and there was a sterner note in his voice, 'I 'm hanged if I will! You 've got the right to forbid me the house, if you choose to, but I 'm not going without a good-bye to the others. You can come and hear whether I talk treason.'

He walked back into the drawing-room, followed, with some loss of dignity, by his father.

'Mother,' he said, 'and all of you, we 've got to part for the present. Father is angry because I can't give up the girl who has promised to marry me, and he forbids me to come to the house, but I couldn't go without saying good-bye.'

He kissed them all, except Dick, with whom

he shook hands. Then he held out his hand to his father, who, looking extremely uncomfortable, ignored the offer, and turned on his heel; Dick whistled 'Wait till the Clouds roll by;' and Mrs Romaine held her handkerchief to her eyes.

V.

'Who do you think I met to-day?' asked Dick.

'Whom,' corrected his mother, looking with pride on the fine, soldierly young figure in his O.T.C. uniform. 'Will Fortescue, was it?'

'No. It was dear old Art. Met him just outside the British Museum.'

Mrs Romaine glanced at her husband, whose eyes were on his coffee-cup.

'Was he in khaki?' she asked.

'No,' answered Dick. 'The silly juggins is a conscientious objector, and lives in hope of being a passive resister, or, better still, of being mobbed and put in prison. I thought he'd get his wish, too, by the way he shouted.'

Mr Romaine groaned. 'Good heavens! This is the crowning disgrace. Practically a bankrupt, married a servant-girl, a conscientious objector. Fancy, a Romaine!'

'I don't know about a bankrupt, sir,' said Dick. 'He didn't look like one, and he seemed in fine spirits. Going in for something outrageously unpopular has bucked him up, perhaps.'

'Unhappy boy!' sighed his father. 'I should have thought even he would have listened to the call of King and Country. "Fine spirits," you say. I hope they were assumed. If not, I am afraid his case is hopeless.'

'Well,' said Dick, 'perhaps the baby accounts for the spirits.'

'Baby!' screamed Doris ecstatically. 'Oh, how ripping! Fancy me an auntie! Oh, I *would* love to see it!'

'Silence!' said her father sternly. Then, turning to Dick, he asked, 'Did he say what —er—colour the unfortunate child is?'

Dick stared. 'A deepish purple, I should call it,' he answered.

'Have you seen it?' demanded Mr Romaine.

'Yes, sir.' Dick's manner was a little sheepish.

'Did you see the young—er—his wife, I suppose I must call her?'

'Yes. She's quite nice-looking, and she's got a pleasant way with her.'

'And how are they living?'

'They have rooms at the works. He's got some queer notion about the duty of employers to be at least as uncomfortable as their men.'

'Mad—mad as a March hare!' groaned Mr Romaine.

'"What's bred in the bone," though,' Dick went on. 'He's got some jolly little water-colours on the walls. He didn't get them for nothing, I know.'

'Student's rubbish, or futurist stuff—I know his taste,' said Mr Romaine contemptuously.

It was quite true. The Great War had come. The tide of patriotic enthusiasm flowed all around him, and Arthur's instinct for unpopularity interpreted it as a challenge. The pomp and glamour of war had always revolted him, and the attraction of being one in a hopeless minority was irresistible. He attended pacifist meetings, distributed pacifist literature, and, to his immense satisfaction, had his windows broken. But Mrs Arthur was a level-headed young person, devoted to her husband, though not to all his ideas, and before very long the fact that in this matter she was not with him began to modify his attitude. Then, cross-examining himself remorselessly, he forced from his own heart the admission that to leave Sara and the adorable babe for the blasted fields and sodden trenches of the Western front would have been a terrible ordeal. From that moment he began to waver. A visit to a hospital ward to see one of his workmen back from the fighting-line, maimed and crippled by a ghastly wound, settled the matter. As he saw the beds in the long ward filled with the battered, broken wrecks of the battlefield, he felt, not any eagerness for going into the strife, but only the impossibility of keeping out of it. That restless, quixotic, unappeasable conscience of his would always send him nosing after the most disagreeable job in the market.

'I'm going, after all,' he said to his wife that night.

She had well read his character. 'I knew you'd have to,' she answered, looking up at him proudly. 'It's too dreadful for you to keep out of.'

VI.

Some six months later, Mr Romaine found one morning on the breakfast-table an 'On Active Service' envelope addressed to him. He recognised the writing, snatched the letter, and, with fingers that trembled just a little, opened it, and pounced on the contents.

'Dear Father,—I dare say this will come to you as a great surprise. I ought to have told you, when I made up my mind that I couldn't keep out of this business, but I suppose pride and silly awkwardness kept me silent. I'm very sorry. I think, too, that I wasn't quite sure of myself—whether I could stick it, I mean. Dick frightened me—he seems just cut out for it, and I'm so utterly different. Dear old—or, rather, young—Dick! My stinks got me into the Engineers, and, more than that, they've actually got me a commission. But, just as I was beginning to feel my feet, a bit of shrapnel in the side knocked me off them. I've been on my back some time; but the worst is over, and in a few weeks I shall be in England again, on sick leave.

'I can't help worrying a bit about the business, though I have every confidence in my manager. But if you would look in, and go over the books

with him, I should feel ever so much easier. I would sooner trust your judgment than anybody else's. Hone, his name is. I've told him that if you do go, he's to give you every facility.

'My best love to mother and Doris and the rest. I've written to Dick.—Your affectionate son, ARTHUR.'

When he had read this through twice, Mr Romaine read it a third time—aloud.

'You will go, won't you, William?' asked his wife.

'Of course I will,' he answered indignantly. 'What do you think I'm made of? The—er—misunderstanding was not of my—well, it *was* a misunderstanding.'

'Do see the baby, dad!' said Doris.

The next day Mr Romaine spent three or four hours in Shadwell, and came home 'oozing satisfaction and benevolence,' so Doris wrote to Dick.

'I must admit,' he said to the assembled family, 'that I have hitherto grievously underrated our dear Arthur. I allowed—and I regret it—I allowed my judgment to be warped by irritation at certain unfortunate mannerisms, and I did not make sufficient allowance for the natural and indeed inevitable immaturity of youth. I have been astonished—yes, amazed—at the evidence of his really remarkable business capacity. In a year or two he has turned a moribund concern into a vigorous, active, effective organisation. The war has helped them, no doubt; but, as the manager put it, they are doing a roaring trade, in spite of that co-operative plan, which I still think a mistake. But really, in face of such a—er—brilliant success, I feel almost inclined to suspend my final judgment.'

'Did you see Arthur's wife?' asked Mrs Romaine.

'Oh yes, I did, my dear; and I must say that, on the whole, I was agreeably impressed. Lacking in polish, of course, but not to any painful extent; and a good girl, I'm sure. have asked her to come here for a few days.'

'And the baby, dad?' Doris inquired.

'A remarkably fine child, and very like what his father was, I'm glad to say.'

'What colour is he?' persisted Doris.

'Ah, my dear,' answered her father, with a tolerant smile, 'I remember asking Dick that very question myself. I dreaded the answer then, but I think I'm wiser now. The baby promises to be a fair Romaine, and I'm not sorry.'

DID SIR WALTER SCOTT KNOW WHO PICKLE THE SPY WAS?

By the Rev. JOHN OLIVER, M.A., V.D.

ONE day, in London, when passing through Leicester Square, I noticed at the entrance to a house formerly occupied by Sir Joshua Reynolds the painter, but now used as salerooms, a bill which stated that a library collection was being disposed of. I went into the place, where I observed, among other treasures, two autograph letters—the one signed Walter Scott; the other, Thomas Carlyle. They were soon put up for auction. I thought of bidding for them, but was deterred by the consideration that any offer of mine would be exceeded by those of relic-hunters who were present. The letters were knocked down at a certain price—to whom they fell I had not the slightest idea.

Next morning it occurred to me to take a stroll through Regent's Park from where I was staying in the Hampstead neighbourhood, and to call at the shop of a bookseller in Marylebone from whom I was wont to make purchases. On my inquiring if he had any book-plates, or what is technically termed *ex libris*, a goodly number were produced; and as I looked at them I chanced to say, 'Have you any autograph letters of Sir Walter Scott?' 'Yes,' replied the bookseller. To my surprise, he brought me the two identical letters I had seen in the saleroom. At the price he offered them, they passed into my possession.

It is the Scott letter which is of special interest in this article. It fills two quarto pages, and contains also three lines on the third, the remainder of which is occupied with a note by Mr J. H. Forbes, to whom the epistle was sent, and by whom it was forwarded on 19th February 1816 to 'Alex. Macdonell, Esq. of Glengarry, Garry Cottage, Perth.'

The letter is in these words:

'MY DEAR SIR,—As I know you are curious about subjects of antiquity, and especially such as relate to your own House, and as I have great pleasure in doing whatever I conceive would be agreeable to you, I beg to acquaint you that I have now in my possession, among other original papers concerning that period, an original letter from Charles II. to General Middleton, superscribed by the King, in which he acknowledges himself bound by promise to give Glengarry the Earldom of Rosse, but excuses himself on account of the Act of Annexation. He appears to have sent a gratification of some kind to Glengarry—it is called a warrant—as an earnest of his favour; but whether a grant of

honours, lands, or money does not appear. The letter is dated Cologne, 6th January 165$\frac{4}{5}$, and says many polite things of Glengarry's services. I think it may be interesting to you to know that your family at all times maintained their claim to the earldom, and were not therein opposed by the counter-claims of any other family, but only by the State jealousy which would interfere to prevent the re-establishment of so great an authority as was possessed by the Earls of Rosse.

'I was going to write out a copy of this curious document, but I thought you might like to have it transcribed in some more authentic manner. There is no question of its authenticity, as it bears the seal of Scotland as well as the signature of Charles. I am almost afraid to touch it, it is so frail, and I would wish you or any one you may commission to see it before it is patched or repaired in any way.

'If this should give you any interest or pleasure, as tending to show how early your family's claim was made to the title and estate of Rosse, it will be great pleasure to, my dear sir, your faithful servant, WALTER SCOTT.

'*P.S.*—I have been beating my brains lately to make words to what is called the music or set—that is, the tune, without the variations—of some of the best Highland pibrochs. I intend to give the words to Alastir Campbell, to whom they will be of use in his intended collection of Scottish music. Can you tell me any person in Edinburgh who is likely to give me the Glengarry Gathering in genuine purity?'

The note by the recipient, written on the same paper to Glengarry, is as follows:

'DEAR GLENGARRY,—Our friend Scott sent me this to seal and forward to you. It seems to be a most important document, and may assist your claim before the Lord Lyon. I shall get a copy of it immediately.

'You will be glad to hear that the Lady Lochgarry has gained her cause, altho' there are still some points to settle.—Yours affectly.,

'J. H. FORBES.'

One reason which the writer of this article has for drawing attention to the correspondence is that it reveals the deep interest Sir Walter felt in the Glengarry family. He was much attached to Alastair Macdonell, the last of them to hold the lands of the House, and the donor of Maida to Scott, who greatly prized the gift. When that chief died in January 1828 the Author of *Waverley* referred to him in his journal as 'warm-hearted, generous, friendly, beloved by those who knew him,' and recorded his own feeling by adding, 'To me he is a treasure.'

Another reason for drawing attention to the correspondence is that, in 1897, Mr Andrew Lang published a volume entitled *Pickle the Spy*, in which he maintains that the betrayer of Prince Charlie to the English Government was a Glengarry, that he was Alastair Ruadh Macdonell, who died unmarried on the 23rd of December 1761. He had 'the attraction,' says Mr Lang, 'of being eminently handsome. No statelier gentleman than Pickle, as his faded portrait shows him in full Highland costume, ever trod a measure at Holyrood. Tall, athletic, with a frank and pleasing face, Pickle could never be taken for a traitor and a spy. He seemed the fitting lord of that castellated palace of his race, which, beautiful and majestic in decay, mirrors itself in Loch Oich. Again, the man was brave, for he moved freely in France, England, and Scotland, well knowing that the *skian* was sharpened for his throat if he were detected. And the most extraordinary fact in an extraordinary story is that Pickle *was* detected, and denounced to the king over the water. . . . Yet the breach between James and his little Court on the one side, and Prince Charles on the other, was then so absolute that the Prince was dining with the Spy, chatting with him at the opera-ball, and presenting him with a gold snuff-box, at about the very time when Pickle's treachery was known in Rome. Afterwards, the knowledge of his infamy came too late, if it came at all.'

'His existence,' Mr Lang informs us, 'was suspected by Scott, if not clearly known and understood. . . . In him Scott, had he chosen, would have found a character very like Barry Lindon (but worse), and somewhat akin to the Master of Ballantrae. The cool, good-humoured, smiling, unscrupulous villain of high rank and noble lineage; the scoundrel, happily unconscious of his own unspeakable infamy, proud and sensitive upon the point of honour; the picturesque hypocrite in religion, is a being whom we do not meet in Sir Walter's romances. In Pickle he had such a character ready made to his hand; but in the time of Scott it would have been dangerous, as it is still disagreeable, to unravel this old mystery of iniquity. A friend of Sir Walter, a man very ready with the pistol, the last, as was commonly said, of the Highland chiefs, was of the name and blood of Pickle, and would have taken up Pickle's feud. Sir Walter was not to be moved by pistols, but not even for the sake of a good story would he hurt the sensibilities of a friend or tarnish the justly celebrated loyalty of the Highlands.'

So writes the author of *Pickle the Spy;* and the question naturally suggests itself whether it is likely that Scott suspected who Pickle was. Of this I am extremely doubtful. When reading Mr Lang's book I could not but think of how interested Scott was in the traditions of the Highlands, how devoted to the memory of Prince Charles, how warmly attached to the Glengarrys. I was unwilling to accept the statement that he even suspected who Pickle was.

On these grounds I, therefore, ventured to

draw Mr Lang's attention more particularly to the question, and received the following reply:

'1 Marloes Road, W.,
June 12 [1910].

'Dear Sir,—I am by no means certain that Sir Walter knew the identity of Pickle, though I think he did, for he had read much of the Stuart papers, and I know that the facts were familiar to some of the Skye Macdonalds.

'In any case, the knowledge would not affect Scott's friendship for the other Glengarrys, past or contemporary. There are black sheep in most folds, and if ever the Cumberland papers are published many things far from pleasant will come to light.—Believe me, faithfully yours,

'A. Lang.

'The Rev. John Oliver,
The Manse,
Maryhill, Glasgow.'

Need it be said that the effect of the reply was to incline the writer of this article more than ever to the conclusion that Sir Walter Scott did not know who Pickle the Spy was?

EL ARISH.

By C. T. A. H.

To one who has walked the one hundred miles of desert from Quantara and the Suez Canal, that is a dark saying of Napoleon's that to hold El Arish is to hold Egypt. How could he have held El Arish? With the aid of a railway and a pipe line we do it easily, but how in his day communications could have been maintained and a large army supplied with all its needs by camels alone across that grim tract of sandhills and dead salt lakes it is very hard to see. Certainly the Pharaohs never attempted a frontier here. Pelusium, not ten miles from the canal, was their most distant outpost. Nor could command of the sea have ever helped the problem. A stranded tug and an abortive pier are eloquent of our own failure here with marine transport. No breakwater can be built on these shifting sands. Not a single indentation occurs on this monotonous coast-line. When the storm rises, where are your lighters to shelter? El Arish has little use for the sea. The ship of the desert is the only craft that finds a port there, and it takes as many of these animals as the Government can buy to do a fraction of the transport work.

By its position El Arish is a more natural frontier town to Palestine than to Egypt, and such undoubtedly it once was. A visitor to the Governor's house recognises the hand of a Byzantine architect in part of its structure; and, again, a Gothic arch on the way to the fort suggests a Norman builder. A Greek governor no doubt once occupied the house; and subsequently, when Jerusalem was a Norman kingdom, a Norman soldier ruled from the fort.

As a town it is unlike anything in Egypt. The low, square-built houses are white and clean. One is reminded of Malta rather than of Egypt. The people in the streets are fairer, and there is something in the eye of the man you meet, in his bearing and the touch of colour in his clothing, that suggests a bolder, hardier race than the dejected felaheen. They are Arabs—Bedouins who have been tempted from their camps to settle in this favoured spot.

For certainly El Arish is favoured. Of water there is abundance, and for fruits of the earth there is the Wady, that narrow, level valley running inland far up amongst the hills. When the rains fall in the hills, the water comes down in a flood and irrigates the whole valley. The flood in February was so violent that it swept away the railway embankment and left the rails suspended and buckling in mid-air. It is an inundation as good as the Nile's, and in the spring the whole Wady is green, and El Arish has the promise of the barley, lentils, figs, and dates on which, with the trade of passing caravans, it lives and is content.

Thus, with an unnavigated sea to the north, and desert to the east, west, and south, for thousands of years—certainly since Abraham—El Arish has lived its own life, aloof and happy. Once in a century, perhaps, the dust of other people's quarrels has swept about its walls. Except for that, it has slept the sleep of rural seclusion, indifferent to the march of progress.

But this time along with the dust of war has come something that will stay. The shriek of the steam-engine is now heard in the streets. Surely El Arish will sleep no more.

SUMMER.

When sunlit hours, from wintry death upspringing,
Throw wide the doorway of the joyous days;
When at the dawn we hear the blithe birds singing,
And every sunset falls with happy praise;
When summer peace and summer glory filleth
The fleeting hours with hope and bliss divine,
May heaven's deep psalm, whose song each valley thrilleth,
Break with rich fullness on that soul of thine!

Lift up thine eyes; the wind all-glorious sweepeth
The Border Hills bedecked this day with flowers.
And while thy heart its tryst with Nature keepeth,
Thank God, thank God, for all His gracious hours.
Lift up thine heart! Behold! the days are olden
That held thee in their winter of despair;
Like dreams they passed—and, lo! with pinions golden
Fair summer, bride of joy, gleams everywhere.

Gilbert Rae.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE PALAZZO VENEZIA.

By SALVATORE CORTESI.

'IT looks as though nearly five centuries of history had been opened before our eyes with the passing of the famous historic Palazzo Venezia to the Italian Government from the property of Austria, which for one hundred years had kept it closed.'

This was in my mind when visiting the imposing edifice of papal Rome together with Commendator Corrado Ricci, Director-General of Fine Arts, and Italy's most illustrious art critic.

On ascending the grand majestic staircase, the visitor at once notices the absence from its base of the bust representing the great Pope, Paul II., to whom the palace is due. He was one of the most interesting figures in the whole history of the papacy, and among the handsomest men of his time. The bust was long believed to be the work of an imitator of the divine Donatello, Vellano of Padua, who succeeded with this marble portrait in leaving to posterity a fine work of art and a worthy memento of his patron. The latter called him to Rome, and entrusted to him the portico enclosing the internal garden of the palace. Modern critics, however, see in the bust the hand of Mino da Fiesole, the great artist who, together with Paolo Romano, worked on the tomb of Paul II.

Until May 1915, when Italy declared war on Austria, this palace was the residence of the embassy of the Emperor Franz Joseph to the Holy See, and was considered as Austrian property, situated in the very heart of Rome. It was a thorn in the flesh of the Italians that this colossal structure, erected by an Italian Pope, conceived by Italian artists, having symbolised in the Eternal City for over two centuries Venice, the most glorious Italian republic, should remain in the hands of Austria, the country which they considered their traditional and irreconcilable enemy. Vienna had never been tactful in dealing with the Italians, and instead of taking advantage of the Triple Alliance, which lasted a third of a century, to extinguish the old feuds between the two nations, the Austrians seemed to seize any occasion to rub their Allies the wrong way. This was notably the case with the Palazzo Venezia. When, in 1870, the temporal power fell and Rome became the capital of United Italy, Austria was not in good relations with the Holy See. Notwithstanding this, as one of the many signs of contempt for the new kingdom, she kept the seat of her embassy to the Vatican in the Palazzo Venezia, thus giving to the ambassador to the Pope a much greater importance than to the one accredited to the king, as the latter ambassador lived in a hired apartment. Rightly or wrongly, the Italians interpreted this attitude as a mark of distrust towards the new order of things, which seemed to be considered by Austria as merely temporary, and as though they expected an early restoration of the papal state. Therefore the Palazzo Venezia became, and was for about half a century, the target of all anti-Austrian demonstrations, obliging the Italian Government to keep around it a special guard of policemen and carabineers, and having in troubled times its neighbourhood occupied by troops. It was most important for new Italy that no insult should be offered to the Palazzo Venezia, which represented both Austria and the Holy See. In fact, she could not afford to offend Austria in such a way as to come to war with her, and she desired to avoid any incident which might have offered an opportunity to the Vatican to claim before the world that the Pope and the diplomatic body accredited to him did not enjoy in Rome the liberty and respect which Italy had proclaimed and sanctioned by the Law of Guarantees in 1871.

When Italy in May 1915 first denounced the Triple Alliance, and later in the month decided to go to war with Austria, she was ready to allow the representative to the Vatican of the Hapsburg monarchy to remain in Rome, and was willing to look after his safety and complete independence. However, Austria and Germany, thinking to embarrass the Italian Government and create for them new difficulties by raising again the Roman question, decided that not only Prince Schönburg, the Austrian Ambassador, but also Baron von Ritter, the Bavarian Minister, and Dr von Mühlberg, the Prussian Minister, all accredited to the Vatican, should leave Rome. They were all sent to Switzerland, continuing to be accredited to the Pope from Lugano. Austrian interests in Italy were entrusted to Spain, which also had two ambassadors in Rome—one to the Quirinal, who undertook to look after Austrian

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civil affairs, and one to the Vatican, who became a kind of link between Prince Schönburg and the Holy See.

Two years have passed since Italy entered the war, and the demand of the people to answer Austria's many violations of all laws by occupying the Palazzo Venezia became so pressing that the Government decided in August 1916 to confiscate it. In so doing Italy was exercising her rights, since the historic building constructed by Paul II. was given by the papacy to the Republic of Venice, and was taken by Austria when Venice became hers; so that on the return of Venice to Italy her palace in Rome ought also to have been ceded.

The decree of confiscation was notified to Señor Piña y Millet, the Spanish Ambassador accredited to the Quirinal, and gave until 1st November for the removal of everything belonging to Austria, and especially the archives, which occupied several rooms. While the arrangements were being made for clearing the palace, Austria sent to Señor Piña, a true and loyal friend of the Allies, a protest against the confiscation, to be presented to the Italian Government, couched in such insulting and vulgar terms that the ambassador, before presenting it, requested the Vienna Government to reconsider the form in which it was drawn. Vienna answered that the form was no business of the Spanish Ambassador, whose duty was simply to fulfil his instructions, acting as intermediary in the transmission of documents between Austria and the Italian Government. Señor Piña obeyed, and the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Baron Sonnino, gave Austria the lesson she deserved. He refused to receive the protest, which the most rudimentary laws of manners should have prevented the Austrians from asking the representative of Spain to present.

The clearing of the Palazzo Venezia was then entrusted almost entirely to Count de la Viñaza, Spanish Ambassador to the Vatican, who stripped the palace of everything which it contained, simply leaving the walls. In some rooms the frames of the doors and windows, and even the floors of ancient tiles, were removed, together with all the fixtures. Among these valuable objects, the bust of Paul II. was abstracted; but Commendator Ricci assured me that he knew where all the things had been stored, and that they were being watched by the Government, and would soon be returned to their rightful place.

The delivery of the palace in this condition was duly made to the Italian authorities, and the same day the Italian tricolour and the gilded flag with the Lion of St Mark waved again from the balcony of the historic palace, greeted by the enthusiastic cheers of the people of Rome.

The grand staircase of the Palazzo Venezia leads immediately into the largest hall, called the Sala Regia, about one hundred and fifty feet long, ninety feet wide, and sixty feet high, with a beautiful pointed roof with old beams, and lighted by five huge windows. The next, at the corner of the building, is the Consistorial Hall, so called because it was used by several Popes to hold their consistories for the creation of cardinals, beatifications, canonisations of saints, &c. The next large hall is called 'of the Mappamondo,' from a famous globe designed and illuminated on wood and canvas by the Venetian cosmographer, Gerolamo Bellavista, by order of Paul II., who decorated with it the main wall of this hall, which is now divided into two.

The adjacent hall is called after Hercules, from a large frieze at the top decorated with a fresco representing the Twelve Labours of Hercules, and with fountains, which, according to Leon Battista Alberti, were most useful paintings in rooms occupied by statesmen and potentates, as the mere sight of the water contributed to refresh their minds and quench the thirst due to excessive libations.

On the wall facing the two windows there is a fresco representing the Venetian Senate, which, in exchange for this palace presented to them by Pius IV. as the seat of the Venetian Ambassador, gave to the papal nuncio as his residence in Venice the old palace of the Doge Andrea Gritti.

The Hall of Audiences which follows is where the Venetian Ambassadors received their guests, and where Gregory XIV. died of stone in October 1591. Halls and rooms continue along three sides of the palace with more or less gorgeous appearance according to their purpose —some with beautiful coffered ceilings carved and gilded; others with artistic large marble mantelpieces, which, together with the rich marble doorways, have in the centre the coat of arms of the Barbo Pope, a rampant lion crossed by a band. One of the rooms looking out on the piazza is decorated by four medallions representing the personages who were chiefly connected with the history of the palace— Paul II., Cardinal Marco Barbo, Paul III., and Pius IV. An important discovery has been that of an ancient floor in beautiful old tiles of an Arab type, which are still manufactured in Naples, where Commendator Ricci will have them reproduced to match the character of the different halls.

To return to the founder of the palace, it will be interesting to recall that Paul II., born in 1418, belonged to the noble Venetian family of the Barbo, which, in that period of nepotism, gave besides this Pope many dignitaries to the Church. The Barbo family claimed to descend from the ancient Roman house of the Enobardus to which belonged the Emperor Nero. Paul II.'s mother was a most pious lady, Polissena Condulmieri, who was respectively mother, sister,

and niece of three different Popes; while her mother, Paul II.'s grandmother, was grandmother, mother, and sister of three pontiffs, besides being great-grandmother, grandmother, and aunt of nine cardinals, six patriarchs, and eleven bishops.

Paul II. was created cardinal at the age of twenty-three by his uncle, Eugene IV., and in that capacity in 1464 he accompanied Pope Pius II. to Ancona for the crusade against the Turks, which that pontiff intended to lead in person. Pius II., however, fell ill and died; while Cardinal Barbo himself, attacked by the plague, which was ravaging Ancona, took refuge in Loreto, the seat of the famous sanctuary, containing the House of Nazareth.

Eugene IV. had predicted that his nephew, Cardinal Barbo, would be the fourth pontiff after him—that is, the successor of Pius II. Cardinal Barbo, ill at Loreto, while placidly sleeping had a vision of the Virgin, who announced his recovery and his approaching election as Pope. As a thanksgiving, he promised to build, at his own expense, a sanctuary to replace that which for one hundred and forty years had held the House of the Virgin, and to continue the construction of the palace which he had already begun next to the Church of St Mark in Rome, the present Palazzo Venezia. The prediction was fulfilled, and on 30th August 1464 Cardinal Barbo became Pope at the age of forty-six.

Paul II. made his palace the centre of all the art treasures he could collect, and of all the amusements and festivals of that sumptuous period of papal Rome. The beautiful interior of the Palazzo Venezia, with its garden, which resembles a monastic cloister on account of the arcades which surround it, and the immense halls, painted by the Florentine Pollaiolo, still seem to recall the festivals given there by Pope Paul II., who, even when Head of the Church, continued the habit of being up the whole night, dining at sunset and supping at sunrise; so that his audiences were always given after dark.

In this palace, and in its garden, Paul II. gave banquets which remained famous through many of the succeeding pontificates, having as guests potentates and princes, and the most distinguished cardinals, including that Rodrigo Lenzuos, with his red stockings encrusted with pearls, who twenty years later became Alexander VI., and is better known as the Borgia Pope.

It was Paul II. who transferred the celebration of Carnival to the Corso, the main thoroughfare of modern Rome, almost facing his palace, where races of horses running riderless were instituted. They lasted every year seven successive days, presided over by Paul II. from the balcony of his palace, under which three heavy curtains were hung, one after the other, for the excited, and by that time unmanageable, horses to dash into, and they were thus stopped in their mad career.

Many bulls, briefs, and other papal documents were dated from the Palace of St Mark. From there Paul II. drafted the Constitution of Rome, and had the merit of encouraging the introduction of the art of printing into the papal states, which through his support took a wonderful development. The presses were brought to Rome from the Gutenberg printing-house in Mainz by Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Pannartz, who, in 1467, were housed by Prince Pietro Massimi in his beautiful palace not far from the Palazzo Venezia. Their editions of Cicero and St Augustine were the first books published in Rome and in Italy, and through the patronage of this Pope, to whom most of them were dedicated, they succeeded in publishing twelve thousand four hundred and seventy-five volumes in seven years. Most of these precious volumes were lined along the walls of the then Palace of St Mark, together with the art collections which the magnificent Barbo Pope had gathered there.

Paul II. died suddenly, at the age of fifty-three, after having gaily supped in the garden. Some attributed his death to his having eaten two large water-melons, others to the little fish from the Tiber of which he had also eaten abundantly; but in reality it seems that he had a stroke of apoplexy.

It is much to be deplored that there is no possibility of ascertaining what the still unfinished palace was like, and what it contained at the death of its creator. The outside of the building is one of the best examples existing of Renaissance architecture in Italy, and a unique specimen in Rome of the Guelf square window divided by a cross.

The massive colossal structure devised by Paul II., covering an immense block and enclosed by four streets, has more the appearance of a castle than a palace. For the construction of the papal edifice, stone, marble columns, and other building requisites, together with architectonic ideas, were taken from ancient remains, and especially from the Colosseum, the Castel St Angelo, the Circus of Hadrian, &c., which were then looked upon as storehouses of materials. Most of the palaces in Rome of the fifteenth century and especially of the sixteenth were thus built; so that it is a wonder that anything at all is left of ancient Roman structures. The famous Palazzo Barberini, erected by Carlo Maderno for Urban VIII. of that family in 1628, gave rise to the saying, '*Quod non fecerunt barberi fecerunt Barberini*' ('What the barbarians did not do the Barberini did').

Paul II. evidently also intended that the surroundings of his palace should be fittingly decorated, and in 1467 had the square in front of it embellished by the erection of the colossal sarcophagus of red porphyry, the sepulchre of

Constance, daughter of the Emperor Constantine, which stood in its mausoleum on the Nomentana Way, where Sixtus IV., who was Paul II.'s successor, replaced it; but whence it was taken to the Vatican in 1791.

Strange as it may seem, the exact date when the palace was begun and the name of its architect are uncertain; but it is believed that it was started in 1455, this being the year on the medals cast to commemorate the foundation; and Gaspare of Verona, biographer of Paul II., attributes it to Francesco Burgense of San Sepolcro. Paul II. spent on the palace one hundred and seventy-five thousand gold ducats, which was then a colossal sum, without, however, finishing it. Perhaps more valuable than the palace itself was the priceless art collection, which by the time Paul II. died had reached proportions that no one can realise nowadays. It was undoubtedly the richest and most precious museum of ancient and contemporary works of art of which Europe could then boast.

Paul III., a Farnese, elected pontiff in 1534, not only took the same name as the Barbo Pope, but resumed his programme and completed the construction of the great palace, which had suffered much through being used as a barracks by the soldiers of Charles VIII. of France and of the Emperor Charles V.

Paul IV., the Neapolitan Carafa, elected in May 1555, ex-collector of Peter's pence in England, in the first consistory held in the Palace of St Mark, received the three English Ambassadors sent by Queen Mary to make the act of obedience and ask pardon for her father. Paul IV. raised the prostrated ambassadors, embraced them, absolved England from all ecclesiastic censure, and, further to increase the dignity of its sovereigns, issued a bull on 7th June by which Ireland was raised to a kingdom, a title which Henry VIII. and Parliament had already given it without the approbation of the Holy See. His successor, Pius IV., of the Milanese family of Medici, also lived in the Palace of St Mark, but by a brief of 10th June 1564 destined half of it as the residence of the cardinal titular of St Mark, and gave the other half to the Republic of Venice for her ambassador as a reward for her having willingly been the first to accept the Council of Trent.

To this period belongs a statue of the Republic of Venice with the Doge's Cap and the Lion of St Mark, which forms a fountain in the centre of the courtyard, and recalls the two hundred and thirty-three years of Venetian possession of the palace. This beautiful courtyard, of which only one side is finished, has Doric columns on the ground-floor and Corinthian columns on the first, as in the Colosseum, which served for its model. As the residence of the Venetian Ambassadors, the palace was in the eighteenth century the scene of most gorgeous receptions and festivals, which reached their climax on the occasion of the election in 1758 of Clement XIII., who was a Venetian of the Rezzonico family. The last ambassador of the Venetian Republic in Rome was the patrician Pietro Pesaro, appointed in August 1794. In May 1797 he was notified that the republic, which had lasted a thousand years and had passed into the hands of the French, existed no longer; and shortly after, the municipality of Venice ordered him to continue in his office in the name of the people, telling him to replace on the palace the arms of St Mark with the insignia of Liberty, to change his seals, and to wear in his hat the white-red-and-green national cockade. Pesaro obeyed in everything except in the coat of arms, as it must have seemed to him a sacrilege to remove that emblem of great patriotic memories. On 16th December he was informed of the Treaty of Campoformio and of the cession of Venice to Austria, and was therefore ordered to return home as a private citizen; but Pesaro remained tranquilly in the Palazzo San Marco, which only then began to be called Palazzo Venezia. He continued to send his reports to the Venetian authorities as though nothing had happened, in one of them making it understood that he did not wish to leave the palace for fear that the Vatican, which two centuries before had given it to Venice, might retake it. The Venetian authorities thought they would prevent this by appointing a keeper of the palace in the person of Abbé Parisi; but the ambassador refused to deliver it over, and remained at his post. He applied to Austria, which, it seems, had never thought of the palace in Rome, for the post of looking after it, and he then did for Austria what he had refused to do for the democratic Government: he replaced the coat of arms of St Mark by that of the Hapsburgs. General Wial French, Governor of Rome, protested, saying there was no word on the subject in the Treaty of Campoformio. Soon the position in Rome became untenable for Pesaro, who retired to England, and died in London in February 1830.

The first Austrian Ambassador sent to the Palazzo Venezia advised his Government to sell it, on account of the bad condition to which it had been reduced. In 1819 the Emperor Francis I. stayed there; in 1822–23 Frederick William, King of Prussia, resided in the palace. The Assembly of the Roman Republic of 1848–49 decreed that the palace should be returned to the people of Venice, and entrusted the Triumvir Giuseppe Mazzini to draft the address. Instead, with the restoration of Pius IX., it was again given to Austria, which kept it even after the Peace of Villafranca in 1866, by which the Venetian provinces passed to Italy.

On 25th August 1916 Italy took possession of the palace, as it 'historically appears an inseparable appendage of Venice.'

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXX.—HOW GEOFFREY RAVENSLEE DEPARTED FROM HELL'S KITCHEN.

'WHAT! back again already, Mr Geoffrey?' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, poking her head round the kitchen door as Ravenslee entered the flat. 'Back so soon?'

'Only for a minute, Mrs Trapes.'

'Supper'll be ready soon—your wedding supper—eh, Mr Geoffrey? You'll have it here with me; you an' Hermy, o' course. Smells kind o' good, don't it?'

'Delicious, Mrs Trapes!'

'Delicious is the word, Mr Geoffrey—stooed beef with carrots'——

'And onions, Mrs Trapes—onions, I'm sure?'

'Well, I'll not deny a onion here an' there, Mr Geoffrey—a stoo needs 'em.'

'Ah, I knew it!' sighed Ravenslee. 'I grieve that I sha'n't be able to eat it.'

'Not eat—what, you? Say, ye ain't sick, are ye?'

'Not in body, Mrs Trapes.'

'Then why no stoo?'

'Because I sha'n't be here. I'm going, Mrs Trapes—I'm leaving Mulligan's now—for good.'

'Leavin'—ye mean with Hermy?'

'No—alone. Good-bye, Mrs Trapes!'

'My land!' gasped Mrs Trapes, 'what you tellin' me?'

'Good-bye, Mrs Trapes!'

'But why? Oh, dear Lord, what is it? Who'——

'I want to thank you for all your kindness. Good-bye!'

As one in a dream, Mrs Trapes extended a limp hand and stood wide of eye and pale of cheek to watch him go; and as he descended the stairs her look of helpless, pained surprise went with him. Swiftly he strode across that familiar court, shoulders squared, chin outthrust, and eyes that glowed ominously in his pale face beneath fierce scowling brows. As he turned into Tenth Avenue there met him the Spider.

'What you chasin' this time, bo'?' he inquired.

'M'Ginnis.'

'Then you're sure chasin' trouble.'

'That's what I want. D'you know where he is?'

'Sure I do, but'——

The Spider paused, drawing in his breath slowly, as with experienced gaze he viewed Ravenslee's pale, set face—the delicate nostrils wide and quivering, the relentless mouth and burning eyes, and all the repressed ferocity of him; and, drawing back a step, the Spider shook his head. 'Bo',' said he, 'that's jest what I ain't goin' t' tell ye.'

'Very well; I must find him.'

'Don't!' said the Spider, walking on beside him; 'if I didn't think a whole lot o' ye I'd lead ye to him.'

'Oh, I shall find him, if it takes me all night.'

'An' if ye do it'll be murder, I'm dead sure.'

'Murder!' said Ravenslee with a flash of white teeth. 'Well, I shall certainly kill him—this time!'

'Is it th' kid again?'

'No—oh no; it's just for my own satisfaction—and pleasure.'

'You ain't heeled, are ye? This ain't goin' t' be no gun-play—eh?'

'No, I haven't a gun, but I've brought his—neckerchief.'

'Sufferin' Pete!' murmured the Spider in a strangely awed voice, and walked on in silence, chewing viciously.

'Bo',' said he at last, 'I'm thinkin' th' kindest thing I could do would be t' slip one over t' your point while you wasn't lookin', an' put you t' sleep a bit—you want soothin'! Bud'll be too big for you or any other guy t' tackle now; ye see, his stock's rose; th' Noo Jersey p'lice wasn't strong enough t' hold him.'

'That's where I'm different—I can!' said Ravenslee, opening and shutting his right hand convulsively. 'Yes, I'll hold him till his last kick—and after!'

'My God!' exclaimed the Spider softly, and, beholding that clutching right hand, he edged away.

'Where you goin' t' look for him?' he inquired after a while.

'O'Rourke's!'

'Why not try Raynor's first?' and he nodded to a saloon on the adjacent corner.

'Because I'm not a fool.'

'Bo', I ain't s' sure o' that! O'Rourke's'll be full o' tough guys t'-night; all th' bunch'll be there; an' if Bud tips 'em the say-so they'll snuff your light out quicker 'n winkin'.'

'That wouldn't be such a hardship.'

'Oh, so that's it, hey? You got a kiss-me-an'-let-me-die sort o' feelin', hey? Some nice bit o' stuff been turnin' ye down, bo'?'

'That'll be about enough!' said Ravenslee, quick and fierce; and, meeting the flash of his eye, the Spider edged away again.

'Sufferin' Mike!' said he, 'you sure ain't doin' the affable chat stunt t'-night!'

But Ravenslee strode along in silence; and the Spider, heeding the pale, set ferocity of his expression, grew troubled. 'Say,' said he at last, 'this don't happen t' be th' night as you've fixed up t' smash th' gang, does it?'

'No—only M'Ginnis.'

'S'posin' he ain't at O'Rourke's?'

'He 'll be somewhere else.'

'Bo', if I was your ma I should be prayin' you don't find Bud; yes, sir! An' I should pray—damn hard!'

By this time they had reached Eleventh Avenue and were close upon the saloon, when Ravenslee halted suddenly, for beneath a lamp on the opposite side-walk he saw M'Ginnis in talk with two other men.

Drawing the neckerchief from his pocket, Ravenslee crossed over and tapped M'Ginnis on the arm, who, turning about, stared into a pallid face within a foot of his own.

'What th' hell'—— he began.

But Ravenslee cut him short. 'You left this behind you,' said he, thrusting forward the neckerchief, 'so I 've brought it to twist round that foul throat of yours. Now, M'Ginnis—fight!'

Thrusting the neckerchief into his pocket, Ravenslee clenched his fists, and, saying no word, they closed and fought—not as men, but rather as brute beasts eager to maim and rend. M'Ginnis's companions, dumbfounded by the sudden ferocity of it all, stayed a while inactive, staring at these two forms that lurched and swayed, that strove and panted grimly speechless. Then, closing in, they waited an opportunity to smite down M'Ginnis's foe from behind. But the Spider was watching, and, before either of them could kick or strike, his fists thudded home—twice, hard blows aimed with scientific precision; after which, having dragged the fallen away from these fierce trampling feet, he stood, quivering and tense, to watch that desperate encounter.

Once Ravenslee staggered back from a vicious flush-hit, and once M'Ginnis spun round, to fall upon hands and knees; then they clinched, and, coming to the ground together, fought there, rolling to and fro and hideously twisted together. But slowly Ravenslee's clean living began to tell; and M'Ginnis, wriggling beneath a merciless grip, uttered inarticulate cries and groaned aloud. And now the deadly neckerchief was about his gasping throat, and in his ears his conqueror's fierce laugh—lost all at once in a roar of voices, a rush of trampling feet.

Wrenched at by fierce hands, smitten by unseen fists, Ravenslee was beaten down—was dimly aware of the Spider's long legs bestriding him, and, staggering up through a tempest of blows, hurled himself among his crowding assailants, felled one with his right, stopped another with his left, and, as the press broke to the mad fury of his onslaught, felt his hand wrenched from a man's windpipe, and heard a frantic voice that panted, 'Leg it, bo'—leg it! Holy gee! ain't ye had enough?' So, mechanically, he set off at a run, with his arm still gripped by the Spider. 'Leg it, bo'—leg it good, or here 's where we snuff it sure! This way—round th' corner; only keep goin', bo'—keep goin'.'

Very fleetly they ran, with their pursuers close on their heels, across open lots, over fences, along tortuous alleys, until the rush and patter of the many feet died away, and the Spider, pulling up at the corner of a dismal narrow street hard by the river, stood a while to listen.

'Jiminy Christmas! but you 're some hot stuff at the swattin' business; you 're a glutton, you are, bo'. I been in one or two scraps meself, but I never seen a guy so hungry for'——

'Where are we?'

'Thirteenth an' Twentieth.'

'Are we safe?'

'F'r th' time, I reckon. But all Hell's Kitchen 'll be out after us t'-night, sure. So I guess it 's us f'r th' immediate hike.'

'Us? Will they be after you too?'

'Well,' said the Spider, smiling down grimly at his damaged knuckles, 'I guess, yes! Hell's Kitchen an' Tenth Av'ner 's got t' get along without me from now on, I reckon. They ain't losin' much, an' I ain't leavin' much; but'——

'What the devil had you got to follow me to-night for?' demanded Ravenslee, scowling.

'Bo',' said the Spider, as they went on again, 'there 's times when my likin' f'r you gets a pain; there 's times when yer talk gives me th' earache, an' yer lovin' looks the willies. I ain't lookin' f'r no gratitood, nor yet a gold dinner-set an' 'loominated address; but, not ownin' a hide like a sole-leather Saratoga, I 'll jest get on me way. S' long!'

'Where are you going?'

'I dunno; but—I 'm goin' there, right now.'

But as the Spider turned away his hand was caught and gripped, and Ravenslee was smiling; his features looked somewhat battered, but his smile was as pleasant as ever. 'Forgive my cursed temper, Spider. I owe you my life again, and—I ought to be grateful, I suppose. Forgive me; I 'm—not quite myself to-night.'

'Sure thing!' said the Spider, returning his grasp. 'But, bo', I 'm kind o' wonderin' in me little mind what Bud 's feelin' like! You sure swatted him good an' heavy. I never seen cleaner foot-work, an' them left jabs o' yours.'

'The question is, how do you feel, Spider, and what are you going to do?'

The pugilist scratched his big chin. 'Well, that 's what gets my goat; I dunno quite, bo'. Ye see, I sha'n't be able t' get no more fights here in the East now, not wi' Bud 'n' his old man against me; ye see, Bud's old man 's about the biggest'——

'I wonder if you 'd care to come with me?'

'Whaffor?'

'Well, for one thing, I need another chauffeur, and'——

'A—what?' The Spider halted under a lamp-post to stare at Ravenslee a little anxiously. 'Say now, take a holt of ye—see?—an' jest put that one over th' plate again. You need a—what?'

'Another chauffeur.'

'Another shuvver—another? Bo', ye didn't happen t' get a soak on th' bean just now, did ye?'

'No.'

'Well, then, I guess you 're some shook up; what you want 's food, right now!'

'Why, yes, now you mention it, I 'm devilish hungry.'

'Leave it t' me, bo'. I know a chewin'-joint close by—soup, joint, sweets, and coffee, an' only a quarter to throw—some feed, bo'! Shin right along; I 'll '——

'No; you shall come home and dine with me.'

'Home?' repeated the Spider, halting to stare again. 'You 're sure talkin' ramblin'.'

'We can discuss the chauffeur's job then.'

'Shuvver?' said the Spider uneasily. 'But what 's a guy like you want with a shuvver?'

'Well, to drive my car—and '——

'Car?' said the Spider, his uneasiness growing. 'Got a car now, have ye, bo'?'

'I rather think I've got six.'

'Sufferin' Sam!' The Spider scratched his big chin, while his keen eyes roved over Ravenslee's exterior apprehensively. 'Say, bo', you quite sure none o' th' bunch booted you on th' dome—eh?'

'Quite sure.'

'An' yet you got six autermobiles. I say—you think so.'

'Now I think again, they 're seven, with the newest racer.'

'Say now, jest holt still a minute! Now, swaller twice, think damn hard, an' tell me again! You got how many?'

'Seven!'

'Got anythin' else?'

'Oh yes, a few things.'

'Tell me jest one.'

'Well, a yacht.'

'Oh, a yacht?'

'A yacht.'

''S nuff, bo, 's nuff! But go on—go on; get it all off if you 'll feel better after. Anythin' more?'

'Why, yes; about twenty or thirty houses and castles and palaces and things.'

'That settles it sure!' sighed the Spider. 'You 're comin' t' see a doctor, that 's what! Your dome 's sure got bent in with a boot or somethin'.'

'No, Spider; I just happen to be born the son of a millionaire, that 's all.'

'Think o' that, now!' nodded the Spider; 'a millionaire, now—how nice! An' what do they call ye at home?'

'Geoffrey Ravenslee.'

'How much?' exclaimed the Spider, falling back a step. 'The guy as went ten rounds with Dick Dunoon at th' "National"? The guy as won th' autermobile race? Th' guy as bought up Mulligan's—you?'

'Why, yes. By the way, I sat in the front row and watched you lick Larry M'Kinnon at 'Frisco; I was afraid you were going to recognise me, once or twice.'

'Then you—you have got a yacht—th' big one as lays off Twenty-third Street?'

'Also seven cars; that 's why I want you for a chauffeur.'

'Ho-ly gee!' murmured the dazed Spider. 'Well, say, you sure have got me goin'! A millionaire! A pea-nut cart! A yacht! Well, say, I—I guess it 's time I got on me way. S' long!'

'No you don't, my Spider; you 're coming home with me.'

'What!—me? Not much I ain't—no, sir! I ain't no giddy gink t' go dinin' with millionaires in open-faced clo'es—not me!'

'But you 're coming to have dinner with that same pea-nut man who learned to respect you because you were a real white man, Spider Conolly. And that 's another reason why I want you for my chauffeur.'

'But—say, I—I can't shuv.'

'Joe shall teach you.'

'Joe? Ye mean Joe Madden?'

'He 'll be chauffeur No. 1; and there 's a cross-town car! Come on, Spider! Now, in with you!'

CHAPTER XXXI.—IN WHICH SOAPY TAKES A HAND.

O'ROURKE'S was full; its long bar, shaped something like the letter J, supported many lounging arms and elbows; its burnished foot-rail was scraped by boots of many shapes and sizes; its heavy air, thick with cigarette-smoke, hummed with many voices. In one corner, a corner remote where very few ventured to penetrate, Soapy leaned, as pallid and non-committal as ever, while Spike poured out to him the story of his woes.

'She drove me out, Soapy! She drove me away from her!' he repeated for the hundredth time. The boy was unnaturally flushed and bright of eye, and his voice was as shaky as the hand which fidgeted with his whisky-glass; and the sense of his wrongs was great, and growing greater with every sip.

'She told me t' leave her! She drove me away from her.'

'So you come here—eh, kid?' drawled Soapy, pendent cigarette smouldering. 'You shinned over here t' Bud f'r comfort, an' you 'll sure get it, kid—in a glass!'

'Bud 's always good t' me.'

''S right, kid, 's right; Bud 's a angel sure, though he ain't got no wings yet. Oh, Bud 'll comfort ye—frequent; an' by-an'-by he 'll take ye back t' Hermy good an' soused; you can get your own back that ways—eh, kid? It 'll sure make her sit up an' take notice when she sees ye come in reelin' an' staggerin'—eh, kid? An' to-morrow you 'll be sick mebbe, an' she 'll have ter nurse ye—eh? Bud 'll fix things for ye, I guess.'

Spike glowered and pushed his half-emptied glass farther away. 'I ain't goin' home soused!' he muttered.

'No?' said Soapy, faintly surprised. 'Bud 'll feel kind o' hurt, won't he?'

'I ain't goin' home soused—not for Bud nor nobody else!'

'Why then, if I was you, kid, I should beat it before Bud comes in.'

'I guess I will,' said Spike, rising.

(Continued on page 484.)

SCIENCE AND THE SOIL.

THIS year everybody with a little bit of garden is taking active steps to get the best out of it, and therefore it ought to be of interest to make a little study of the chemical nature of soils and of the ways in which they can be improved. Soil might perhaps be defined as 'the disintegrated top of the land,' and this 'top,' of course, consists of minute particles derived from the breaking up of rocks by the wearing effect of wind, water, frost, &c.

We can easily recognise three main kinds of soil—sandy, clayey, and chalky; but we should not look upon any one of these in its pure state as a good soil for growing purposes. Nor would simple mixtures of these be of much use. Something extra is required—namely, a material called *humus*, which is made by the decaying remains of plants and animals. Modern investigation has shown that this humus plays a very important part in connection with the fertility of the soil.

Formerly it was supposed that soil consisted of the inorganic particles formed by the breaking up of rocks, simply *mixed up* with the organic matter derived from the decaying of plants and animals; but lately it has been practically proved that the rock particles are covered with a sort of skin formed from the humus, together with some silica, alumina, &c. This skin has the power of holding up moisture and the various soluble compounds that are necessary for a plant's growth, and which, but for this, would be largely washed away.

Here we have an explanation of the very great benefit that a sandy soil derives from 'green manuring.' In the ordinary way it cannot retain sufficient moisture and salts; but when the green stuff is dug in and rots, it forms the humus which coats the particles, and greatly increases their power of retaining the necessary plant-food and moisture.

It is a curious fact that humus appears at first sight to act in an exactly opposite way upon very heavy clay soils. Clay is apt to retain too much water, and not to allow sufficient movement of the plant-foods towards the rootlets. The humus separates the clayey particles, and so 'opens out' a soil of this description.

If the proportion of humus gets too high the soil is likely to 'sour,' and then it is quite unsuitable for plant-growth. It is important, therefore, that manuring should not be overdone.

Although very many inorganic substances take part in a plant's growth, it has been found that only four classes of substances are likely to run short—namely, phosphates, potash compounds, nitrogen compounds, and lime compounds. If these materials get used up, most plants either refuse to grow at all or grow in a very poor way. It is rather strange that there may be an abundance of potash compounds or phosphates in a soil, and yet it may be incapable of sustaining a plant's proper growth. The explanation is that the compounds are not easily soluble ones, and the plant cannot get its food quickly enough. It is true that the action of air and moisture leads continually to the breaking down of the insoluble compounds into soluble ones, but the process is a very slow one. Plants may therefore get phosphate or potash or nitrogen starvation, and it is often necessary to add suitable fertilisers to supply their food.

Of the phosphate manures the chief are guano, superphosphate of lime, and basic slag.

Superphosphates are obtained by treating ground bones or phosphate rocks with sulphuric acid. By this means a proportion of the natural phosphate in the bones or rocks is made soluble, and is therefore available for immediate use by the plant.

Basic slag is obtained from the linings of the furnaces used in converting iron into steel.

Artificial potash manures are almost out of the question now, owing to the difficulty of getting any salts of potassium since the supply from Germany has been cut off. Before the war kainit was much used, and also muriate of potash (potassium chloride).

The most easily available source of potash at present is plant ashes. It is important, therefore, that all plant rubbish should be burned

and the residues dug into the garden. The 'oar weed' variety of seaweed, too, contains considerable supplies of potash.

The chief substances that have been used to supply nitrogen are sodium nitrate (nitrate of soda), obtained from Chili; saltpetre; ammonium sulphate (sulphate of ammonia), obtained from gas-liquor; and nitrolim, made from lime, coke, and nitrogen, or calcium carbide heated in an atmosphere of nitrogen.

Ammonium sulphate is especially valuable in light soils, as it is much less easily washed away than sodium nitrate. On this account, it does not penetrate very deeply if it is put on the top of the soil. If it is used for deep-rooted crops, it ought to be dug in.

Nitrolim is not so well known as any of the others, but seems to be a good fertiliser, and is useful when lime is wanted as well as nitrogen. It is not always easy to tell whether a particular soil is deficient in any of the essential foods, but the growth of most plants is improved by adding any mixture containing phosphates, nitrogen, and potash.

In recent years much attention has been given to the action of microbes in the soil. They appear to play a very important part in the growth of plants; in fact, if it were not for their activities, the organic matter in the soil would not be able to turn into plant-food. The varieties found in ordinary soil are very numerous, and they are not by any means all friendly. Some of them are capable of setting up diseases; others merely hinder the growth by their antagonism to the beneficial microbes. It has been discovered that, in general, the injurious microbes are more easily killed by heat than the others, and, therefore, if the soil is heated by means of steam and then allowed to cool, the friendly microbes that are left are able to multiply exceedingly. Experiments have been tried by taking small quantities of soil and comparing the growth of plants in portions previously heated with that in unheated portions, and in most cases very marked differences have been found—the growth is much more rapid and vigorous in the case of the soil that has been heated. Of course, it would be practically impossible to apply this to large scale growing, but it has been found that certain disinfectants, such as toluol and carbon bisulphide, have an action similar to that of heat; and it is probable that further developments in this direction will result.

It is important now that scientific methods of soil improvement should be studied, as so much depends upon getting the utmost growing value out of our soils.

THE LADY IN THE RED MASK.

III.

BUT it was well worth all the trouble, for I had never seen the quarter-deck looking better. It was a blaze of coloured lights, a vista of brilliant bunting and green foliage, with here and there the sheen of burnished steel and brass. The chorus of happy 'Oh's' and 'Ah's' when our guests came on board more than rewarded us for our labours.

Mrs Stanley-Wetherall, her two daughters, and Miss Angela Rathbone were among the first arrivals. They were masked, of course, and officially we were not supposed to know who they were, but no mask or domino could disguise the unmistakable figure of their chaperon, and no sooner had they reappeared from the cloak-room than they were set upon by a clamouring crowd eager for dances. In the forefront of the battle was the commander, and he, I noticed, scrawled his initials over fully two-thirds of Miss Stanley-Wetherall's programme. She did not seem to be the least put out about it, either.

'Oh, but I'm forgetting,' she said. 'Angie dear, may I introduce Captain Mostyn, Mr Carfax, Mr Piggott, Mr Harvey, and—er—everybody? Miss Rathbone. I quite forgot I wasn't really supposed to know who you all are,' she went on; 'but I hope you'll see that Angie's programme is filled up.'

We all bowed, and Miss Rathbone, covered in maidenly modesty, inclined her head and fidgeted with her fan.

I took a decided fancy to her from the very first moment I saw her. She was *petite* and golden-haired, exactly like Enid Stanley-Wetherall, and so far as their figures were concerned there was nothing to choose between them. Moreover, their dominoes were identical, their shoes and stockings a perfect match; they wore similar hair ornaments; and their dresses, or what little I could see of them, seemed precisely the same. So far as their appearance went the two girls might well have been twins, and the only way one could tell them apart was that Miss Stanley-Wetherall's mask was black, while Miss Rathbone's was scarlet. The glaring colour might not have suited some people, but it suited her.

I was not going to be cut out by any of the others; so, when the commander had done his duty and had asked for one dance, I produced my programme and demanded four. Miss Rathbone acquiesced without the least hesitation; whereupon I increased the number to five, greatly to the disgust of some of the others. I could not help their troubles.

Her programme was filled up in less than no

time, and when the other people arrived and the band started I saw her whirling round the floor in the arms of the fleet paymaster. She danced divinely.

I pirouetted with a number of different ladies that night, married women and girls, but I cannot remember who they all were or what I talked about. All I thought of was Miss Rathbone—Miss Rathbone—Angela. How the name suited her! I liked her figure, her hair, her tiny feet, and everything about her. Decidedly I must manage to see more of her, for I felt—well, it is difficult to describe it in cold blood, but I felt as if I should like to have her as a very dear friend. Purely platonic, of course. Platonic friendships between girls and bachelors are so beautiful and touching, are they not?

I could hardly control my impatience until the band struck up for the third dance—our dance. It may have been a waltz, a two-step, one-step, bunny-hug, or fox-trot, for all I can remember; but, whatever it was, she danced like a sprite. We got on splendidly, and so gave ourselves over to the enjoyment of it that we hardly spoke a word while it lasted.

But at last the band stopped, and, flushed and happy, I gently released her. 'Would you care for some refreshment?' I asked in the most approved society manner.

'Would I not?' she answered eagerly, fanning herself. 'I've a thirst on me like an elephant. I'm just pining for a drink.'

'Come along, then,' said I, leading her to the refreshment-buffet, and marvelling at her original way of expressing herself.

'What will you have? A little lemonade or claret cup, and an ice?'

She shook her head. 'What's that yellow stuff in the jug there?' she demanded, pointing.

'Cider cup,' I told her.

'What a pity! I thought it was shandy,' she said regretfully.

'Would you like shandy-gaff?' I asked, in mild astonishment, thinking it rather strange that a girl should exhibit a partiality for a mixture of beer and gingerbeer.

'Rather!' she replied. 'It's just the stuff to dance on. I could drink pints of it.'

I had to order the horrible brew specially, and when it arrived she drank it down in the most approved style. 'Ah!' she sighed contentedly; 'that's a good tipple! Now let's go and sit down somewhere.'

'Would you like to sit in my cabin?'

'Oh, any old place 'll do for me,' she answered, shrugging her slim shoulders.

So I took her to my cabin, sat her down in my best arm-chair, and fanned her gently.

'What a cosy little room!' she said, looking round approvingly. 'And how nicely you've decorated it! Are all these girls your sisters?'

She was eyeing my various photographs.

'No,' I was forced to admit. 'They're all relations or friends.'

'But what a lot of girl friends you seem to have!' she went on maliciously. 'How many times have you been in love, I wonder?'

I blushed furiously. 'Oh, not more often than most people.'

'Naughty boy!' she exclaimed roguishly, wagging an admonitory finger. 'You naval officers are all terrible. Are you in love with any one at the present moment?'

I shook my head. 'I used to fancy that fluffy-haired one,' I said, pointing to a photograph in a silver frame. 'But she's gone and got engaged to a major in a cavalry regiment.'

'But you oughtn't to keep her photo?'

'The place looks so bare without it,' I explained. 'I haven't another to put in the frame. I suppose,' I added, averting my eyes and gently stroking the arm of her chair—I wish it had been her arm—'I suppose that if I —er—were to ask you very nicely, you wouldn't take pity on me and give me one of yourself to fill up the gap?'

She gave a little squeak of surprise and sat bolt-upright. 'But, Mr Carfax, I've barely known you five minutes! It wouldn't be at all proper. Besides'—— She paused.

'Is there any reason why we shouldn't get to know each other better?' I interrupted, my heart going pit-a-pat.

'Ah, that depends,' she said archly. 'If you're good, all sorts of things might happen.'

'What d'you mean by that?'

'I think,' she said with mock severity—'I think we'd better change the subject. What beautiful weather we've been having, haven't we?'

'What a ripping pair of shoes you've got on!' I retaliated.

'Yes, they are rather nice,' she agreed, agitating one pretty foot, clad in its black-satin slipper, until the paste buckle shone and twinkled in the light. 'These buckles are real old French paste; they cost a hell—ahem, an awful lot. These stockings, too. They're real silk, you know; none of your imitation rubbish.'

'I don't doubt it,' said I, rather surprised that my fascinating companion should refer to the nether regions and go to the trouble of informing me that her stockings were real silk. I always understood that hell and ladies' stockings were banned in the conversation of polite society. To tell the truth, I felt distinctly embarrassed. Perhaps Miss Rathbone was merely rather outspoken and unconventional, but I had an awful thought at the back of my mind that the shandy-gaff might have gone to her head. Fool that I was! I should never have allowed it.

I glanced at her nervously, but she seemed all right.

'Now I've shocked you,' she declared with mock penitence. 'I'm so sorry. I've got an

awful habit of saying anything that comes into my head.'

'I'm not the least bit shocked.'

'Not the littlest, teeny-weeny bit?' she asked, leaning forward and looking into my eyes.

How tantalising her little pink cheek looked, and how I loved that little wisp of hair at the nape of her neck!

'No,' I said, 'I'm not in the least shocked. On the contrary, I like you'—— And just then the band started for the next dance.

'You can tell me afterwards,' she said, as we got up and left the cabin together. 'I love hearing people's secrets.'

How I whiled away the time until our next dance together I cannot remember. I glared with envy as she whirled round the deck in the arms of the subaltern of marines, the assistant-paymaster, the torpedo lieutenant, and the engineer commander; but at last my turn came again.

'What's this dance?' she asked, as the band started and I went forward to claim her.

'It's a two-step,' I told her.

'I'm sick to death of two-steps!'

'So am I,' I agreed willingly. 'Let's—er—go and sit it out.'

'Let's,' said she sweetly, taking my arm. 'Let's go to that nice little room of yours and talk comfortably.'

My heart gave a leap. I realised that the dear girl must love me already. Was ever a fellow so lucky?

'Half-a-'mo, though,' said Miss Rathbone. 'I'm beastly thirsty.'

My heart fell. 'D'you want more shandygaff?' I gasped.

'No-o,' she cooed. 'I've had three glasses of shandy already. Let's go along to the refreshment-place and see what they've got.'

'Perhaps you'd like some lemonade this time?' I suggested, as we approached the buffet, and I saw the waiter regarding my partner with a horny eye.

She shook her pretty head. 'No; lemonade's too much like water,' she announced. 'Water rots the soles of one's boots, so what the dev—on earth does it do to one's inside? There aren't any liqueurs here, I suppose?'

'No,' I answered firmly.

'I'm simply dying for a glass of that green, pepperminty stuff,' she sighed.

'What! crème de menthe?'

She nodded.

I was quite certain that beer, gingerbeer, crème de menthe, and anything else she may have had between-whiles would not mix; but what could I do? I could not refuse a deliberate request on the part of a lady. For all I knew, she may have wanted it as a medicine.

So I sent for the nauseous stuff, and she swallowed it with every symptom of appreciation.

'It warms the cockles of your heart, doesn't it?' she laughed, coughing slightly and patting her chest. 'Now, let's trot along to that little room of yours.'

We trotted.

'Now,' she said softly, relapsing into my armchair and fixing her eyes on mine, 'what was it you were going to say to me when the band started?'

'I—— Oh, I really can't remember,' I stuttered, blushing furiously.

'Are you quite sure?' she murmured, still eyeing me.

I placed a hand on the arm of her chair. 'I'm a fool,' I said nervously. 'But I—— Oh, I can't say it!'

'Try!' she urged, sliding her arm along until I felt its soft pressure against my hand. 'Do try!'

There was no ignoring her appeal, and I summoned up all my courage. 'I believe I—er—I mean,' I floundered hopelessly—'I mean, I know I love you!' There, I had said it.

She sat up and gazed at me in speechless astonishment, but only for a moment, for suddenly she burst out into shriek after shriek of laughter.

'Oh, ha, ha, ha, ha!' she gasped. 'How damned funny!'

'I beg your pardon?' said I severely, removing my hand. 'I was quite serious.'

'Were you really?' she asked with some show of surprise. 'Oh dear! Aren't I awful? I thought you were pulling my leg, and now I've put my foot in it. Will you ever forgive me?' She looked at me imploringly.

'Yes, if you give me a copy of your photograph and promise that we shall see some more of each other.'

She sighed. 'Do you really want me as a friend?'

'Of course I do!'

'Well, come to tea with the Stanley-Wetheralls on Sunday,' she said. 'Come early. Come at half-past three. I shall be there.'

'You can bet your bottom dollar I will!' said I fervently.

I cannot recollect what else we talked about besides ourselves, but I told her again how much I admired her; and she, like the pet that she was, admitting that the feeling was not altogether one-sided, allowed her little hand to remain in mine. It was obviously a case of love at first sight, and I was just summoning up my courage once more to embrace her, when—the band started again.

Soon afterwards came midnight and the last of the old year. Somebody struck the usual sixteen bells; every ship in the harbour blew her steam-whistle or siren until we could hardly hear ourselves speak; we all unmasked, joined hands in a huge circle, sang 'Auld Lang Syne,' and wished each other a happy New Year.

But I looked in vain for my little lady of the red mask.

'What's become of Ang—Miss Rathbone?' I asked Miss Stanley-Wetherall.

'Oh, it was so sad!' she answered. 'The poor little thing got one of her splitting headaches, and had to go home.'

'By George!' said I; 'I AM sorry!'

But I really did not wonder at it. Shandygaff and crème de menthe do not mix.

So, having lost my divinity, the ball fizzled out so far as I was concerned.

'I say, Carfax,' said the subaltern of marines when the last guests had gone, 'who was that skittish young friend of yours in the red mask? She was jolly hot stuff!'

'I'll thank you not to call my friends "hot stuff," soldier,' I said severely. 'I don't like it.'

'Sorry, old bird. I didn't know she was a particular friend of yours; but she is a bit of a fizzer, all the same.'

'Really?' I observed in my most frigid manner.

'Yes,' nodded the marine officer. 'She used the most peculiar language, and insisted on having a whisky-and-soda with me.'

'And do you know what she said to me?' broke in our engineer commander. 'I'm not a good dancer, as you know, and had the misfortune to tread on her toe; and what d'you think she called me?'

'I'm sure I don't know, sir.'

'She said I was a clumsy old blighter!' said the chief.

'The devil she did?' I gasped.

IV.

At 3.30 P.M. precisely the following Sunday I was shown into Mrs Stanley-Wetherall's drawing-room. Evidently Miss Rathbone was still upstairs enjoying her Sabbath afternoon's repose, for the room was empty. I felt vaguely disappointed. She might have taken the trouble to be punctual, after telling me particularly to come early.

'Wanchee see Missie Rathbone,' I told the Chinese 'boy' as he was disappearing with my cards.

He turned round, screwing up his yellow face.

'You savvy Missie Rathbone?' I repeated, speaking very distinctly.

He shook his head. 'My no savvy dat name,' he answered, looking very puzzled. 'Missie Lathbone no b'long dis house. Missie Wetherall an' Missie Enid b'long topside.'

'All right. Can do,' I said, imagining he must be making a mistake. 'You go tell Missie Enid.'

'I savvy,' he said, closing the door behind him.

At 3.34 by the drawing-room clock the door was opened to admit Jenkinson, a subaltern from the regiment quartered in the barracks below.

'Hallo, Carfax!' he grinned sheepishly. 'Paying calls?'

'Yes,' I nodded coldly. 'I've been asked to tea. Mrs and Miss Stanley-Wetherall won't be down just yet. I'm just—er—waiting for them.'

I half hoped he would take the hint and go away, as he must have seen from my manner that I regarded his arrival as an intrusion. But not a bit of it; he merely selected the most comfortable chair and sat down.

'I'll wait,' he announced. 'As a matter of fact, Miss Rathbone asked me to tea. Told me to come at half-past three.'

'Miss Rathbone?' I demanded, in surprise, very much annoyed that I was not to have my *tête-à-tête* conversation.

'Yes, Miss Rathbone,' he smirked. 'Why not?'

'Merely that she asked me to come here at the same time.'

It was his turn to be jealous, for his expression became most unpleasant. He sat up and glared at me—positively glared. 'She asked you!'

'Certainly,' said I, glaring back. 'She's a great friend of mine.'

'The devil she is!' he muttered. 'But you're not the only'——

Further conversation was interrupted by the arrival of Miss Stanley-Wetherall. She seemed rather perturbed, and had evidently dressed in a hurry. I noticed at once that the tip of her nose was imperfectly powdered.

'Good-afternoon,' Jenkinson and I said together. 'We've come to call.'

'How nice of you!' she said, glancing covertly at the clock. 'Do sit down. Mother will be here in a minute.'

I thought it advisable to explain why I had come so early. 'As a matter of fact,' I said, glaring at the soldier, 'Miss Rathbone asked me particularly to come at half-past three. I hope she is—er—quite well after her headache?'

The girl looked rather flustered. 'Oh yes—er—oh, I mean—well—I have very sad news.'

'What is it?' we both asked.

'Poor Angela had to go back to Singapore the day after the ball. An uncle of hers died. Isn't it sad?'

'Very,' I agreed, bitterly disappointed. 'She told me she was staying here for some time.'

'Y-yes, of course. She was to have stayed with us for a month. But she—she didn't know her father was going to die, did she?'

'Father!' I exclaimed.

'Y-yes,' stuttered Miss Stanley-Wetherall, crimson in the face and staring helplessly out of the window. 'They've both died. Cholera, I think she said. It was—er—terribly sudden, wasn't it?'

'Poor darling!' I murmured under my breath.

The door suddenly opened, and in came our commander and the torpedo lieutenant. The time was a quarter to four. My heart fell into my boots. They also had come at Miss Rathbone's invitation. The little minx seemed to

have asked every one she had danced with at our ball.

At 3.52, when Miss Stanley-Wetherall was in the midst of her explanation, our subaltern of marines was shown in. He was closely followed by a member of the staff of the Hong-Kong and Shanghai Bank, another officer of Jenkinson's regiment, and the deputy-manager of the Vacuum Oil Company. They, too, asked for Miss Rathbone, and once more the sad story had to be told.

At three minutes past four Mrs Stanley-Wetherall herself made her appearance. 'How nice of you all to call!' she said graciously, evidently prepared beforehand for the crowd which greeted her. 'I do hope Enid has been entertaining you. It's too sad about poor Angelina.'

'Angela, mother dear,' her daughter corrected.

'Angela, to be sure. I was forgetting. But it's so sad. The poor, dear girl so enjoyed the ball, and then the very next morning she got a wretched cable to say that her brother in Shanghai was dangerously ill'——

We stared at each other in mute astonishment.

'Oh!' squeaked the daughter, falling into a chair and covering her face with her handkerchief. 'I shall scream in a minute!'

We rushed to her assistance.

'Bring some water, quickly!' the commander ordered nobody in particular.

'Stand back, everybody! Give her air!' said the Vacuum Oil gentleman agitatedly, flourishing a purple silk handkerchief.

'Ring the bell for my smelling-salts!' shrilled the anxious mother. 'She's fainting!'

'Slap her hands and feet—hard,' advised the torpedo lieutenant. 'My sister often has these fits.'

'Oh, for goodness' sake leave me alone!' spluttered the invalid, sitting up and removing the handkerchief. 'Oh, it's too gorgeous!'

We stared at her in blank astonishment. She was shaking with laughter. The tears were actually running from her eyes.

'It's the funniest thing I've ever heard,' she went on breathlessly. 'To think how you've all been taken in! You badly wanted more girls, so mother and I'——

'I'm sure I had nothing to do with it!' snorted the elder lady.

'Yes, you had,' laughed her dutiful daughter. 'Well, mother and I thought we would do our best for you, so I lent my cousin my frock, and shoes, and everything. They fitted perfectly. I borrowed a transformation from—well, never mind whom—and told him'——

'Him!' we echoed.

She nodded feebly. 'Yes,' she said. 'H-I-M.'

'Who is he?' we demanded, grinding our respective teeth.

'Promise you won't hurt him if I tell you?' she asked, looking at each of us in turn.

We promised faithfully.

'His full name,' she giggled, 'is G-G-George Ponsonby Buckle. I think you must all have met him!'

George Ponsonby Buckle, Midshipman, R.N., the 'White Maggot' of H.M.S. *Warwick*. To think of it!

It was my turn to collapse into a chair.

THE END.

A VISIT TO A COPTIC MONASTERY.

THE Copts of Egypt, having for a number of centuries 'bowed low before the blast' of Mohammedan persecution, and later, with a similar obstinacy, withstood the well-meant assaults of Protestant missionaries, are now quarrelling vigorously among themselves. The questions at issue are quite unconnected with doctrine. £, *s. d.* is the cause of the ferment. The partisans are, on the one side, the clergy, who control the *wakfs* (religious endowments), and, on the other, the reform party, represented by the wealthy and educated Copts, who wish to take the administration of the Church property out of the hands of the clergy and place it upon a business footing under a representative body. The peasants remain, as usual, apathetic.

A more striking contrast than that presented by the opposing factions could not be imagined. The clergy, bearded, black-turbaned, and clothed in flowing robes, look exactly what they are—relics of a bygone age, or at any rate an age which is rapidly passing away. They might have stepped direct from a Bible picture. They are rarely possessed of any education beyond the ability to perform the priestly office and to repeat by rote passages of the Scriptures. Many of them are utterly illiterate

The opponent of this picturesque type presents a very different aspect. The modern Copt dresses in European clothes, retaining, however, the *tarboosh* as a head-dress. He is to be found following such vocations as lawyer, doctor, stock-broker, or money-lender. He also figures largely in the Government service, and not infrequently speaks both French and English as well as his own tongue.

Undoubtedly Lord Kitchener's bold stroke in taking the Mohammedan *wakfs* away from the khedivial influence, and placing them under a special Ministry, had a great deal of influence on Coptic opinion. The Copts aver that they appealed again and again to his lordship to organise a reform in their *wakfs*.

Various reasons are hazarded for his refusal. One is that the Patriarch of Alexandria, the head of the Coptic Church, is now a very old man. He wishes to leave the Church exactly as he found it. When he dies, and his successor is appointed, action will be taken. The fact is, something more than merely consulting the Patriarch would have to be done. With the introduction into the country of European business methods and a settled form of government, the various bishops and abbots have consolidated their position in the most surprising manner, and any attempt to dislodge them would probably provoke a contest, in which all the resources of the law would be played to the uttermost.

The first aim of the reformers' attack is the monasteries. The modern Copt—staunch in his orthodoxy—is nothing if not up to date, and history has taught him to raise the voice of accusation against these institutions, a number of which are enormously wealthy. Some of these monasteries are of great antiquity; several, surviving the Mohammedan invasion of the seventh century, go right back to the dim, far days of Hypatia. The most notable of these is the one dedicated to St Anthony of the Thebaid, situated in an isolated spot three days' journey across the eastern desert. It was here that the saint is said to have spent seventy years sitting on a rocky platform high up in the barren mountain-side. He earned a great reputation, and a regular caravan route for pilgrims was established from the Nile valley.

The monastery, which was built after his death, appears to have existed right down to the present day, with only one break, which occurred about four hundred years ago. The monks at that time, having apparently become rich and indolent, imported a number of Moslem slaves to do the menial work. The slaves were baptised and made nominal Christians. One night, however, they rose and massacred their masters; then, sacking the monastery, fled. After this the place was abandoned for a period of seventy years, all manuscripts and other objects of interest being destroyed by the wandering Arabs.

A visit made by the writer to this monastery may not be without interest. The first thing to be done was to secure a letter of introduction from the bishop. After this two Arabs of the Maazi—the tribe which inhabits that particular part of the desert—had to be engaged as guides.

This brings up a curious point in connection with desert travel. Take with you even one man of the tribe amongst whom you are going to travel, and you can go from Algiers to Persia without so much as a walking-stick in your hand. Go alone, or with strangers, and you will most certainly get your throat slit.

We commenced our journey early one morning from the east side of the Nile opposite the village of Busch. The November air was keen, the camels were swift, well-bred beasts, and we were travelling light. There was exhilaration in that morning ride; also, it was a relief to escape from the eternal green of the cultivated area, with the sense of confinement and flat monotony. The Nile valley grew dimmer and dimmer as we ascended the sandy slope, and finally became nothing but a misty gray expanse stretching away to the low hills of the Libyan Desert. This was the last impression gathered from a high shoulder on which we halted after some four hours of travel. Thenceforward the journey lay through the abomination of desolation—the rugged, burnt-up mountains, the dry, sandy watercourses, and the wind-swept plateaus of the region lying between the Nile and the Red Sea.

At noon we rested for an hour, without, however, removing the saddles, a precaution, the camelmen informed me, to prevent blistered backs. We travelled all through the afternoon, the scenery varying but little, and hardly meriting a description. During the latter part of the afternoon the track led over a high plateau covered with black, shiny pebbles. The distant hillocks were floating about in lakes of mirage, and a deadly stillness reigned over all. We met no one on the way. Apparently the track led only to the monastery.

Another hard day's travel brought us off the high plateau down through a rocky and precipitous gorge into the Wady-el-Araba, a valley about twenty miles broad, walled in by lofty ranges of barren mountains running east and west. A high promontory was pointed out to me as the Gebel-el-Der (Mountain of the Monastery). Of the monastery itself, however, nothing was visible. It was still a day's journey off.

We camped that night by some pools fed by brackish springs. It was the first water we had seen since leaving the Nile, and the camels were glad of a drink. Half-a-dozen date-palms of various sizes, and looking as though they had received the curse of barrenness from their very birth, reared their crests over this dismal spot.

The Arabs tell of many places in these wild, desolate ranges which mark the sites of former hermitages and monasteries. They are generally near a spring or group of pools. Their history is long buried in oblivion. The knowledge of their existence has been handed down by tradition amongst the nomad inhabitants. It was undoubtedly into these rocky fastnesses that the Christian hermits fled before the fierce onslaught of the Moslem invasion. Possibly the worshippers of Isis may have preceded them when Christianity became vigorous and aggressive. The whole of this region lying between the Nile and the Red Sea, and shimmering in the eternal heat-haze and silence, was once intersected with

highways and byways, and echoed the busy comings and goings of men.

A little to the south of our route are the once famous porphyry quarries. It was there that the columns were quarried for the temples of ancient Egypt, and later for those of Rome. The roads along which these huge blocks of stone were hauled, sometimes a hundred miles, as well as the stations where supplies of water were kept, are traceable to-day. One of these roads leading from Kena was under the special tutelage of a triad consisting of Amsu or Pan, Isis, and the infant Horus. Isis is described as 'the beautiful mother of the gods, the Queen of Heaven.' She is represented holding in her arms the divine infant. An inscription records that nearly ten thousand men were employed in one group of quarries alone. Their rude stone huts are standing to-day. The Romans used these roads as a line of communication to their colonies on the Red Sea, and in the year 1800 one of the routes was followed by our Indian army on its march to the Nile. A well dug by the sepoys on that occasion is still known as the Bir-el-Inglisi.

The last day's journey took us in a transverse direction right across the valley, heading always for the Gebel-el-Der, which, like all prominent landmarks, seemed to recede as we approached.

It was an hour before we got within appreciable distance of the monastery, and during this period it had vanished and reappeared several times as we dipped into the deep water-courses which score the valley. As we emerged from one of these, our low cemetery wall had magically grown into lofty battlements enclosing a large, irregular portion of the hillside. A dark embrasure indicated the entrance, and beside it stood two black-robed monks. They had seen us coming from afar, and had come out to welcome us.

Causing our camels to kneel, we exchanged greetings. One of the monks then pulled a bell-rope which was hanging down over the wall, and a bell high up in the turret tinkled. Presently the huge iron-studded door swung open, and we were admitted to the monastery.

The first thing which caught my eye was a large space filled with great stacks of firewood, which struck a strangely medieval and northern note in this hot land. The rest was a confused mass of houses of the Fellah type of unburned brick, with tiny streets not unlike those in an Earl's Court Exhibition village. The white cupolas of several churches rose up from this mêlée, and over all were the tossing plumes of a grove of date-palms. Of such height were the walls that none of these features had been visible from outside except the tops of the palm-trees.

Presently the senior monk, a sturdy old Fellah of Falstaffian proportions, came forward and took my letter of introduction. He opened it, squinted at it, and turned it all ways, pretending to read it. I suspected him, however, to be illiterate, an opinion which was confirmed later when I saw a young monk reading it over to him.

Satisfied as to my credentials, the old man conducted me to the guest-rooms, which, much to my surprise, were both clean and comfortable. I had anticipated hospitality, and had provided myself with several tins of Keating's powder. Be it recorded that I had not to open one. The rooms gave on to a terrace, from which there was access to the walls and also to a remarkably fine view right down to the valley to where a tiny strip of deep blue indicated the Gulf of Suez. On the other side of this loomed the misty outline of Mount Sinai.

That evening the old monk and I sat down to a most elaborate banquet which had been prepared in my honour; and when we had eaten we talked, and our talk was all about the kings and queens of Europe, in whom my host seemed to have the profoundest interest.

When I had given my personal assurance as to the health of King George and Queen Mary, we fell to mutually pounding the Young Turk party, and then passed gracefully on to the war, with speculation as to the probability of Mass being said once more in St Sophia. Nor did my host forget the polite hope, usually offered by Egyptians, that Egypt might always remain under the care of Great Britain. This was about the scope of our conversation.

By half-past eight the monastery was as silent as the grave, and the old man began to yawn, and presently bade me good-night.

The next morning I was awakened by the clanging of a bell. It was still dark, but I dressed and went out and made my way towards one of the churches. Dim, cowled figures were hurrying in from every direction. The monks left their shoes at the door, and each took a long-handled crutch upon which to lean during the service, for there were no seats. Inside, the building was divided into two portions by a high screen covered with icons. In the inner portion, upon a stone altar, two candles gave a fitful gleam which served to emphasise the surrounding gloom. Priests, turbaned and vested, were already chanting in a monotonous minor as they walked round the altar amidst clouds of incense. The service, which was the celebration of Communion, lasted over two hours. It was held in the ancient Coptic tongue. There was a rugged grandeur about it which harmonised well with the surroundings, and was strongly suggestive of early Christian days. At the conclusion blessed bread was handed round in substantial loaves, which were broken and eaten in the church.

Most of the day I spent idling about the garden, which was terraced out of the steep slopes of the hill. Besides date-palms, it possessed some very

fine olives, just then in full bearing, and a wonderful sight.

A crowd of monks followed me everywhere like a troop of children, pleased at having a stranger to talk to. From them I was able to gather something of their life. It certainly did not seem a hard one, and bore no relation whatever to the generally accepted ideas of monkish discipline. Each man had his little cottage, and was given his daily ration of food, which he could eat how and when he liked. No productive labour of any kind was done, nor did there appear to be any daily routine. Church services were held twice daily. The remainder of the time the monks seemed to spend loafing about smoking cigarettes. All these men were drawn from the Fellah class. Some were mere youths; others were old men with patriarchal beards. Several had not left the monastery for forty years. Having regard to the very uxorious nature of the Egyptian Fellah, who marries young, and who can but rarely be induced to leave his village and his land, the wonder is that any recruits for the monastic life can be obtained at all.

At the time of my visit there were only forty monks in the monastery, though there is accommodation for more than double that number. Eleven were priests, whilst three held the rank of *kommos*, or arch-priest. Down to recent times the Patriarch of Alexandria was always chosen from the monks of St Anthony, who enjoyed a particular reputation for sanctity.

The income of the monastery now amounts to something over twenty thousand pounds a year; and, as the only visible expenditure is the maintenance of the monks, whose dietary is mainly of a vegetarian nature, the Copts are beginning to ask what becomes of all the money. The funds are entirely under the control of the abbot, who resides on the estates at Busch, in the Beni Souef province.

The monks seem to be on the best of terms with the Arabs of the desert. A frequent occurrence during my stay was the ringing of the bell over the entrance-door, and on these occasions a monk would rush off to answer the summons. Opening a trap-door in the overhanging turret, he would shout down to inquire what was wanted. It was usually a demand from wandering Bedouins for flour, bread, or dates. Portions of these would be promptly lowered in a basket without any demand being made for payment. This charity was probably in the nature of a tax paid to the desert tribes, who are all Mohammedans, and who could easily make life impossible for the monks in this isolated spot. I was informed that, even as matters were, no monk would dare to make the journey to the Nile without a Bedouin escort.

One of the most interesting features of the place is the water-supply, which gushes in a fine strong stream from a rock at the top end of the garden. The rock has been excavated for some distance back to facilitate the flow, and the result is a most picturesque grotto covered with water-loving plants. The water, like all the water in the valley, is brackish, though in a much less degree than in other places.

Of the churches, only one is of interest from an archæological point of view. This is the original church of St Anthony, probably as old as the monastery itself. In form it is quite unlike the ordinary Coptic church, being long, narrow, and having an apse at the east end instead of the usual square portion cut off by the iconostasis. The walls are covered with rude frescoes, grimed with smoke, but still plainly discernible. The monks declare that St Anthony is buried in this church, though they profess to be ignorant of the exact spot.

The one other place of interest was the cave —a thousand feet up the face of the mountain— in which the saint passed his life. The spot is marked by a tiny natural platform of rock, and from this a winding tunnel of some thirty or forty yards leads to a dreadful hole right in the heart of the mountain. Here is shown the tiny space where the saint used to sleep, and the rough block of stone which he used as an altar. The platform at the entrance to the tunnel commands a really fine view over the wild and rugged valley. Doubtless it was here that the holy man sat whilst pilgrims from the far Nile valley climbed painfully up the steep face of the cliff to seek his blessing or to obtain absolution for some grievous fault, not forgetting to bring with them those substantial tokens of penitence without which even the holiest of men cannot sit upon a rock gazing ever upon the face of nature.

An old, old story. But to-day the pilgrims do not come. Instead, Coptic reformers, smug and bespectacled, meet in solemn conclave, debating as to whether it were not best to sweep this relic of the past from the face of the earth.

FIREFLIES.

Fireflies, out in the darkness glistening,
Tell me, oh, tell me, the way you came;
Was it through woods where the elves lie listening,
And shiver with fear at your passing flame?

Were you minted from fires of daffodil yellow,
Or born in the sedge by the haunted mere?
Was it April begat you, or autumn mellow
At the turn of the leaf and the fall of the year?

Did you drift from the curls of the babe Apollo
As he roamed unseen o'er the vales of Greece?
Or, stay, were you torn by a homing swallow
From the sun-kissed hills of the Chersonese?

Fireflies, out in the darkness glistening,
Tell me, oh, tell me, the way you came;
Was it through woods where the elves lie listening
With eyes aglimmer? Come, tell the name
Of the fairy furnace that forged the flame.

D. Boyle.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

NOW we see clearly that in former days the human imagination was much too timid in regarding the possibilities of life and the world's development. Despite science, despite thought and work, despite even the most tremendous politics and all-night sittings at Westminster upon the doubts and dangers of governmental measures that were proposed, there was such a conservatism of attitude towards the future as seemed to suggest the assumption that movement and development had almost stuck. Historic upheaval, so it appeared, had ceased—in Britain at all events; there would be no more changes in the scenes of civilisation; and with each London season the idea of the millennium became appreciably more abstract or even stupid. History and progress had reached, as it were, a *cul-de-sac*, in which everything was to be left to electricity, and the spirit seemed doomed to starve. If you will think closely upon it, many of you will agree that something like this represented in a large measure the general human attitude before the war. The world had fallen into a state of inertia; life, that had so slowly evolved through the æons from—from what did it evolve?—had come to a kind of stoppage that resembled finality. Men and women spoke lightly of 'perfection' having been attained, of the 'last word' having been said, of the uttermost discovery having been made, of nothing more being left to be done by marvellous man. A scientist would make some chemical discovery that would solve many mysteries which had baffled us for generations, and so now in this field there was completion, and nothing more remained to be done. An explorer would reach an extreme point, and so, the stars being forgotten, that was finished also. Men and women turned their minds to the past and did a sort of stock-taking and appraisement of merits, deciding who and what had been the greatest, and were to be classified as such for all time. There were no more possibilities, then; developments were apparently impossible. That fatal word had entered the mind, and it stayed. Having produced human life and continued to work upon it for very many thousands of years, with, as one must believe, some view of ultimately achieving a kind of perfection for this magnificent handiwork, the most marvellous thing we know of in the universe, the Creator was evidently supposed to have ceased this anxious endeavour upon arriving at our wonderful generation. That sense of future impossibilities was a deadening thing, and life was suffering severely for it. The war, of course, has made a change; and it is perhaps in this general attitude towards the possibilities of life and the future that the greatest change has been made in each one of us by the cataclysm of war. We hear continually of the differences that the struggle will make and has made—and we look around and find some people defining those differences chiefly in terms of food, and money, and minor conveniences. But that general sense of the greater, the spiritual change, the mental outlook, the sense of the possibilities and the meaning of life, and the scheme of the Creator, has been felt vaguely within us, and has been difficult to define, to seize upon. Is it not fairly well suggested in the simple idea that the barrier of impossibility which seemed to have arisen in people's minds and to have made a ring-fence round existence has been removed, that the conservative tendencies of thought have gone with it, and that now we see that all things such as were of dreams before *may* be, and that the world and life will go marching on? Minds are enlarged; the old pettiness of conception falls; and imagination soars again, leading effort on. To take but one instance, see what changes are being wrought in the British form of government, which seemed so stable and so settled; think what changes are coming on. It is from this disappearance of the formula of impossibility, and from the successful raids we are making already in the unknown worlds it hid from us, that life at present, for all its griefs and its horrors, its sufferings and its cruelties, is so thrilling. The world is on the road again, and there is a new scene at every turning.

* * *

It is certainly by the course of such a contemplation that many of us can best explain the peculiar strength and quality of our emotions as certain events happen in these times, which our improving intelligence enables us to understand in a way that not long since might have been hard. For example now, there was the

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case of the entry of the United States into the war, and the swift action that instantly spread over that golden land which many had imagined permanently settled for non-intervention. Here in some respects one of the impossibilities was removed, and a possibility for the progress of life that shone and glittered in its splendour was set up in its place. The emotional effect was remarkable. It was through this effect that many of the people came to a new understanding of possibility, knew that the world was started again in eagerness, and was no more like the lazy, careless world of the other time that seemed to have spent its effort in straining on to perfection, and to have retired to ease and comfort on a modest competency of self-satisfaction. The entry of the United States, the dominant force of the New World towards which all the forces of civilisation look more and more, was the signal of the progressive future, that which recognised no impossibility, pointing to a reconstruction of the world and of thought and a new advance towards the unseen goal which may yet be millions of years ahead, which the Master of the world must hold in the wonderful scheme of time. The old war craze, the instinct for the massing of armed legions, the mad ambitions of rival tribes, diplomatic chicaneries, and a gigantic system of international irritation and small-mindedness have spoiled Europe when her power for good was best. In this emergency it is essential for the advancement of the universal scheme of world progress that life should now push on from a new salient, and that the best of Europe should join up with the virile forces beyond the ocean within whose control so large a part of destiny seems to lie. It is not merely a matter of giving money, ships, and men to the fighting Allies, enormous as is the benefit of these things, and necessary even for the safety and preservation of what is left of good in Europe; it is the token of the future, the opening of one of the old gates of possibility that seemed for ever locked against us, and the beginning of the world anew. America can give much that is absolutely essential to us at present and in the future. She is rich; she has money and land, a fine hardy race of men and women that she is building up and improving on, generation after generation; she has noble ideals, and above all she has freedom in her soul and a cold contempt for the shams and hypocrisies of some dying forms of civilisation. That freedom of America is a very real and a very great thing. It is in some ways the most splendid thing in the development of the human mind and instincts that has ever been known. And those who have not spent time in the United States and wandered about that wondrous land cannot realise how this freedom is not only a thing for reflection, and moralising, and speaking or writing about, but is as real as the earth, as the sun and the clouds and the bodies of men. It is in the air that is breathed; one lives in it, feels it. America is still thousands of years, perhaps, from her own perfection, but she has made an enormous advance in the establishment of the principle of freedom and in the strenuous cultivation of it; and though she is still young, suffers from the faults of youth, finds continually that through selfishness of units specks of corruption and imperfection creep into her fabric —of which other jealous peoples have rarely failed to make the most by strenuous exaggeration—the principle is there, and works energetically always. For this glorious effort in reality, in sincerity, in truth, and in the resulting freedom, every man of heart and sense should salute the American eagle. Bettered, as we hope, through sadness and suffering in the war, we shall join this great people for the new effort in the task of the human race — the eradication of its faults. If, as we say, America can give us much in material, and much in principle and ideals, the good part of the Old World which joins hands with her gives something of great value to the common capital for the new adventure, something that not for ages, if ever, could America make for herself. It will give a peculiar refinement of mind which cannot be successfully imitated by others any more than rare and subtle Eastern scents can be concocted in a Piccadilly shop. The glories of the literature of France, of the art of Italy, and the peculiar pertinacious spirit of Britain are to be more intimately associated with America, to her infinite advantage. This new combination, judging by the standards we know and can think of, is so superb, so tremendous and encouraging in its possibility, that as we see it now it would have been a hard, sad thing for East and West to try to struggle on in independence of each other. The prospect would have been nearly as hopeless and demoralising for the whole of humanity as prospect could ever be. The human instinct is a wonderful thing, subtle and sure in the promptings given to it from secret sources, and, without troubling to work out the grand Possibility in any such logical way, mankind knew by a flooding joyous inspiration what the coming of America meant, how the world must be changed and made the better—not, as we say, for her assistance in the war, but for the new and earnest association afterwards. A certain elation, which was purer and nobler than any other emotion experienced since the struggle began, filled the hearts of the people. They had the feeling of an Impossibilty accomplished.

* * *

No man of thought and understanding who was in London on what we entitled 'America's Day' will ever forget the experience, purely emotional as it was. The day before, primroses had been laid at the foot of the statue of Lord Beaconsfield in Parliament Square, and the tribute to 'Peace with Honour' had been made.

This statue of the Victorian statesman bedecked with the frail blooms of a laggard spring looked out towards the Victoria Tower at what we think of as the Lords' end of the Houses of Parliament, the dominating pinnacle of the Westminster group. High upon the summit of the Tower there are at the four corners little crowns upon their separate spires, and from the middle there ascends the flag-staff, at the tip of which is another crown. From this crowned staff no other than our own dear flag had ever flown; tradition, use, and sentiment had consecrated the Victoria Tower with its crowned pride to Britain's own. But on America's Day old tradition and all its traps were flung aside; old prejudices, born of resentments and jealousies created more than a hundred years ago, were shovelled under; and the Stars and Stripes, the star-spangled banner of freedom, was sent aloft to the crowned staff along with the Union-Jack. One doubts if man will ever see a more significant omen in these modern times than that. Thousands of people of this city, and of strangers from the country, and those of foreign lands, and Americans, feeling those new emotions within them, gazed upon those twin flags, and, realising the mighty portent, felt a spell upon them. The flags were not above and below each other, nor in any form of separation. They were together; they took the breeze together; their folds wrapped and mingled with each other; and, as you watched them flutter, you saw a composite of the British and American, some stars in a corner and a diagonal red with a patch of blue in the opposite, but never did you see two separate flags. They flew together. On the Abbey, on St Margaret's, over at the Westminster City Hall, on the tops of Whitehall, Victoria Street, and all the thoroughfares of great London, the effect was repeated in a gentler tone. There was the dominant note on the Victoria Tower, and it echoed through the town. The Stars and Stripes on a sunny morning were welcomed in their proud appearance on the heights of the capital of empire, and against the pearly sky of that memorable day they made an overwhelming display. 'Lo!' thought some of those who looked; 'how fast has America galloped in history! Here is the Mother of Parliaments, scene of the deeds of Cromwell and the Stuarts and the rest, shrine of constitutional England, and here is the flag of America flying upon it, the America that began but yesterday!'

* * *

After all, in a considerable sense, very literal, these Stars and Stripes had but come home again. There are those who find flaws in the legend and the circumstances, as they do in all that is not ordinary and plain, but yet it is the truth that those Stars and Stripes came from Northamptonshire. Something of the kind was in the arms of the family of Washington that belongs to that good English shire, and when a national flag was adopted in June 1777—the War of Independence not yet being won, but victory being anticipated—the Stars and Stripes were adopted for the flag of the American republic. It is the belief of America that this was the origin, that it was a compliment to the leader who was forging the grand beginning of the new nation that was to take leadership in the world. The contrary theory is that the Stars and Stripes were adopted from the official emblem of the old East India Company, which consisted of thirteen alternate red and white stripes, with the combined crosses of St George and St Andrew in the canton. To me this seems most unlikely in comparison with the other view, and the single suggestion to support it is that the East India Company's emblem had the thirteen red and white stripes, as had the American flag. But the latter had thirteen because there were thirteen states to start with. What should the Congress of the new nation care for the East India Company and the exact characterisation of its emblem? Even if they had indeed borrowed the idea, surely that very fact would have led them to make such difference in detail as they could. On the other hand, George Washington was then the man—the one upon whom all the hopes of those who fought for freedom were reposed. So much was George Washington the man, that his officers in the field, believing more in him than they did in the political leaders, petitioned him to be their king! He was the first president, as he was the virtual creator, of the new republic. The new capital was christened with his name, a name that rose in an English midland county. George Washington revered the old English home. Family pride was a force in him.

* * *

Four years ago I wandered about Washington and Mount Vernon, where the first president lived and died, and one saw evidences of that reverence in many places. The short steamboat trip by river from the chief city to Mount Vernon is in many respects the most impressive, and at the same time the most delightful, that a stranger in the States may make. A glide upon the brown waters of the Potomac, and soon the long, low, white mansion is seen composed upon a ridge. The path to the height is steep and green, and in the early spring or after rain there is a smell of Nature, of the fresh country, that is grateful to the man who has lived many days and nights in those hurtling cities. About the house are wide lawns and clumps of trees, many of which were personally selected and planted by Washington himself, for he was particular in this matter of the adornment of Mount Vernon. There is a magnolia near the butler's house, which he brought from the James River in 1799, the last year of his life; and in one of the mounds near the entrance is an elm, a slip from the Washington elm in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which was sent to Mount Vernon by Miss Alice Longfellow, Vice-Regent for Massa-

chusetts. There are shrubs presented to the garden by other presidents; a hydrangea planted by Lafayette in 1824; and the Mary Washington rose, named by Washington for his mother. There is a willow that came from Napoleon's grave at St Helena, a German linden set up by Prince Henry of Prussia, and a British oak planted by request of our King Edward, when Prince of Wales, to replace the memorial tree which he himself planted during his visit to Mount Vernon in 1860, and which died. Some of these are near the tomb, upon which Marshal Joffre the other day laid a spray of bronze and Mr Balfour a wreath of laurel and lilies intertwined with the colours of the Allies, this inscription being on the wreath: 'Dedicated by the British mission to the immortal memory of George Washington, soldier, statesman, and patriot, who would have rejoiced to see the country of which he was by birth a citizen and the country which his genius called into existence fighting side by side to save mankind from subjection to military despotism.' That was the solemn, noble tribute laid on the tomb where lie the remains of Washington and his wife Martha. (The key of the vault was cast into the Potomac when the bodies were laid in it after being brought from the old tomb.) This simple, splendid tribute by Mr Balfour for his country was the right corollary to the flying of those brother-flags from the Victoria Tower at Westminster. Step across the threshold of the house at Mount Vernon, look from chamber to chamber, wonder and meditate, consider the meaning of character and the force of man, and among other things you will perceive that this was the home not only of a great soldier and statesman, who turned the path of history, but also of a fine gentleman with noble and yet simple tastes. For a score of good reasons I cannot bring myself to think that the early Americans did anything but make their compliment to George Washington the completest possible. They called their city after him, and surely they might choose also his own banner or one something like it for that of the new nation. 'Resolved,' said Congress, 'that the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.' The thirteen, as we have suggested, were for the thirteen original colonies that revolted from the Mother Country under the leadership of Washington. It was the intention of Congress to add one more to the original thirteen stars and stripes whenever a new state was added, and soon Vermont and Kentucky caused additions; but when the total had come to twenty and there was a prospect of many more, there was fear of overcrowding with stripes, and Congress determined that for the future there should be only a new star for a new state, and that the stripes should go back to the original thirteen, the founders' stripes. Now there are forty-eight stars in six rows in the inner top corner of this mighty banner. Americans love this flag; they are proud of it; they have need to be. They call it 'Old Glory' affectionately. They think it is beautiful, and though few flags are dreams of art, there are here the emblems of truth, of sincerity, of love and endeavour, and those are the most beautiful things. The Federal law forbids that this great flag shall ever be used in trade-marks and advertising, and ordains that it shall 'never be allowed to touch the ground.' On Flag Day of 1914 (14th June) Mr Franklin K. Lane, the British-born Secretary of the Interior in the Wilson Cabinet, spoke to his staff at Washington these words: 'I swing before your eyes as a bright gleam of colour, a symbol of yourself, the pictured suggestion of that big thing which makes the nation. My stars and stripes are your dream and your labours. They are bright with cheer, brilliant with courage, firm with faith, because you have made them so out of your hearts. For you are the makers of the flag, and it is well that you glory in the making.' If ever there was reason for a studied lapse from old tradition, and for a friendly flag to flap with ours upon the topmost towers of Westminster, 'Old Glory' was the rightful flag.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXXI.—*continued.*

BUT now was sudden uproar of voices in the street hard by, a running and trampling of feet, and, the swing-doors opening, a group of men appeared, bearing among them a heavy burden, and coming to the quiet corner, they laid M'Ginnis there. Battered, bloody, and torn he lay, his handsome features swollen and disfigured, his clothes dusty and dishevelled, while above him and around him men stooped and peered and whispered.

'Why, it's—it's—Bud!' stammered Spike, shrinking away from that inanimate form. 'My God! it's Bud!'

''S right, kid!' nodded Soapy imperturbably, hands in pockets; and, though his voice sounded listless as ever, his eyes gleamed evilly, and the dangling cigarette quivered and stirred.

'Ain't—dead, is he?' some one questioned.

'Dead—not much!' answered Soapy; 'guess it's goin' to take more'n that to make Bud a stiff un. Besides, Bud ain't goin' t'die that way; no, not that way, I reckon. Dead? Watch

this!' So saying, he reached Spike's half-emptied glass from the bar, and, not troubling to stoop, poured the raw spirit down upon M'Ginnis's pale, blood-smirched face.

'Dead?' said Soapy. 'Well, I guess not; look at him!' And, sure enough, M'Ginnis stirred, groaned, opened swollen eyelids, and, aided by some ready arm, sat up feebly. Then he glanced up at the ring of peering faces and down upon his rent and dusty person, and fell to a sudden fierce torrent of curses; and, cursing thus, his strength seemed to return all at once, for he sprang to his feet, and with clenched fists drove through the crowd, and, lifting a flap in the bar, opened a door beyond and was gone.

'No,' said Soapy, shaking his head, 'I guess Bud ain't dead—yet, fellers. I wonder who gave him that eye, kid? An' his mouth too? Did ye pipe them split lips? Kind o' painful, I guess. An' a couple o' teeth knocked out too? Some punchin', kid! An' Bud kind o' fancied them nice white teeth o' his a whole heap!'

Here the bar-tender glanced toward the corner where they stood, and, lifting an eyebrow, jerked his thumb at the door behind him with the words, 'Kid, I reckon Bud wants ye.'

For a moment Spike hesitated; then, lifting the mahogany flap, he crossed the bar with familiar foot, and opened the door.

'Guess I'll come along, kid;' and, hands in pockets, Soapy followed.

They found M'Ginnis sprawling at a table and scowling at the broken knuckles of his bruised right hand, while at his elbow were a bottle and two glasses. He had washed the blood and dirt from him, had brushed and straightened his dusty garments, but he couldn't hide the cuts and bruises that disfigured his face, or his scratched and swollen throat.

'What you here for?' he demanded, as Soapy closed the door. 'Didn't send for you, did I?'

'No; that 's why I come, Bud.'

'But say, Bud, what—what 's been th' matter?' stammered Spike, his gaze upon M'Ginnis's battered face. 'Who 's been'——

'Matter? Nothin'! I had a bit of a rough-house as I come along.'

''S right,' nodded Soapy; 'you sure look it! Never seen a fatter eye.'

'Well, what you got t' beef about?'

'Nothin', Bud; only'——

'Only what?'

'It 's kind o' tough you losin' them couple o' teeth—or is it three?'

M'Ginnis turned on him with a snarl. 'A-r-r-, you! Some day I 'm goin' t' kick the insides out o' ye!'

'Some day, Bud, sure. I'll be waitin'! Meantime, why not get some doctor-guy t' put yer face back in shape? Gee, I hate t' see ye—ye look like a butcher's shop! An' them split lips pains some, I guess!'

Here, while M'Ginnis choked in impotent rage, Soapy lit a fresh cigarette from the butt of the last, and held out the packet. 'Try a coffin-nail, Bud? No? Well, I guess ye couldn't smoke good with a mouth on ye like that.'

'Who did it, Bud?' questioned Spike eagerly. 'Who was it?'

'Hush up, kid; hush up!' said Soapy, viewing M'Ginnis's cuts and bruises with glistening eyes; 'I guess that guy 's layin' around somewheres waitin' f'r th' coroner. Bud wouldn't let him make such a holy mess o' his face an' get away with it—not much! Bud 's a killer; I know that.—Don't I, Bud?'

'You close up that dog's head o' yours, Soapy, or, by'——

''S all right, Bud—'s all right. Don't get peeved. I'll close up tighter 'n a clam; only—it 's kinder tough about them teeth.'

'Are ye goin' t' cut it out, or shall'——

'Aw, calm down, Bud—calm down! Take a drink; it 'll do ye good.' And, filling a glass with rye whisky, Soapy set it before M'Ginnis, who cursed him, took it up, and turned to Spike.—'Fill it up, kid,' he commanded.

'Not me, Bud; I—I ain't here for that,' said Spike. 'I come t' tell ye as some dirty guy 's been an' blown the game on me t' Hermy. She—she knows everything, an' to-night she drove me away from her.'

'Did she, kid, eh—did she?' said M'Ginnis, a new note of eagerness in his voice. 'Drove ye out onto the streets, kid? That 's damn hard on you!'

'Yes, Bud, I—guess she—don't want me around.'

'Kind o' looks that way!' nodded M'Ginnis; and, filling Spike's glass, he put it into the boy's unwilling fingers. 'Take a drink, kid; ye sure need it!' said he.

''S right,' murmured Soapy; 'told ye Bud 'u'd comfort ye, didn't I, kid?'

'So Hermy 's drove ye away?' said M'Ginnis; 'throwed ye out—eh?'

'She sure has, Bud, an' I—oh, I 'm miserable as hell!'

'Why, then, get some o' Bud's comfort into ye, kid,' murmured Soapy; 'lap it up good, kid; there 's plenty more—in th' bottle!'

'Let him alone,' growled M'Ginnis; 'he don't want you buttin' in!'

''S right too, Bud!' nodded Soapy; 'he 's got you, ain't he? An' you—got him, ain't you?'

'I didn't think Hermy 'u'd ever treat me—like this!' said Spike tearfully.

'You mean—throwin' ye out onto th' streets, kid? Why, I been expectin' it!' said M'Ginnis.

'Expectin' it?' repeated Spike, setting down his glass and staring. 'Why?'

'Well, she 's a girl, ain't she? an' they 're all th' same, I reckon.'

'An' Bud knows all about girls, kid!' murmured Soapy. 'Bud 's wise t' all their tricks. Ain't yer, Bud?'

'But whatcher mean?' cried Spike. 'What ye mean about expectin' it?'

'Well, she don't want ye no more, does she?' answered M'Ginnis, his bruised hands fierce clenched, his voice hoarse and thick with passion. 'She 's got some one else now—ain't she? She 's—in love—ain't she? She 's all waked up an' palpitatin' for—for that damn '—— He choked, and set one hand to his scratched throat.

'What d' ye mean, Bud?'

'Ah!' said Soapy, softer than before, 'I 'm on, Bud; you put me wise!—He means, kid, as Hermy 's in love with th' guy as has just been punchin' hell out o' him—he means your pal Geoff.'

With a hoarse, strangling cry M'Ginnis leapt up, his hand flashed behind him, and—he stood suddenly very still, staring into the muzzle of the weapon Soapy had levelled from his hip.

'Aw, quit it, Bud; quit it,' he sighed; 'it ain't come t' that yet. Besides, the kid 's here, so loose yer gun, Bud—no, give it t' me; you 're a bit on edge t'-night, I guess, an' it might go off an' break a glass or somethin'. So gimme yer gun, Bud; that 's it! Now we can sit an' talk real sociable, can't we? Now listen, Bud. What ye want is t' get your own back on this guy Geoff, an' what the kid wants is t' show his sister as he ain't a kid, an' what I want is t' give ye both a helpin' hand.'

But while M'Ginnis stood scowling at the imperturbable speaker, Spike rose, a little unsteadily, and turned to the door. 'I 'll be gettin' on me way, Bud,' said he.

'Where to?'

'Home.'

'What! back t' Hermy? After she turned ye out?'

'But I—I got t' go somewheres.'

'Well, you stay right here with me, kid. I 'll fix ye up all right.'

''S right, kid!' nodded Soapy. 'Bud 'll fix ye up all right. We 'll have in another bottle when that 's empty!'

'What about your sister, kid?' demanded M'Ginnis fiercely. 'What about Hermy an' this swell guy? Are ye goin' t' sit around an' do nothin'?'

'But Geoff 's goin' t' marry her.'

'Marry her! What! him? A millionaire marry your sister? You think so, an' she thinks so, but I know different!'

'But Hermy ain't that sort; Hermy 's—good.'

'Sure; but this guy 's got her fazed; she thinks he 's square all right—she 'll trust him; an' then, s'posin' he ain't?'

'I—I ain't s'posin' nothin' like that!' said Spike, gulping his whisky.

'Well, s'posin' he 's been meetin' her—in a wood—on the sly—eh? S'posin' they been huggin' an' kissin''——

'Say now—you cut that out,' stammered Spike, his voice thick. 'I tell ye—she ain't—that kind.'

'S'posin',' continued Bud, refilling the lad's glass—'s'posin' I could show 'em to ye in a wood—eh? Ah! What she want t' meet him in a wood for, anyway—nice an' quiet, eh?'

'Say now, Bud, I—I ain't goin' t' listen t' no more!' said Spike, rising and clutching at the table. 'I—I 'm goin' home!' and, swaying on unsteady feet, he turned to the door.

But M'Ginnis gripped his shoulders. 'Wait a bit, kid.'

'N-o; I 'm—goin' home—see!' said Spike, setting his jaw obstinately. 'I 'm goin'—right now!'

'That 's just what you ain't!' snarled M'Ginnis. 'Sit down! Hermy 's only a work-girl—don't forget that, kid—an' this guy 's a millionaire. I guess he thinks Hermy 'll do—till he gets tired o' her, an'—then what?'

'He—told me he 's goin' t' marry her!' said Spike slowly, speaking with an effort, 'an' I guess Geoff ain't a liar. An' I wanter—go home.'

'Home—after she throwed ye out? Ain't ye got no pride?'

'Aw, say, Bud,' sighed Soapy, 'I guess d' kid ain't soused enough for pride yet; sling another glass int' him—that 'll fix him good, I reckon.'

'I ain't g-goin' t' drink no more,' said Spike, resting heavy head between his hands. 'I guess I 'll b-beat it home, f'lers.'

'Bud,' suggested Soapy, 'ain't it about time you rang in little Maggie on him?'

M'Ginnis whirled upon the speaker, snarling; but Soapy, having lighted another cigarette, nudged Spike with a sharp elbow. 'Kid,' said he, 'Bud 's goin' t' remind ye o' little Maggie Finlay—you remember little Maggie as drowned herself?'

Spike lifted a pale face and stared from the placid Soapy to scowling Bud, and shrank away. 'Yes,' he whispered hoarsely; 'yes—I 'll never forget how she looked—pale, so pale an' still, an' th' water runnin' out o' her brown curls. I—I 'll never forget.'

'Well,' growled M'Ginnis, 'watch out Hermy don't end th' same way.'

'No!' cried Spike; 'oh my God—no!'

'What 's she meetin' this millionaire in a wood for—on the sly?'

'She don't! Hermy ain't like that.'

'I tell ye she does!' cried M'Ginnis; 'an' him kissin' an' squeezin' her, an'—nobody by.'

'It 's a lie, Bud; she—she wouldn't!'

'S'posin' I could show ye? S'pose you see him there waitin' for her?'

'If—if he means any harm t' Hermy I—I 'll kill him!'

'Aw—you wouldn't have the nerve, kid!'

'I 'd shoot him dead—by God, I would!'

'You ain't man enough, kid.'

'You g-give me a gun an' see. I 'd shoot any

one t' save my sister from—th' river. Oh my God—I—I 'd die for her, an' she don't love me no more!' And, leaning his head upon his arm, Spike burst into a passion of tears.

M'Ginnis watched him a while; then, filling the boy's glass, clapped him on the shoulder and held it to his lips. 'Neck this, kid,' said he; 'neck it all—so. That 's good, ain't it? To-morrow evenin' I 'll take ye where they meet. Maybe you 'll ketch him waitin' for her; but instead o' Hermy and kisses there 'll be you an' me—hey? Will ye come?'

'S-sure I will if—you 'll gimme—your gun.'

'Pshaw, kid! what 's a kid like you want with a gun?'

'T' shoot him.'

'Eh? What d' ye mean?'

'If he 's after my sister I 'll—kill him. I will; by God, I will!'

''S right,' nodded Soapy, staring into the boy's drawn face. ''S right, Bud; if ever I see a killer, th' kid 's sure it!' Slowly the glare died out of Spike's eyes, his body drooped, and, sighing, he pillowed his heavy head upon the table and fell into a drunken slumber. For a while the two men sat there hearkening to his stertorous breathing; then Soapy laughed softly and mirthlessly. 'You sure got th' kid all worked up an' mad enough t'—kill—eh, Bud? If he does get up against this guy Geoff, this guy Geoff 's sure goin' t' cash in—sudden. Consequently, I guess you 'll be wantin' paper an' pencil—both here!'

'What th' hell'—— began M'Ginnis.

'Telegram, Bud. You 're goin' t' frame up a nice little telegram t' this guy Geoff—eh, you sure are th' fly gazebo'! A nice little message: "Meet me t'-morrow in the wood at sunset.—HERMY." Somethin' nice 'n' romantic like that 'll bring him on th' run—eh, Bud? Then, 'stead o' Hermy, comes you an' th' kid—eh, Bud? An' 'stead o' kisses this guy Geoff gets a lead pill—eh, Bud? Th' kid can't miss if you get him close enough. It sure is some scheme, Bud. I couldn't have thought it out better myself. Paper 'n' pencil, Bud—get busy, an' I 'll sashay over an' send it off for ye—t'-night.'

During Soapy's unusually long speech M'Ginnis sat staring at him under frowning brows, but now he turned and scowled down at the sheet of paper, picked up the pencil, laid it by again, and sat opening and shutting his big hands, while Soapy, lighting another cigarette, watched him furtive-eyed. When at last he spoke his voice was thick, and he didn't lift his scowling gaze.

'Send that kid Larry t' me—an' say—you don't have t' come back.'

'All right, Bud—all right; only, you 'd best send two telegrams t' make sure—one t' Fift' Av., 'n' one t' his place up th' river. S' long, Buddy!'

Some fifteen minutes later, the boy Larry, stepping out of O'Rourke's, was swung to the wall in Soapy's grip.

'Aw—say, cheese it now! Is that you, Soapy?'

''S right, my bucko. Fork out that telegram—quick!'

'Aw, say, whatcher mean? 'N' say, Bud told me to hustle; 'n' say'——

'Dig it out—quick!' said Soapy, the dangling cigarette glowing fiercely. 'I want it—see?'

'But say,' whimpered Larry, 'what 'll Bud say?'

'Nothin'! Bud ain't goin' t' know. You take this instead; take it!' And Soapy thrust another folded paper into the boy's limp hand, who took it whimpering.

'Bud tol' me t' bring it back.'

'Well, you tell him you lost it.'

'Not much. I 'll shin right back an' tell him you pinched it.'

'You won't, my sport—you won't!' said Soapy, and, speaking, moved suddenly; and the boy, uttering a gasp of terror, shrank cowering with the muzzle of Soapy's deadly weapon against the pit of his stomach. 'You ain't goin' t' say a word t' Bud nor nobody else, are ye, Larry boy—are ye?'

'No, no!'

'Because, if ye ever did, old sport, I should give it ye there—right there in the tum-tum—see? Now, chase off, an' see ye get them addresses right. S' long, Larry boy; be good now!'

When the boy had scudded away, Soapy opened the paper and scanned the words of M'Ginnis's telegram, and, being alone, smiled as he glanced through it.

'You got th' kid, Bud,' he murmured; 'you got th' kid; but if th' kid gets the guy Geoff, why—I 've sure got you, Bud; got ye sure as hell, Bud!'

(Continued on page 501.)

CHARCOAL.

By F. ROWLINSON.

THE process of converting wood into charcoal has been known for many centuries; but so simple and ingenious was the process as originally carried out that modern theory has made little or no essential improvement on time-honoured practice. How the mode of charring wood was first discovered, or to what uses the charred product was first put, we have no means of knowing. Possibly some prehistoric man sought to stifle the smoke and blaze of his fire by cover-

ing it with turf, so as to hide his whereabouts from his enemies. On the next morning he raked over the embers of his previous night's fire, and, behold! they glowed, giving out an intense heat, but without smoke or blaze. The new fuel, probably accidentally discovered after this manner, soon became of great importance as one of the steps in the advancement of civilisation. With the aid of charcoal, metals could be worked, smiths could forge weapons and rude instruments, earthenware utensils could be fashioned from clay and used to contain and convey liquids. Industry in almost all its branches must have received a mighty impetus from the discovery of charcoal-burning.

Of the metals extracted from their ores by the aid of charcoal, iron was the most useful and important. The primitive method of the early smelters was to select a level spot on a draughty, wind-swept hill. On this was lighted a fire of wood, and on this again were piled thin alternate layers of iron ore and charcoal. The whole was covered with clay, vent-holes being left on the windward side, through which the prevailing wind roared. After some time the clay covering was removed, and a white-hot 'bloom' or spongy ball of very pure iron was taken out and forged into shape. The quality of this old charcoal iron was so good that analyses of such samples as survive show no inferiority to the very best of modern makes. Further progress resulted in the application of blast from leathern bellows, driven by foot or by water-power. This step abolished the uncertainty which must have resulted from the fickleness of the winds. Simultaneously the open hearths were replaced by conical brick furnaces, the charcoal and the ore being charged at the top, and the rough 'bloom' being removed at the bottom. Such were the widely used German *Stückofen*, which utilised the ores and abundant charcoal-supplies of the great German forests. As the demand for iron became more and more insistent, furnaces were built of continually increasing size, until the iron remained so long in the furnace in contact with the white-hot charcoal that it began to absorb it. This alloy, as it were, of iron and charcoal (carbon) melted at the high temperature, and instead of a rough ball of spongy metal being removed at the end, a continuous supply of fluid cast-iron was available. With this new development the demand for iron increased more rapidly than before. Cannon of considerable size were cast; iron began to be used as a substitute for wood in constructional works. The whole of the rapidly increasing iron industry now rested upon the labours of the charcoal-burners. These auxiliaries took advantage of their indispensability to secure for themselves advantages shared by the miners and the smelters. They assumed a sturdy independence of spirit, fostered alike by their restless, wandering, open-air life, and the keen demand for the produce of their labours. To the extent of this independence the old French proverb, *Charbonnier est maître chez-lui*, testifies. The amount of sound timber consumed by the blast-furnaces of this period was enormous. There were about this time (1550) in England one hundred and forty forges, each using three loads of best charcoal per day, or about one million cubic feet per furnace per year. The Forest of Dean held a monopoly at first, but later Kent and Sussex became formidable rivals owing to their proximity to London. Such were the demands of these places for charcoal that, together with the need of timber consequent upon our extended commercial enterprise, they began to cause grave fears for our timber-supplies. Restrictive legislation was introduced by Elizabeth at various times from 1558 to 1584 to prevent the wholesale destruction of the great English forests. The erection of works in new districts was entirely prohibited, whilst those already existing were severely controlled. Hampered by these laws, the demand for charcoal suffered no increase, until in the eighteenth century mineral coal, and later coke, began to oust it from its place as the sole fuel employed in iron-smelting. The invention of the hot-blast stove by Neilson, a Scotsman, was the death-knell of the charcoal-burner. The last Sussex furnace was blown out in 1827, and the centre of the iron industry shifted north. The last charcoal furnaces remaining in the United Kingdom are at Ulverston in Lancashire, these having been working for almost two centuries.

The invention of gunpowder, of which charcoal is an essential constituent, altered the whole art and science of warfare. From the first use at Crécy in 1346 until the abandonment in quite modern times, charcoal made by the old heap-burning methods was by far the best for use in gunpowder. Where wood was scarce, attempts to preserve the volatile products which are unfortunately lost in the heap process resulted in the development of closed-retort processes, by which these by-products are recovered. Such processes, though successful in their aims, do not yield a charcoal of the old-fashioned high quality; it is both softer and less reliable. Hence the retort process is used primarily for the production of wood-spirit, acetic acid, &c., charcoal being looked upon only as a by-product. Thus it comes about that, just as charcoal was used to make gunpowder, these more modern processes aim at the production of acetone and gray acetate of lime, which are both of exceedingly great importance in the manufacture of propellent explosives. As in many well-known instances, the by-products, at one time utterly wasted, have now become the *raison d'être* of the process. For this reason the manufacture of charcoal, long discontinued in this country through the decline of the charcoal furnace, has been re-established, but in such a modified form

that it is not at first sight identifiable with the original process.

The only variety of charcoal so far discussed has been wood charcoal. There are, however, other varieties known as animal charcoal. These, as their name indicates, are made from animal products, and the most important of them are bone charcoal and blood charcoal. Animal charcoal possesses in a remarkable degree a property which renders it exceedingly useful in the arts and manufactures. This property, which is also found in wood charcoal, but in a much less active form, is the power of absorbing gases, vapours, and colouring matter with which it is in contact. A striking illustration of this is afforded by dark wines, such as port, which, on filtration through bone charcoal, come through quite clear and colourless. This property was formerly made use of in the sugar industry to decolourise raw-sugar juice, but this method is now superseded by others. Amongst the gases and vapours absorbed by charcoal, noxious effluvia resulting from putrefaction and decay are noteworthy. This characteristic property of absorption is retained for a considerable period, and may at any time be restored by strongly heating the charcoal. For this reason trays containing charcoal are largely used in hospitals, and in respirators and ventilators to prevent the egress of unpleasant odours from sewers. Powdered charcoal and crisp biscuits of charcoal are taken internally in certain forms of dyspepsia. The idea of filtering discoloured drinking-water through charcoal is dependent upon this property of absorption, though it must be borne in mind that such treatment by no means eliminates from the water any harmful bacilli which it may contain. In countries where mineral fuel is scarce and where wood is abundant—for example, France—wood charcoal is largely used as a fuel by the peasantry. Its use is attended by some element of danger if a proper supply of air be not maintained. The half-burned fuel gives off a most poisonous gas, which is particularly insidious in that it is odourless, so that the unsuspecting victim has no warning that the atmosphere is deadly. A noted French man of letters met his death in this manner some years ago. But with proper arrangements charcoal is quite safe as a fuel, and is far more cleanly and pleasant than coal.

From this brief consideration it will be seen that, although the day when charcoal was the principal industrial fuel is long since past, the substance is still of importance in many minor ways. In several manufacturing processes, and particularly in hygiene, charcoal yet plays a very useful part; so that a half-historical glance at this once valuable substance may not prove wholly uninteresting and unprofitable.

EVENING ON A TROUT-STREAM.

THE warm summer evenings find many a fisherman loitering beside the flowing river until such time as the twilight hatch of sedges shall once more put life into the trout, and he bides his time as patiently as the classic yokel waiting for the water to flow by that he may cross dry-shod. Not in all the angling year is there an hour in which the fisherman's patience is more sorely tried or less surely rewarded. All through the long summer day, when the river is low and stale, the indifferent, sleepy trout are such as might have inspired that hopeless couplet of Bunyan:

> Yet fish there be that neither hook nor line
> Nor snare nor net nor engine can make thine.

The only way to put a trout in the basket on such dazzling days is with a dry fly or up-stream worm. Even so, success is in the balance, for the trout, knowing they need only wait till the evening sedges come out in their thousands, are in no hurry to feed on meaner fare. So they wait, and the fisherman must wait with them, full of hope, and at least heartened by Max Müller's axiom that the future can never be worse than the past.

Trout or no trout, it is witching business, and not its least charm is the absence of all hurry. The fisherman, having made up a cast of fernweb, sedge, and alder, lets it soak in the shallows while he smokes a quiet pipe and lazily watches the last of the swallows and the first of the bats wheeling in shrill rivalry among the butterflies and midges of the sunset hour. A little later the neighbouring village clock gives out the hour of eight, and still the figure on the bank is motionless. In strenuous times like these there is, perhaps, something contemptible about such contentment beside the river; but, with no other company than his own thoughts, his is at least an innocent vigil. As soon as the light fails, he waits for something to happen, and, sure enough, from the heavy shadows under the far bank comes the plosh that betokens the rise of a good trout. Gulp goes another fish a little distance down-stream; bang goes a third right opposite. The evening rise is on in earnest, and he must be up and doing.

Encased in waders and brogues, welcome even on these summer nights, particularly if he has passed life's half-way house, he steps out into the swift stream, and perhaps, in his keenness to throw over an outlying fish, goes in over his waders, proving once more the truth of the Spanish proverb that one cannot catch fish without getting wet. It is no easy work striking fish

that he cannot see, but by throwing a short line, which is far more deadly under such conditions than any attempt at exhibition casting, he manages to hook a fair proportion of those which rise. These evening trout have noticeably the trick of coming short at the fly, and striking is guesswork in every case, for it must be instantaneous in rapid water, and not the deliberate performance that answers on sluggish chalk-streams like the Test or the Itchen. Once the fish is hooked, the play 's the thing, and tackling a pound trout in the darkness calls for much diplomacy and judgment, for the fish circles unseen at the end of the fine cast, and the final act of coaxing a big trout into a small net, neither of them visible at the time, is a severe test of the angler's skill.

This fishing in the late evenings does not commend itself to those who like their sport enlivened by sunshine and the song of birds, but these late-rising trout are particularly welcome to hard-worked men who are not free to seek the river during the day. The slow setting of the summer sun, with the evening fishing yet to come, marks an hour of severe repression that is an education in itself. To cast his flies over the fish before the light fails is to give the game away, putting them on their guard and spoiling the water for the evening. The brief spell of the evening rise is blind man's holiday. Hidden bushes await careless casts; hidden holes yawn for unwary feet. It is obvious that conditions so severe do not, perhaps, make for unalloyed delight. Nor is the reward of so much patience by any means assured. Most things come to those who wait, but not always evening trout. Yet, for all the drawbacks and uncertainties, these summer evenings are not the least treasured memories of any one who takes patience and philosophy with him to the river.

THE UP-TO-DATE WAR MAP.

By A. Hilliard Atteridge.

IN most of our little wars on the borders of the Empire we have had to fight in countries where either very defective maps were available, or there were none at all on any useful scale, so that the country had to be mapped as our troops advanced. But on the Western front in the present great war we have found ourselves, for the first time in the history of our army, fighting in a country where an abundance of accurate large-scale maps are available. The Belgian and French official maps corresponding to those of our own Ordnance Survey are admirable, and range in scale from general maps of about three and a half miles to the inch up to maps of rather more than six inches to the mile. These large-scale maps are detailed enough to show every clump of trees, every house in the villages, every rise and fall of the ground, every ridge and hollow. There was, therefore, no need to make new maps of the country; but we find in Sir Douglas Haig's despatches a testimony to the excellent work done by the survey companies of the Royal Engineers, and, as a matter of fact, an immense amount of highly skilled work is being continually done to get the utmost value out of the existing maps. Two different organisations are engaged on this task, and mutually co-operating in it—one under the direction of the French Staff, the other under our own. The task of these combined organisations is to show on the maps the endless changes effected by the modern system of elaborately entrenching the fighting front, and to keep this information continually up to date.

One of the large-scale maps of a section of the fighting front in France, as prepared for use by our own troops, looks very different from the same map as it was issued by the French Government in the peaceful days before the war. Over the original map there stretches what looks at first sight an irregular lacework of red lines—broken zigzag lines, continuous lines, lines of dots, lines of little red crosses, and here and there spaces covered by small red dots, and in others large patches of red print. Each of these signs has its special meaning. The red markings are a large-scale map of the enemy's trenches printed over the original map; and studying it with the help of the key printed in the margin, one can make out the successive lines of fighting-trenches, the communication-trenches linking them together, the zones of wire entanglements marked by red crosses, the redoubts and gun positions—in a word, all the details of the enemy's defensive organisation.

There are indications which show if a trench has been abandoned, or if it is still kept in good order for fighting. Crowds of red dots here and there mark the effect of bombardment, for they indicate ground extensively cratered by shell-fire. How is it all this information is obtained, and that it is possible to mark the enemy's entrenchments so fully, not only in the first line, but in line after line behind it, perhaps for the depth of several miles?

These results are due to a skilful application to war purposes of two inventions of the last few years—the aeroplane, and the camera which is used for producing cinematograph films. No sooner had the aeroplane come into existence than its value for military reconnaissance was recognised. But even the most skilful observer flying rapidly over an enemy's lines could not collect the detailed information now shown on

the maps. He collects it by using the eye of the camera. The instrument is of the same general type as that used for cinematograph work. During the flight over the trenches the camera, pointed downwards, with the film running past its lens, supplies a negative which is brought back to our lines and handed over to experts in the work of development. In a few minutes it is developed and a proof printed off. To most of us this picture would not give much information, but it is put into the hands of men who have had long practice in interpreting the details shown on aerial photographs. The first step is to compare it with the large-scale map. Roads and villages are picked out on the photograph, a comparison with the map shows their precise position, and then it is possible to transfer to the map the details of the enemy's trenches between these points as revealed by the photograph. The fact that much of the fighting has taken place in chalk districts facilitates the work, for the trenches appear as well-marked white lines in sharp contrast to the unbroken ground around them. By taking a succession of photographs day after day, the enemy's positions can be watched to see how this or that part of the line is being strengthened, or reserve-trenches are being constructed behind it, and new communication-trenches opened from front to rear. Note can also be taken of the cutting down of woods, the destruction of buildings, the laying down of new branch-railways, the making of stations, the formation of depots and ammunition-dumps—all useful information for the attacks of our airmen. The work is heavy, because it is not a case of making a trench map once for all, but the map has to be continually revised and kept up to date.

The work of collecting the material for the map-maker entails a certain amount of fighting in the air. The aeroplane which carries the photographer and his camera has to be protected by fighting-aeroplanes armed with machine-guns and ready to attack and drive down any hostile aircraft that attempt to interfere with the reconnaissance. Indeed, those aerial surveys could not be regularly and effectively carried out unless we held a more or less complete command of the air. There is also the danger of coming under the fire of anti-aircraft guns. In the early days of the war, before this kind of gun became very effective, aerial reconnaissance was carried out at two thousand or three thousand feet from the ground; but before the end of the first year the development of anti-aircraft guns forced the aeroplanes to fly higher, and aerial photographs are now taken at a height of five thousand or six thousand feet, or even at still greater heights. The photographic apparatus available gives so much detail and such perfect definition, even on a very narrow band of film, that an enlargement can be secured after development and all the details brought out.

The placing on the map of the information collected by the airmen is only one part of its preparation for practical use. It is important to find ways for describing accurately the precise position on the ground of guns, troops in movement, &c., in giving orders, and selecting the targets for artillery fire. Before the war, in our peace manœuvres very rough-and-ready methods were used for describing points on the map—'so far and in such a direction from a farm or cross-road,' or, again, some chance letter on the map would be taken and the distance and direction from it given. One found in orders and reports such expressions as 'Four hundred yards north of the "L" in "Blackwater."' Much more precise methods are now adopted. The system had already been in use in most countries for directing the fire of coast-defence guns. The sea on a coast map is mostly a blank; so, in order to signal to the gunners the exact position of a hostile ship, the sea spaces on the maps used in the batteries were divided by a system of squares. This system of squares is now used on the war maps in a very elaborate form. First there are large squares marked with a capital letter. These are subdivided into smaller squares denoted by a number, these squares being one thousand yards long and wide; these are again divided into quarters—squares of five hundred yards—always described by the letters *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*. Transparent celluloid scales are provided with the five hundred yards square ruled on them, and divided into ten rows of ten little squares each. By laying this on the map and counting the small squares from the lower left-hand corner, one can tell, for instance, that there is a battery in the fifth square of the sixth row. This defines the position within fifty yards, and one can be still more precise by noting that the guns are in the middle of the square or in one of its corners, or at some point between these. Thus a position can be described with quite sufficient accuracy for opening fire upon it even at long range, the further regulation of the fire being carried out by 'spotting' from an aeroplane or an anchored balloon.

The maps give a further aid towards a more general description of places upon it. Provisional names are given to every isolated clump of wood, every rise and fall of the ground, to supplement the names already marked on the map for the more important woods and hills. One may give some instances from the maps of the Somme front, which have been so largely reproduced that they are now public property. The hollows north and south of La Boiselle village, which had no name, are described on the maps as 'Mash Valley' and 'Sausage Valley.' Clumps of wood to the east of the village, too small to have any local name, appear with the names given them by the airmen—names sometimes derived from their shape, as seen from above—'Acid Drop Copse,' an oval clump of trees;

'Caterpillar Wood,' half a mile of bushes and scrub following the curve of a hollow; and 'Canoe Wood,' whose outline on the map is that of an Indian canoe. Sometimes the names reveal the nationality of their inventor. Thus, 'Usna Hill' and 'Tara Hill,' west of La Boiselle, show that an Irish map-maker was at work. These names for hill-tops and ridges are an improvement on the French method of describing hills by their height in metres, as we talk, for instance, of the famous 'Hill 70' near Loos, and 'Hill 60' near Ypres. The drawback of this method of describing hills is that in broken, undulating country there are likely to be several hill-tops on the map which have about the same height.

It is obvious that these detailed maps, with their elaborate system of squaring, are of the greatest use in planning the heavy bombardment which precedes an assault, and in the actual attack. But they have an equally important use in the direction of long-range fire from day to day. The heavy artillery in action at the front works at ranges which until the present war had never been used in land warfare. There are guns on both sides which can throw a shell over twenty miles. These extreme ranges are not used, for one can regard as something like a freak in artillery work the German exploit of pitching a few shells into Dunkirk at a range of twenty-two miles. It was obviously an experiment, and so far it has not been repeated. But ranges of five or six miles are quite common, and guns have been in action up to ten miles. At such ranges the gunner does not see his target. In fact, indirect fire at unseen targets is in frequent use at comparatively moderate ranges. It is essential to conceal the position of the guns, and they are brought into action from behind buildings, woods, rises of the ground, or artificial screens, the rapid rise of the trajectory of the shell carrying it well over the obstacle that screens the guns. The gunner knows his precise position on the large-scale map, and aerial reconnaissance enables him in the same way to fix the exact position, direction, and distance of the target. His range-tables give him the exact line of flight of his shell at every range, and from the map, which shows the precise form of the ground, he can rapidly construct a section of it, and be quite sure that the flight of the shell will not only clear all intervening obstacles, but also in its descent reach hostile positions even behind ridges or other obstacles which conceal them from view. The gunner relies upon an observer, usually in the air, watching the effect of his fire, correcting the range, and letting him know the result. It is the elaborate map that enables the gun to be laid so as to reach the unseen target. At shorter ranges, from one thousand five hundred up to three thousand yards, machine-gun fire is used in the same way. Wireless telegraphy enables the aerial observer to signal the results of the fire very rapidly. In a letter from the front, describing the firing of one of our giant howitzers, which was published in the newspapers not long ago, the writer tells how, beside the gun position, a signaller was seated on the ground with the wireless receiver near him, and two discs, like those of a telephone, attached to his ears, while far away to the front an aeroplane was hovering in the sky, and how it seemed that the shot had hardly been fired when the signaller looked up and said, 'About fifty yards over,' and the gunner corrected the elevation of the gun so as to shorten the range to that extent.

It is this new art of long-range shooting by the map at unseen targets that has made permanent fortifications erected in peace-time comparatively useless. The position of works of this kind cannot be concealed, and in fact one finds them marked even on maps freely sold for motoring purposes. The result is that, with long-range artillery, smokeless powder, and indirect fire, an attacking army can choose positions for its guns from which fire can be brought to bear upon the known position of the fort or battery, while the gunners in the fort cannot find out where the attacking batteries are. In the first days of the war, the German gunners put the southern forts of Liège out of action in a few hours by long-range fire from unseen positions screened by the hills and woods south of the city. Verdun was saved in the first months of the war by taking the heavy guns out of the permanent forts and mounting them in concealed batteries in the surrounding woods, where it was difficult even for the German aircraft to discover exactly where they were.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

PANAMÁ CANAL LIMITS THE SIZE OF UNITED STATES BATTLESHIPS.

IN our February 'Science and Arts' notes particulars were given of some colossal battle-cruisers for the United States Navy. Since then an investigation has been carried out to ascertain the limit of size for an American battleship. In the construction of very large vessels the depth of water in the harbours and the facilities for 'dry-docking' have to be considered. In this case the Panamá Canal was found to be the limiting factor. The limit, however, is a very high one, for the canal can

accommodate a battleship of a size which, it is to be hoped, will never be exceeded. This vessel could be nine hundred and seventy-five feet in length, with a breadth of one hundred and eight feet, and a draught of thirty-four feet, with a displacement (weight) of eighty thousand tons. For main armament fifteen guns of eighteen-inch calibre, mounted in five triple-gun barbettes, are suggested, together with a secondary armament of twenty-one six-inch guns. A belt of armour sixteen inches thick would be provided right round the ship, while special protection against torpedoes below the water-line is contemplated. The estimated speed of such a vessel is forty miles an hour, and the cost fifty million dollars.

EASILY MADE TRANSPARENT MATERIAL.

According to *Popular Science Siftings*, sheets of waterproof transparent material can be prepared by applying glue to ordinary mosquito netting. One part of glue is allowed to stand in sixteen parts of water for half-an-hour. The vessel containing this mixture is then placed in boiling water until the glue is melted. After being strained through wet cheese-cloth into a heated tray, the liquid is ready for application to the mosquito netting. This operation is performed by passing the fabric through the glue solution and hanging it up to dry. To render the material waterproof it is treated in a bath of 40 per cent. formaldehyde and water. The resulting sheets are fireproof, pliable, and semi-transparent, and they can be coloured with aniline dyes for use in windows and lanterns and for other ornamental purposes.

COLLAPSIBLE PNEUMATIC LIFE-RAFT.

The invention of a life-saving raft by a German, Herr Meyer, of Berlin, will come rather as a surprise to many of us, in view of the efforts of German naval gunners and airmen to prevent the rescue of their own men by the British in several sea-fights. In form the new device resembles the link of a chain, with a light wooden hinged diaphragm across the aperture. The part corresponding to the link is made of canvas and rubber, and is distended with air. Its surface is protected by stout cord netting, and there is a rope running round the outer periphery, to which are attached the usual loops for persons in the water to catch hold of. Collapsibility and lightness are the main features of the appliance, which can be folded up and carried on the back, its weight being only fifteen pounds. When blown out it measures six feet in length, and will safely support six hundred-weights. A larger size measures twenty feet in length and will carry fifty people inboard, while another hundred can sit on the top of the 'link' or hang on to the loops. This model weighs about two hundredweights. Both sides of the device are exactly alike, so that it matters nothing which side floats uppermost.

HOW THE JAPANESE KEEP THEMSELVES WARM WITH POCKET STOVES.

Japanese pocket heaters are described by N. Kawaguchi in the *English Mechanic*, from which it appears that our allies in the far East are accustomed to carry about their persons in cold weather what are practically miniature slow-combustion stoves. The fuel used in these appliances, known as *kwairo-bai*, must burn slowly without giving off smoke or fumes, and great ingenuity has been exercised in producing suitable substances for this purpose. Hemp-stalks, mulberry-leaves, the kozu and the catalpa plants, corn-cobs, nut-rinds, and other waste products, together with a vegetable oil, are all used to provide this fuel. A small quantity of saltpetre is added, while the leaves of a certain tree are employed to cause the powdered materials to stick together. The best fuel basis is said to be hemp-stalks from which the fibre has been extracted, these being burnt into charcoal and afterwards pulverised. When the various ingredients have been carefully mixed to the right consistency, they are made into rolls, two qualities being produced—one soft, for 'bosom-stoves;' the other hard, for uses such as hot-water bottles are put to in other countries. The bosom-stoves resemble metal cigar-cases, whilst those for burning the hard fuel are somewhat larger. One charge of fuel in the former, at an almost infinitesimal cost, will last for three hours. The Japanese use these heaters when travelling, when sitting in unheated rooms, and at other times. Thousands were carried by the soldiers in the Russo-Japanese war. In the present war also large numbers have been used by the Russian troops, and a considerable demand exists for them in France, into which country they were introduced by French missionaries from Japan.

DOES MEAT-EATING INCREASE THE LIABILITY TO CANCER?

Some interesting facts tending to show a close relation between meat-eating and cancer have been collected by the editor of the *Golden Age*. For instance, no case of this disease has occurred among the Russian Dukhobors in Canada, who number seven thousand, and whose tenets forbid them to eat meat. The immunity of vegetarians from cancer is also confirmed by the absence of it in two Benedictine monasteries, while the lowest death-rate from this cause in any European country is to be found in Italy, where less meat per head is consumed than in any other state. On the other hand, the greatest increases in the number of victims to this complaint in America have occurred in Chicago and San Francisco, where extravagance in diet is rampant. The above evidence is, however,

rather discounted by the admitted fact that gout and cancer seldom occur together, and that a plentiful diet of meat is generally supposed to encourage a tendency towards the former complaint, if indeed it is not often the direct cause of it.

ANILINE DYES AS ANTISEPTICS.

A Prussian surgeon, Dr Erwin Baumann, is using large quantities of aniline dyes for curative purposes, says *Popular Science Siftings*. Methyl violet was found to give the best results, a 4 per cent. dye solution being used. For superficial wounds dye in the form of powder is employed, while a paste consisting of the powder mixed with glycerine and alcohol is introduced into deep wounds. Another plan sometimes adopted is to put into the wound antiseptic gauze saturated with a solution of the dye. The effects are also found to be beneficial in cases of osseous suppurations, ventrical ulcers, abscesses, appendicitis, and other diseases. Reference was made in this Journal (May 1917) to the investigations carried out at the Bland-Sutton Institute of Pathology into the merits of the yellow dye called flavine. 'Brilliant green' has also been used there, as well as on the field, as a valuable antiseptic.

PORTABLE MOTOR OUTFITS FOR INCREASING THE CARRYING CAPACITY OF CANAL BOATS.

Owing to the shortage of labour and rolling stock upon our railways, together with the heavy traffic in munitions and war material, great difficulty is being experienced in the transport of goods needed for the carrying on of ordinary industries. Any means, therefore, which will augment other methods of conveying merchandise should prove particularly beneficial at the present time. As is known to most people, the boats on our canals are mainly hauled by horses at a very slow speed. Before the war the horse was being gradually ousted by the oil-engine, but this process was a slow one, as new boats had to be built especially for propulsion by motors. Neither time nor labour is now available to increase the carrying-power of canals in this way; but the difficulty has been overcome by Mr Arthur E. Hooke, of Birmingham, who has designed a motor and propeller outfit which can be attached to an ordinary 'horse' boat in half-an-hour. The motor, which develops seventeen horse-power, is mounted upon the top of the cabin at the stern of the boat; whilst the rudder is unhooked, and in its place is put a propeller working between two plates, which form a double rudder. A vertical spindle drives the propeller through bevel gear which will transmit power from one spindle to another at right angles to it. This, of course, is necessary, as the propeller shaft must be horizontal. At the top of the vertical spindle is another bevel gear to connect to a horizontal spindle from the engine on the cabin-top. Universal joints allow the propeller to be swivelled round for steering the boat, while the transmission spindle from the engine runs in a tube, as otherwise it might catch on the jacket of the man steering, who has to stand close beside it. This device has proved exceedingly successful, and it is capable of propelling a loaded boat with another towed behind it at, roughly, double the speed that a horse is able to haul one only. Moreover, the apparatus can be quickly changed from one boat to another; so that it is always doing useful work, and on the average one equipment will keep two or three boats working at their utmost capacity. Incidentally, Mr Hooke not only designed the first apparatus, but also did most of the work of making it, owing to the difficulty of obtaining skilled labour, and he has been especially exempted from military duty in order to extend the scheme, which is considered to be of national importance. Great credit is also due to Messrs Coggins & Arthur, an enterprising firm of merchants and canal-boat owners of Birmingham, who have backed up Mr Hooke throughout.

NEW PLAN FOR ALTERING CLOCKS FOR 'SUMMER TIME.'

In a letter to *Nature*, Dr P. E. Shaw suggests a novel method of altering our clocks to suit 'summer time' without moving the hands. According to Dr Shaw's plan, clock-dials should be so fixed that at the commencement of 'summer time' they can be turned backwards five minutes, which would have a similar effect to putting the hands forward an hour. By this means the hour-hand would coincide with the sun as for Greenwich time; that is to say, at noon it would be at the top of the dial, while the rising and setting of the sun at the equinoxes would occur with the hour-hand pointing straight downwards. Another advantage would be a clear indication that in summer the real time was an hour behind that shown by the hands. When normal time was resumed the dial could, of course, be readily altered to its original position. New clocks could very easily be constructed to conform to this method of adjustment.

NEW CHEAP PROCESS FOR OBTAINING NITRATES FROM THE AIR WITHOUT ELECTRICITY.

From time to time references have been made in this Journal to the extraction from the air of nitrates for use in fertilising the land and for other purposes. Hitherto the processes of extraction have depended upon large supplies of electric current, which can only be produced at a low enough cost in countries where water-power can be cheaply developed. According to the *Scientific American*, a chemical process has recently been discovered by Professor John E. Bucher, of Brown University, which bids fair to revolutionise this industry. The new method consists in heating a mixture of powdered coke, soda-ash, and powdered iron or iron ore in a

furnace, and passing air over it, the result being the formation of cyanide of soda. Curiously enough, the iron is not affected in any way, but the process cannot be carried out in its absence. Cyanide of soda may be turned into ammonia (with bicarbonate of soda as a by-product) easily enough, and at a low cost. Instead of doing this, however, Professor Bucher treats it with part of the waste carbon dioxide gas from the furnace, which has the effect of producing urea, a substance richer in nitrogen than the ordinary ammonium compounds, and therefore a much more effective fertiliser.

CHEAP NON-RETURNABLE PAPER MILK-BOTTLES.

The delivery of milk to the consumer is carried out on two systems in this country. According to one, which is prevalent in London and some provincial cities and towns, the dairies supply the milk in their own containers, which are returned when empty. The alternative plan is for the consumer to supply the receptacle. With the former system the milk cans or bottles must often go into infected houses, and it is difficult to guarantee their complete sterilisation before being used for the delivery of milk to other customers. A safer and more economical plan, it will be generally admitted, is to carry the milk to each customer in a closed vessel of which the cost is less than that of collecting and cleaning the usual cans or bottles. This problem has been very carefully studied in the United States, where milk is delivered in glass bottles. According to the *Scientific American*, the Health Department Advisory Council of Pennsylvania are so convinced of the dangers that they have issued an order prohibiting this practice. Paper milk-bottles are to be used as an alternative, and a machine has recently been invented capable of making five thousand an hour. Wood-pulp, which may be of inferior quality to that used for paper, is the material employed, and it is untouched by hand throughout the process. The pulp is pressed into the correct form round a steel core, and is then passed through a drier. The name of the milk-dealer and its capacity are subsequently stamped upon it. After its removal from the core, the bottom and the top are crimped on in a special machine. Finally, the bottles are soaked in hot paraffin wax, which makes them waterproof, and automatically packed for delivery to the dairies. One ton of pulp is enough for sixty thousand bottles, while each machine for making them is nearly one hundred feet in length, and costs four thousand pounds.

ELECTRIC FARMING.

Already electricity is an important factor in many industries, and the present crisis in the food-supplies of the British Isles makes its application to agriculture a matter of great interest. The Development Commissioners, having obtained a grant from the Treasury, have taken over Huntington Court Farm, near Hereford, for the purpose of thoroughly testing the use of electricity as an aid to food production. The idea is to discharge electricity from a system of thin wire spread over the areas to be treated. The wire network is supported on insulators connected to poles, with a span of thirty feet or so between every two supports, and is high enough to enable farming operations to be carried on without interference with the apparatus. A high-tension alternating supply of electricity is used, and this, together with a small transformer of valves for rectifying and an automatic time-switch for controlling, forms a system less costly than any previously in use. Moreover, it is so laid down as to be practically 'fool-proof.' The current-consumption is not great, and the anticipated increased yield per acre of spring wheat, barley, oats, clover, and certain root crops will be eagerly welcomed. The use of electricity in British agriculture has aroused much interest in scientific farming circles for the last fifteen years, and this latest action of the Government is distinctly helpful. So far back as the seventies of last century Professor Lemström of Stockholm noticed that plants seemed to thrive better as the result of the electrification of the air around them. Since then it has been repeatedly proved, especially on farms fitted up with the Lodge-Newman apparatus, that cereal crops are markedly increased in yield. The ratio of increase is even greater in the case of vegetables, potatoes and artichokes growing to a great size without their edible qualities being at all impaired. In Germany, where the use of electricity in agriculture has also been introduced in the hope of securing a greater food-supply, it has been found that in dry weather the electrical discharge does not benefit the crops, so spraying with electrified water has been tried. So far as British agriculture is concerned, the Development Commissioners have set out to give the project a fair trial for a period of not less than three years, and, in addition to employing the highest experts in electricity and farming, are obtaining the supervision of the Board of Inventions and Research.

RESULTS OF ELECTRIFYING CROPS.

Since the foregoing paragraph was written, the Board of Agriculture has published in its *Journal* a report of a valuable experiment in electric farming which was carried out at Lincluden Mains Farm, Dumfries, during the year 1916. An acre of suitable ground sown with oats was subjected to electric treatment for eight hundred and forty-eight hours during the season; an equal acreage in other portions of the same large field, also sown with oats, was not so treated. When the crops were gathered in, it was found that the yield of grain from the electrified area was 49 per cent. larger than that from the unelectrified portions, while the yield

of straw was 88 per cent. larger. At the prices current when the crop was reaped, the increased value works out at six pounds seven shillings per acre, thus providing an ample margin of profit after due allowance is made for the cost of the current used, which, at the rate of a penny per Board of Trade unit, would amount to about eleven shillings. Certain observations made at Lincluden Mains would also appear to indicate that the benefit of an electric discharge is not confined to the first year, but may extend to a second year at least. Thus a field which had been electrically treated in 1915 produced a much heavier crop of clover in 1916 than a similar field which had not been so treated. If further observations and experiments show that, in addition to an immediate increase of the treated crop, the electric discharge may also benefit a succeeding crop, it is obvious that the agricultural value of the process is very much enhanced.

A NEW DUPLICATOR.

The restrictions placed by the Government upon the sale of glycerine and gelatine have rendered impossible the manufacture of those forms of duplicating apparatus in which these substances are used. A draughtsman in the west of Scotland has, however, discovered a suitable substitute, the supply of which is entirely unrestricted and practically unlimited, and he has now devised a form of duplicator quite as cheap and serviceable as the old gelatine tray. In one respect, indeed, it is said to be superior, for it is claimed that the convex surface of the new duplicator will greatly prolong its life, a flat surface being much more liable to wear away in the centre. By means of this apparatus, to which the name of 'The Impactor Convex Duplicator' has been given, a large number of copies may readily be obtained of any document or drawing done originally in good copying-ink.

AN ANCIENT ARMOURY.

A recent fall of cliff near Scarborough, on the coast of Yorkshire, has brought to light a collection of some twenty bronze weapons, which probably formed the stock-in-trade of a worker in metals a thousand years or more before Julius Cæsar first set foot on our shores. Though battle-axes form the larger part of the collection, portions of a sword, spears, chisels, and gouges are also included. Twelve of the axes, of the socketed type, are quite perfect. Some of them betray signs of use; others are in the rough state, as if they had just been turned out of the mould. When found, one of the axes still contained part of the original wooden shaft; another varied from the ordinary pattern in having a rivet-hole instead of a loop for the purpose of keeping the handle firm. The whole collection, which has been lodged in the Hull Museum, is full of interest to the antiquarian, and especially to students of the 'Bronze Age' of our national story.

AN OLD-TIME 'SUBSTITUTE' FOR FLOUR.

Attention has been drawn to a paragraph in this Journal published seventy years ago, which is of peculiar interest at the present time. It is headed, 'The Cheapest Bread Yet,' and runs as follows: 'We have been favoured by Mr S. Brown, of Finedon, near Higham Ferrers, with a sample of bread which he states is in constant use on his farm. It is made of flour and mangel, in equal quantities by weight. The mangel-wurzel is pared, cut into slices, and boiled so as to mash well. The usual quantity of yeast must be used, and little or no water is required. The dough must stand some time after being mixed, and must then be baked in the ordinary way. If the loaf sent to us be a fair sample, we should call it good household bread.' The apparent saving is very marked, the price of mangel-wurzel being only a halfpenny per pound, as compared with seven or eight times that amount for flour. It should be pointed out, however, that the food value of mangel-wurzel is very much less than that of wheat-flour; hence the saving is not nearly so great as appears on the surface.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

A LOST STAR.

THE velvet blackness, like a pall,
Hung breathless in the vast profound,
Letting its sable fringes fall
On earth around.

When sudden through the hollow night
A great white star resplendent shone;
It filled the firmament with light,
Blazed—and was gone!

So a great Thought insistent came
To move men as by magic spell:
It fired their minds with mighty flame—
Then flashed and fell!

Orion, Mars, the Bear I trace,
But that Lost Star no more returns.
And yet in interstellar space
Somewhere it burns!

J. CUTHBERT SCOTT.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SEVENTH SERIES

JOHN CORNELIUS COMES HOME.

By Ashmore Russan.

CHAPTER I.—HOW THE NEWS CAME TO MARAVILLAS.

A HEAVY downpour had fallen on Mount Tacana, and in consequence the Rio Grande was in flood. Fortunately for Davison, John Cornelius, intending to cross at the ford, was waiting on the opposite bank for the stream to drop until a certain mark on a certain boulder should show above water; and, more fortunately still, John Cornelius had a lariat coiled on his saddle-bow. That he should have been there was equally fortunate for John Cornelius.

Davison knew nothing about the warning mark on the boulder, or of the boulder's special usefulness. To him it was just a rock in the middle of the ford, and to be avoided. Once before he had crossed the Rio Grande at this particular spot, but that had been some years back and in the dry season. Although swollen and turgid, the stream did not look out of the way dangerous, and he spurred into it, his horse willing enough. A mule would have refused with all the obstinacy of its kind.

Half-way through, just above the guiding boulder, the horse was swept off its legs, and Davison was swung out of the saddle. Swirled by the current against the great stone, he clung to a projection with all his strength; while, at the mercy of the flood, the horse continued its irresponsible career down-stream, struggling hard amongst the rocks and occasionally swimming.

John Cornelius was the only witness of the mishap. He had shouted to deter the traveller from making the attempt, but his voice had been drowned in the roar of the waters. As he swung the coiled lariat round his head, he shouted again, louder, 'Let go one hand and hold up an arm!' Being an expert with the rope, he knew the danger of lassoing the unfortunate traveller by the neck in such a whirling torrent.

Davison heard, and obeyed. Next moment the noose of the lariat dropped over the uplifted arm as neatly as could be, and tightened. At once John Cornelius turned his horse from the river, and very quickly Davison stood beside him, shaking himself like a drenched spaniel.

'Good man!' he panted. 'You 've—saved—my life—I reckon.'

'So do I,' returned John Cornelius. 'Lucky for you I happened to be here. Whatever possessed you to try to cross with the boulder-mark under water?'

'Never—heard—of any—boulder-mark. Only—been this road—once before—years ago. Has my horse—got out?'

John Cornelius raised his six feet of height in the stirrups and glanced down-stream. 'He's out all right, about half a mile away. Seems to be limping a bit. Sure to be cut more or less and bruised a lot. Rocks down there pretty ragged. But come with me to Maravillas and get a change and a feed. I 'll send a *mozo* for your horse.'

Half-an-hour later, in a rig belonging to John Cornelius, which, as the wearer was short and plump, and John Cornelius long and rather thin, fitted tightly where it touched, and met scarcely anywhere in its circumference, Davison was lounging in an easy-chair on the veranda of the *Casa Grande* at the Maravillas coffee *finca*, a good cigar between his teeth and a long drink beside him.

'I 've been up to Guatimoc,' he was saying. 'Coffee-machinery 's my line—Davison & Co.'s. It 's ten years since my last run round this part of Mexico. Been here long, Mr Cornelius?'

'Nearly eight years.'

'Funny I haven't your name on my list of coffee-planters. Whose machinery do you use?'

'Murray's—what I have.'

'H'm!' Davison blew a cloud of smoke to the veranda roof, bursting off a button in so doing. 'Oddest thing,' he went on, 'is that your name 's quite familiar to me—in the old country, but I never heard of it in Mexico before to-day. Our squire at home was a John Cornelius, Torringham Hall, Worcestershire. Died some years ago. Was he a relation of yours?'

John Cornelius yawned. 'I believe so,' he answered. 'My uncle. Never saw him. Never wanted. Never was at Torringham.'

Davison laid his cigar down carefully on an arm of his chair and sat up—cautiously. 'Did you know he was dead—defunct—gone to glory?' he asked.

'No. He was nothing to me. Family quarrel. John is the family name—eldest boy. Dare say

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I yelled when they gave it me, but I couldn't stop them doing it, anyway, and I've got to stick to it. I'm Don *Wan* amongst these people—which is a satisfaction.'

'Any more Johns in the family?' Davison continued, still alert.

'Not that I know of. Believe I'm the last, and likely to remain so.' And John Cornelius yawned again.

Davison took up his cigar and smoked in silence for half-a-minute. 'I'll be hanged if this isn't the rummiest thing that ever came my way!' he burst out suddenly. 'The old squire may have been nothing to you, but you or some other John Cornelius was a lot to him. He left all his property to a John Cornelius—a nephew—wait a bit—to the son of his dear brother.—What the dickens was the brother's name?—I have it—"John Cornelius, the son of my dear brother Andrew, of St Mary Axe in the City of London, and Clapham Common in the county of Surrey." That was it.'

'"*His* dear brother,"' repeated John Cornelius. 'Well, that's news.' And he lit a fresh cigar.

Davison got to his feet, losing another button. In his excitement he also upset the long drink and broke the glass. 'Is it *you*, man?' he cried, vainly trying to pick up the fragments. 'Are you the Cornelius that's wanted?'

John Cornelius smoked on placidly. 'Never mind the breakage,' he said presently, ignoring the question. 'Here, Pedro,' calling to a *mozo* a little distance away, 'bring a broom and another glass.'

'But are you Andrew's son?' Davison persisted.

'I am. Where did you get that yarn?' asked John Cornelius.

'That *yarn?*' Davison repeated disgustedly. 'Well, if you aren't a coffee-cooler, and no mistake! Look here! My people live at Torringham. I, Jimmy Davison, was born there. I knew the old squire as well as he'd let anybody know him. He died about seven years back. Lawyer Jones advertised for you—for a John Cornelius, anyway—a month or two, perhaps longer, and I think he went to America. I saw the particulars of your uncle's will in the newspapers, and I saw Lawyer Jones's ad.—"U.S. and Colonial papers please copy." You know the sort of thing? It's a miracle to me that you never saw it.'

'It would have been rather a miracle if I had,' said John Cornelius. 'I've been busy making this *finca*. I've planted three thousand acres of coffee, and built this place. You have seen something of what it's like, and it has taken some doing, what with two or three revolutions a year and about every other sort of trouble. Besides, when I came to Mexico I cut myself adrift from England altogether. My father was dead. My mother died when I was a boy. I haven't seen an English or American newspaper in five or six years. Wouldn't have had time to read 'em, anyway.' He turned to the *mozo*, who had brought another glass. 'Sweep up the pieces, Pedro, and don't cut your fingers.—Help yourself, Mr Davison. Your yarn will keep. Dinner's ready, and that won't. Drink up and come along.'

'Well, I'll be shot!' muttered Davison under his breath.

During the meal—of chickens, rice, and red pepper; of *carne seco*, rice, and red pepper; of *tamales* and red pepper, washed down with good *vino tinto*—John Cornelius said no word of the astonishing news Davison had brought him. He was full of his coffee *finca*, of the new drying *patios* he intended to cut out of the slope of the hill leading to the Rio Grande. He asked to see Davison's catalogues. Having been in the river, they were soaking wet. He had them dried carefully, and gave an order for two pulpers and a separator. Pea-berry beans were in fashion again, and he was very particular about the separator—that it should be able to pick them out.

The traveller in coffee-machinery was amazed.

Several times he tried without success to turn the conversation to the fortune waiting an heir in England, and finally concluded that his story had not been believed. That spurred him.

'Look here, Mr Cornelius,' he said; 'suppose we chuck this coffee talk *hasta mañana*. What are you going to do? Do you know the Torringham Hall property's worth the best part of a quarter of a million, and that there's a lot of loose cash and other things?'

'Yes,' said John Cornelius. 'I should think, from what my father told me, that the property's worth all that; but I'm not going to do anything—in a hurry. I'm going to think it over *hasta mañana*, and longer. Who's living at the Hall?'

'Lawyer Jones and his daughters—pretty girls both, especially Rosa. He's the squire. He's lived there for years. Looks on the place as his own, the Torringham folks say.'

'The devil he does!' said John Cornelius, and lit a candle. 'Have another drink? No? Well, you must be tired. Your horse will be all right to-morrow. You know your room. Second door from here on the veranda. Here's a candle. No mosquitoes at Maravillas. Good-night, Mr Davison. Lucky for you I was down by the river this afternoon.'

'Well, of all the cool customers!' exclaimed Davison when he had closed the door of his chamber. 'Lucky for me he was down by the river, eh? Well, so it was; but most folks would say it was lucky for him.'

Davison's horse not being quite fit for the road, his master remained at the coffee *finca* until the afternoon of the next day. John

Cornelius mounted him and took him over a great part of his three-thousand-acre plantation. He was going to try more drastic pruning. Intended to plant *robusta* on the lower lands. Advised Davison to cable and have the pulpers and separator put in hand at once if they were not in stock. Asked to be informed as soon as possible when the machinery could be shipped. Not a word of the fortune in England. Not a word until Davison was starting on his way. Then, as they shook hands, 'Well, good-bye, Mr Davison. I really think it was lucky for you I was down by the river. Say, when you send that cable home, you have no need to mention anything about what you've been telling me, nor when you confirm it. I make a point of it. But mind you hurry up the machinery.'

'All right,' said Davison. And as he rode off he once more prophesied his ultimate ending, 'I'll be shot!' adding, 'Rum customer for Archibald to tackle, what-ho!'

(*Continued on page 521.*)

THE SHRINE OF THE PEACE OF GOD.

By R. COURTIER-FORSTER.

AMONG the mountains of Abkhasia in Transcaucasia there stands an old sixth-century Iberian shrine perched high on a pinnacle of rock some thousands of feet above a sweeping bay of the Black Sea. My fellow-pilgrims in the great Caucasian monastery at Novi Affon told me of it; of the four monks who lived there still, like hermits; of the tiny chapel of the Icon with Three Faces; of open vaults and bleaching skulls; of jackals and bears in the forests below, and wolves that slunk among the trees watching their prey; and of the wonderful peace which any one who reached the shrine found within its narrow walls.

The old pilgrim who had been there sat under the palms in the shade of the white wall of the monastery, looking out over a sapphire sea, and talked of the shrine. The Chapel of the Peace of God he called it, and sighed, for never again could he make the journey and climb the rough and steep mountain-road up to the crags where the four hermits dwelt. While he talked he cracked baked sunflower-seeds between his teeth until the ground was white with tiny husks. As the bells of the monastery church broke the stillness of the summer afternoon, he stood up and shook the seedlets from the folds of his long coat. 'It lies away to the west,' he said, pointing to the mountains which rose higher and higher as they stretched upwards towards the untrodden mysteries of Nachar's snowy heights; and he turned and walked up the path past the cedar grove, in through the open doors of the gray old church, where the lamps gleamed before the icons of the saints.

That night, as I lay in my cell watching through the open window the stars float high over the mountains, I thought of the pilgrim's progress to the old Chapel of the Peace of God. When the brother came down the monastery corridor at half-past two in the morning, ringing his bell to call us to the night office in the church in the garden, my mind was made up; I also would go where the old pilgrim had been, and make the journey up to the shrine in the Abkhasia Mountains.

The old man walked with me to the confines of the monastery domain through long alleys of dark cypress-trees which edged the silver sheen of the monks' olive-orchards. At the Fountain of the Life-Giving Cross by the little stream which forms the boundary of the abbey lands he blessed me, and sat down to rest and pray; while I went on, over the wooden bridge, and turned my face to the mountains and the west.

The roads in Transcaucasia, except over the great passes, seem to be more the work of nature than of man. The positions for the roads in the mountains of Abkhasia have been selected by the mules, who first choose a way up or down a mountain-side. Other mules follow in the wake of the first, and so a track is made. Man came after the mules, and called the work of the beasts a mountain-road, and a mountain-road it remains, unsullied by the hand of man. It was such an Abkhasian road that led up the mountains to the Chapel of the Peace of God. It wandered through steep forests of wild plum and apple trees laden with ripe fruits. Great raspberries hung in clusters by the wayside among trailing vines and giant ferns; the blossoms of the Judas trees flamed like scarlet cups above bushes of soft blue hydrangeas; iridescent dragon-flies darted among the sun-shafts which fell through the lofty forest trees; while, far below, the summer sea lay gleaming with the colours of a peacock's throat.

Perhaps this was the road the first Iberian monks had trod, ascending higher and higher to make their home in the Peace of God. Not a leaf stirred in the noonday heat. The road, rough as the bed of a mountain-stream, climbed painfully towards the burning sky. Backwards and forwards it twisted and turned up the mountain-side, past the thick walls and crumbling towers of a ruined castle. Soft ferns carpeted the lofty, roofless halls where once Mingrelian nobles stood. It must have been a place of great strength in the fierce centuries of the proud Caucasian kingdoms. Now its annals are powdered into dust, its very name is forgotten, and the names of the princes who

raised it tower by tower. Some peasants passing called it just 'the Castle,' 'our Castle.' All else has faded from man's memory with the lapse of centuries. I sat alone at one of the deep embrasured windows, gazing down into the silent, forested depths below, speculating as to who had been the last of the forgotten owners to stand there for the final farewell in the fierce frays of the wars with Karthlia, and what was the manner of his going. With high hopes and lofty intent, or broken and ruined in the last agony of a lost cause, or perhaps fighting inch by inch, driven back, and still farther back, nearer and nearer to that very window above the precipice—and death?

There lies buried in the heart of the great Caucasus the romance of a lost world. People speak of the Caucasus as they speak of the Alps or the Pyrenees, but this vast viceroyalty covers over a hundred and eighty-one thousand square miles, and back in the early centuries was the home of great Christian states and cultivated civilisation, when much of the higher life and art of Europe lay crushed and dying before the savage oncoming of the German tribes.

The quest of the Shrine of the Peace of God was arduous, the way long and toilsome, and fair flowers and luscious fruits lure the pilgrim from the path. But the goal became ever nearer, and at last the forest broke before an open door in a high, moss-grown wall beside a giant tree of ripe golden plums. I was at the gate where the four monks dwelt. Within rose a medley of ruined towers and walls and old arches perched on the very summit of the rock. A little gray stone building stood against an ancient battlemented wall beside a crumbling tower. At one end of the enclosure worn stone steps lead up to what remains of the walls and sanctuary of the first Byzantine hermitage. At the other end, behind a thick medieval embattlement, a narrow path and other steps passed up to the little chapel containing the holy Icon of the Three Faces. The outer walls encircled all the summit of the mountain-top. Away to the north lay deep forested valleys thousands of feet below, twisting and turning between the tumbled masses of the huge Caucasian mountains; and clear against the sky towered the rocky, snow-swept mass of Mount Kluchor. Beneath me to the east lay a white settlement shining like a toy village among the cypress and olive trees, and the curving bays of the Black Sea coast for a hundred versts where the Abkhasia Mountains sweep down into the shimmering sea.

A young peasant man and woman, hot and dusty, were sitting at a trestle table in the grateful shade of the wall, sipping tumblers of pale amber tea. A distinctly warm and bedraggled monk was filling a tin kettle at a large wooden barrel in the corner. All three looked up as I entered, and bowed to me with friendly kindliness.

'Tea?' queried the monk, with the pleased air of one offering hospitality with the certainty of giving pleasure.

I accepted the kindly offer gladly, and sat down on the bench by the trestle table. I was very hot and tired.

'How nice a little red wine would be!' I remarked longingly, fanning myself with my hat.

Their faces lighted up with a quiet smile, and they looked at me appreciatively.

'What an excellent idea!' the young woman said enthusiastically. The young peasant smiled approval.

When the monk returned with a tumbler in a saucer for me, I ventured meekly to suggest that a little red wine would be much appreciated and liberally paid for.

'Certainly not,' said the monk reprovingly, but with a twinkle in his eye; 'you cannot have red wine here. This is a hermitage. There is sugar for your tea. Nice lump-sugar.' And he placed a few pieces on a little plate before me.

I praised the sugar—it was so beautifully clean—and continued fanning myself. In the Caucasus the sugar offered you is not always clean. Often it has been kept in a box with bits of string, loose copper coins, old corks, and other useful articles.

The monk went back to his kitchen.

'Are you sure there is no red wine?' asked the young woman of the young man, in the tone in which a woman always gets what she wants if the man can procure it for her. 'Red wine would be very good,' she added, gazing coldly at the water-barrel in the corner of the little yard, as though it deserved a snub.

'No,' answered the young man, with a grin, 'I am not at all sure. I will go and see.'

A whispered altercation took place in the kitchen at the side, where the monk was boiling water for the tea in a huge copper.

Presently the young man returned with a triumphant smile. 'There will be red wine,' he said joyfully.

The young woman rewarded him with frank approval, and he sat down boldly nearer to her on the bench than he had been before.

In a minute or two the monk appeared with a small teapot, which he set down solemnly in front of the young man.

'Why do you not bring it in a bottle or a carafe?' queried my neighbour simply.

'He who drinks red wine here drinks it out of a teapot,' retorted the monk severely, and stalked virtuously away.

The young man poured some into the young woman's tea, and then into his own. 'Help yourself,' he said hospitably, passing the teapot to me.

I thanked him, and helped myself. The wine was sour and biting, but mixed in a tumbler of

weak tea was extraordinarily refreshing after the journey in the heat.

We refilled our tumblers several times with mingled tea and wine—it was astonishing how thirsty we all were; and the monk brought us a plate of bread that was almost white.

Tea ended, we rose together and crossed ourselves. I went up past the empty uncovered graves hewn in the rock, where the monks who trod these paths long centuries ago had been tenderly laid to rest by their brethren. Now their empty resting-places were lined with clustering maidenhair fern and soft green moss. The old Iberian chapel, ruined and roofless, had great clusters of the same ferns growing from the mouldering walls, among worn Byzantine carvings. A little shrine had been rebuilt within the iconostasis on the site of the ancient altar, and furnished with icons and little lamps. Behind a grating in the right-hand wall there lay arranged on shelves the remains of those monks who had been buried in the rock graves of the little sanctuary. It seemed so unreasonable to have disturbed their bones after centuries of rest in the silence of the mountains they had loved so well, in order to place them in a grotto for the idle curiosity of chance mountaineers and wandering pilgrims. There were not many of them—less than a dozen all told. Their skulls lay in a row on the top shelf. The big arm, leg, and thigh bones were placed on the second shelf, and the rest lay all jumbled up together on the third. The sightless eyes were turned towards the deep valleys and dizzy heights of white-robed Nachar. The Shrine of the Peace of God had been sadly changed by the passing of the centuries. Great Caucasian kingdoms and dynasties had moved across earth's stage to nothingness since first those faithful eyes watched the sun sink into the snows, and knelt here seeking the Peace of God. The immense distances and vast spaces of the mighty Caucasian ranges witnessed still in silent splendour to the majesty of their Creator, and out of the evening breeze the solitaries heard the still, small voice of God. For a thousand years the night-wind had sighed around the hermits' cells, and the lamps had burnt low before the icons of the saints.

I passed into the other carefully preserved old church. Within the minute chapel knelt an aged white-haired monk at prayer, where for a hundred generations hermits have never ceased to pray for the Peace of God. On the wall was the Icon of the Three Faces, and it really had three faces. Looked at directly in front, it showed the Holy Birthgiver of God and the Divine Child; when standing a few feet to the left one saw a picture of St Nicholas the Wonder-Worker with his hand raised in blessing; from the right it was an icon of God the Father holding God the Son, with God the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove flying forth. It was a strange and curious icon, but it was not before that that the old monk was praying. He knelt by a little window, and his eyes gazed out over the deep valleys to the pinnacles and walls of snow turning to pink and gold as the sun went down in the west. The day was nearly done. In the stillness of the gathering gloom the dim forms of other monks stood up to pray. A great silence lay over the hermitage of the Peace of God.

The floating wick of an icon lamp flamed up brightly for an instant, flickering feebly, rose and fell, died down to a minute spark of light, and ceased to be. Soft purple shadows were slowly drawn over the snow like a velvet pall. A pale star shone from the gathering night above the fading peaks, and still the bowed white-haired figure knelt on, and the darkness fell.

There was rest eternal in the Shrine of the Peace of God.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By Jeffery Farnol.

CHAPTER XXXII.—OF HARMONY AND DISCORD.

MR BRIMBERLY, comfortably ensconced in Young R.'s favourite arm-chair, nodded ponderously and beat time to the twang of Mr Jenkins's banjo, whereto Mr Stevens sang in a high-pitched and rather shaky tenor the latest musical success, yclept 'Sammy.' Thus, Mr Jenkins strummed, Mr Stevens trilled, and Mr Brimberly alternately beat the *tempo* with a plump white finger and sipped his master's champagne, until, having emptied his glass, he turned to the bottle on the table beside him, found that empty also, crossed to the two bottles on the mantel, found them likewise void, and had tried the two upon the piano with no better success, when, the song being ended, Mr Jenkins struck in with, 'All dead men, Brim! Six of 'em between us—not bad goin'—what?'

'And very good fizz too, on the whole!' added Mr Stevens. 'I always sing better on champagne. But come, Brim, my boy, I've obliged with everythin' I know, an' Jenk 'e's played everythin' 'e knows, an', I must say, with great delicacy an' feelin'; now it's your turn—sing somethin'.'

'Well,' answered Mr Brimberly, squinting at an empty bottle, 'I used to know a very good

song once, called "Let's drownd all our Sorrers an' Cares." But, good 'eavens! we can't drownd 'em in empty bottles, can we?'

'Oh, very good!' chuckled Mr Jenkins. 'Oh, very prime! If I might suggest, there's nothin' like port—port's excellent tipple for drowndin' sorrer an' downin' care—what?'

'Port, sir!' repeated Mr Brimberly. 'We 'ave enough port in our cellars to drownd every sorrer an' care in Noo York City. I'm proud of our port, sir, an' I'm reckoned a bit of a connysoor.'

'Ah, it takes a eddicated palate to appreciate good port!' nodded Mr Jenkins loftily—'a eddicated palate—what?'

'Cert'nly!' added Mr Stevens. 'An' here's two palates waitin', waitin' an' ready to appreciate till daylight doth appear.'

'There's nothin' like port!' sighed Mr Brimberly, setting aside the empty champagne bottle—'nothin' like port; an' there's Young Har 'ardly can tell it from sherry—oh the Goth! the Vandyle! All this good stuff would be layin' idle if it wasn't for me! Young Har ain't got no right to be a millionaire; 'is money's wasted on 'im—'e neglects 'is opportoonities shameful—oh, shameful! What I say is—what's the use o' bein' a millionaire if you don't air your millions?'

Hereupon Mr Jenkins rocked himself to and fro over his banjo in a polite ecstasy of mirth. 'Oh, by Jove!' he gasped, 'if that ain't infernal clever I'll be shot! Oh, doocid clever I call it—what?'

'Er—by the way, Brim,' said Mr Stevens, his glance roving towards the open window, 'where does he happen to be to-night?'

'Where?' repeated Mr Brimberly, fingering a slightly agitated whisker—'where is Young Har, sir? Lord, Mr Stevens, if you ask me that I throws up my 'ands an' I answers you—'eavens knows! Young Har is a unknown quantity, sir—a will o' the wisp, or, as you might say, a ignus-fattus. At this pre-cise moment 'e may be in Jerusalem or Jericho, or—a-sittin' outside on the lawn—which Gawd forbid! But there, don't let's talk of it. Come on down into the cellars, an' we'll bring up enough port to drownd sorrer an' care all night.'

'With all my heart!' said Mr Jenkins, laying aside his banjo.

'Ditto, indeed!' nodded Mr Stevens, slipping a hand in his host's arm, and thus linked together they made their way out of the room.

Scarcely had their hilarious voices died away when a muscular brown hand parted the hangings of a certain window, and Geoffrey Ravenslee climbed into the room. His rough clothes and shabby hat were powdered with dust, and he looked very much out of place amid his luxurious surroundings as he paused to glance swiftly from the bottles that decorated the carved mantel to those on table and piano. Then, light treading, he crossed the room, and, as the hilarious three were heard approaching, vanished in his turn.

'Ere we are—Jubilee port!' exclaimed Mr Brimberly, setting down two cobwebbed bottles with elaborate care. 'Obleege me with the corkscrew, somebody.'

'Won't forget as you promised us a song, Brim?' said Mr Jenkins, passing the necessary implement.

'Oh, I won't disappoint ye,' answered Mr Brimberly, drawing the cork with a practised hand; 'my father were a regular songster, a fair carollin' bird 'e were, sir.'

''Ow about "Knocked 'Em in the Old Kent Road"?' Mr Stevens suggested.

'Sir!' exclaimed Mr Brimberly, pausing in the act of filling the glasses, 'that's rather a—a low song, ain't it?—What do you think, Mr Jenkins?'

'Low?' answered Mr Jenkins. 'It's as low as—as mud, sir. I might say it's infernal vulgar—what?'

'Why, I don't care for it myself,' Mr Stevens admitted rather humbly; 'it was merely a suggestion.'

'With your good favour,' said Mr Brimberly, after a tentative sip at his glass, 'I'll sing you a old song as was a rare favourite of my father's.'

'Why, then,' said Mr Jenkins, taking up his banjo, 'oblige us with the key.'

'The key, sir?' answered Mr Brimberly, pulling down his waistcoat. 'What key might you mean?'

'The key of the note dominant, Brim.'

Mr Brimberly stared and felt for his whisker. 'Note dominant,' he murmured. 'I don't think my song has anything of that sort, sir.'

'Oh, well, just whistle a couple o' bars.'

'Bars,' said Mr Brimberly, shaking his head—'bars, sir, is things wherewith I do not 'old; bars are the 'aunt o' the 'umble 'erd, sir.'

'No, no, Brim,' explained Mr Stevens; 'Jenk merely means you to 'um the air.'

'Ah, to be sure; now I appre'end! I'll 'um you the hair with pleasure.'

Having said which, Mr Brimberly cleared his throat vigorously, and thereafter emitted certain rumbling noises, whereat Mr Jenkins cocked a knowing head. 'B sharp, I think?' he announced.

'Not much, Jenk!' said Mr Stevens decidedly; 'it was C flat—as flat a C as ever I heard!'

'It was B!' Mr Jenkins maintained. 'I appeal to Brim.'

'Well,' said Mr Brimberly ponderously, 'I'm reether inclined to think I made it a D—if it wasn't D it was F nat'ral. But if it's all the same to you, I'll accompany myself at the piano-forty.'

'What,' exclaimed Mr Stevens, emptying and refilling his glass; seeing which, Mr Jenkins did the same—'what—do you play, Brim?'

'By hear, sir—only by hear,' said Mr Brimberly modestly, as, having placed bottle and glass upon the piano within convenient reach, he

seated himself upon the stool, struck three or four stumbling chords, and then, vamping an accompaniment a trifle monotonous as to bass, burst forth into song:

'It was a rich merchant that in London did dwell,
He had but one daughter, a beautiful gell,
Which her name it was Dinah, scarce sixteen years old,
She'd a very large fortune in silver and gold.
Chorus—Ri tooral, ri tooral, ri tooral i-day,
Ri tooral, ri tooral, ri tooral i-day.'

(It was now that Mr Ravenslee, his rough clothes replaced by immaculate attire, entered unostentatiously, and, wholly unobserved by the company, seated himself and lounged there while Mr Brimberly sang blithely on.)

'As Dinah was a-walking in her garden one day,
Her father came to her and thus he did say:
"Come wed yourself, Dinah, to your nearest of kin,
Or you sha'n't have the benefit of one single pin!"
Ri tooral, ri too'——

Here Mr Jenkins, chancing to catch sight of that unobtrusive figure, let fall his banjo with a clatter; whereupon Mr Brimberly, glancing round, stopped short in the middle of a note, and sat open-mouthed, staring at his master.

'Enjoying a musical evening, Brimberly?'

Mr Brimberly blundered to his feet, choked, gasped, groped for his whiskers, and finally spoke. 'Why, sir, I—I'm afraid I—we are.'

'I didn't know you were such an accomplished musician, Brimberly.'

'Mu-sician, sir?' Brimberly stammered, his eyes goggling. ''Ardly that, sir—oh, 'ardly that. I—I venture to—to tinkle a bit now an' then, sir. No offence, I 'ope, sir?'

'Friends musical too, it seems?'

'Y-es, sir; music do affect em, sir, uncommonly, sir.'

'Yes; makes them thirsty, doesn't it?'

'Why, Mr Ravenslee, sir, I—that is, we did so far venture to—er—I mean—oh lord!' and, mopping perspiring brow, Mr Brimberly groaned, and goggled helplessly from Mr Jenkins, who stood fumbling with his banjo, to Mr Stevens, who gaped fish-like.

'And now,' said Young R., having viewed them each in turn, 'if these—er—very thirsty musicians have had enough of—er—my wine to—er—drink, perhaps you'll be so obliging as to see them—off the premises?'

'I—I beg parding, sir?'

'Please escort your friends off the premises.'

'Certingly, sir—at once, sir.'

'Unless you think you ought to give them each a handful of my cigars.'

But Mr Brimberly had already bundled his dazed guests to the door, out of the door, and out of the house with very little ceremony. It was a very deferential and officiously eager Brimberly who presently knocked, and, bowing very frequently, begged to know how he might be of further service.

'Might I get you a little supper, sir? We 'ave 'am, sir, we 'ave beef, cold, salmon and cucumber likewise cold, a ditto chicken'——

'That sounds rather a quaint bird,' said Ravenslee.

'Yes, sir; very good, sir; chicken an' a nice slice of 'am, sir, say, and'——

'Thank you, Brimberly; I dined late in New York.'

'Why, then, sir, a sandwich or so; pray permit me, sir; cut nice an' thin, sir.'

'Thank you—no.'

'Dear, dear! Why, then, sir, whisky, brandy, a lickyour?'

'Nothing.'

'A cigar, sir?'

'H'm! Have we any of the Garcias left?'

'Y-es, sir. Ho, certingly, sir. Shall I'——

'Don't bother; I prefer my pipe; only, let me know when we get short, Brimberly, and we'll order more; or perhaps you have a favourite brand?'

'Brand, sir?' murmured Brimberly—'a—er—certingly, sir.'

'Good-night, Brimberly.'

'Good-night, sir; but first can't I do—hanything?'

'Oh yes, you do me, of course. You do me so consistently and well that I really ought to raise your wages. I'll think about it.'

Mr Brimberly stared, coughed, and fumbled for his whisker, whence his hand wandered to his brow and hovered there. 'I—I bid you good-night, sir!'

'Oh, by the way, bring me the letters.'

'Certingly, sir!' and, crossing the room, Mr Brimberly returned bearing a salver piled high with letters, which he set at his master's elbow; this done, he bowed and went from the room, one hand still at his dazed brow.

Left alone, Ravenslee took up the letters one by one. Some he threw aside, some few he opened and glanced at carelessly; among these last was a telegram, and the words he saw were these:

'Meet me to-morrow, sunset, in wood. All shall be explained.—HERMY.'

For a while he sat staring at this; then, laying it by, drew out a letter-case, from which he took another telegram bearing precisely the same message. Having compared them, he thrust them into his pocket, and, filling his pipe, sat a while smoking and lost in thought. At last, his pipe being out, he rose, stretched, and turned toward the door, but, in the act of leaving the room, paused to take out and compare the telegrams again, and so stood with puckered brows.

'Hermy!' he said softly. 'Hermione is so much prettier. "All shall be explained." A little trite perhaps! Oh, well'—— So saying, he folded up the telegrams, switched off the lights, and went to bed.

(*Continued on page 516.*)

SCIENCE AND INDUSTRY.

By E. Fearon.

THAT there will be for years to come great need of all the energy and resource the nation possesses if it is to regain and extend the trade lost during the war is a self-evident fact; but whether we realise what the task that confronts us really amounts to is not so certain. There is, however, *one* certainty of which we can rest assured, and that is that Germany will leave no stone unturned in her efforts to regain her former markets, and it behoves us to take time by the forelock, and see what we can do to utilise to the utmost the brains, commercial methods, and materials of Great Britain and her dependencies.

In addressing a meeting at Leeds University a short time ago, Professor Foster, of London, remarked upon the ignorance of the average man in this country with regard to the application of science to industry, as follows: 'The so-called educated man in Germany had an entirely different intellectual stock-in-trade from the so-called educated man in this country. If a German read in the newspapers about nitric acid, T.N.T., or picric acid, he read about materials of which he had some idea. In this country nobody except those who had a knowledge of the inside of a chemical laboratory had the faintest idea of what those words meant; and in consequence of this hiatus in the training of the so-called educated man, any chemical enterprise which came forward for financial support came to the notice of people who had no idea of its bearing on the national economy.'

That these remarks are warranted is brought home to us if we study some of the preposterous advertisements that appear from time to time in the press—a typical one, for instance, asserting that by adding some mysterious chemical substance to coal it lasts longer, gives out more heat, and so on, and so forth. These precious assertions are generally backed up by 'testimonials' from dukes and earls, bishops and other dignified people, who, like Oliver Twist, usually write asking for more! Although these and similar claims are exposed every now and then in the technical press, it is evident that there is a market for such rubbish, or it would not pay to advertise the things so widely and at such a big cost. 'A little learning' may be 'a dangerous thing,' but there is no doubt that the absolute ignorance of scientific knowledge on the part of the public is a good thing for the people who are cute enough to take advantage of it. A want of scientific knowledge did not matter so very much a hundred, or even fifty, years ago, but it is patent to every one who looks ahead at all that the nation which neglects scientific methods at the present time is going to be left behind in the race for supremacy. Great Britain has the men and the brains to keep her in the forefront, but unless those brains are used to the very best advantage, other nations, more virile and more energetic, will take the lead from her, and signs are not wanting that this is already taking place. The great strides made by Germany in recent years in trade and scientific attainments have aroused the attention of the world, and if we can get any hints from our opponents how to increase our efficiency, it is as well to take them and profit thereby.

Taking the question of education first, we find that, generally speaking, elementary education follows similar lines to those in England up to the age of fourteen, although the average attendance is higher—94 per cent. against 88¾ per cent.

But after the age of fourteen the German boy must attend continuation schools, a law being passed in 1900 compelling employers to allow all employees under eighteen years of age to continue their education. There are minor differences throughout the country, but if we take Berlin as being typical of the whole, we find that every male worker employeed within the boundaries of the city must, as soon as he has passed through the elementary school, attend regularly the municipal continuation school until the end of the school half-year in which his seventeenth birthday occurs. This includes all sorts of workers — the skilled workman, the labourer, the clerk, the shopkeeper, and others—so that the subjects taught are very varied, ranging from mensuration and geometrical drawing to business correspondence and methods. The maximum hours of instruction (for which no fee is charged) are three hundred per annum, and the minimum two hundred; and the employer must provide the necessary books and instruments, and allow the pupil to leave his work in time to attend the classes. There are also what may be called 'trade schools' for cabinet-makers, joiners, plumbers, harness-makers, and so on, which an apprentice may attend instead of the municipal school. The training given is extremely good, the workshops are equipped with modern machinery, and everything is done to turn out a well-trained workman. The apprentices are generally 'bound' at fourteen years of age for a period of four years, the hours of work being nine to ten daily for six days a week. At the end of his apprenticeship the future artisan must attend an examination in the theory and practice of his trade, and must submit a specimen of his work, called the *Gesellenstück*. If he passes this examination

satisfactorily, he becomes what we should term a journeyman, and can earn about eightpence an hour. After some years of practical experience, he may sit for further examination, and, if successful, becomes *Meister*, or master, and may start in business for himself or work for an employer.

For those in a higher social scale there are various gymnasia and other institutions which supply specialised instruction, the *Lehrer-Seminarien* and *Fachschulen* being among the latter, while *Oberrealschulen* and *Realschulen* make a special feature of modern languages. We have no desire to belittle in any way the wonderful progress the British nation has made in the past, but there appears to be a lack of method in her educational system, a lack of *real* teachers—that is, teachers who can impart the knowledge they possess and not merely pass examinations in it—and a lack of wishing to gain knowledge for its own sake.

Although we have many brilliant scientists, the nation as a whole cannot be called well educated, and one cannot but feel that the Germans and the Americans will eventually beat us commercially unless a great change is effected, for America spends far more on education than we do, and her inhabitants are far less hidebound by tradition and custom than we are. A manufacturer in America will not hesitate to scrap an obsolete piece of plant if he can obtain better results by installing a modern one, whereas in Britain the tendency is to avoid installing new machines, &c., because of the first cost, although the increased production and diminished wage-sheet would pay for the initial expenditure many times over.

With regard to chemical control of industry in Britain, there is a lamentable lack of appreciation of the possibilities of more economical working of plants, and a want of scientific research. Generally speaking, the chemist is one of the worst-paid men on the staff of most works, his remuneration being on a par with a rather superior fitter or foreman; whereas, if chemical control of industrial operations was carried out as it should be, great economies could undoubtedly be effected. Germany realised this a good many years ago, and there you will find a hundred chemists to one in Britain, with the result that costs of manufacture have been reduced to a minimum, and her trade for twenty years had expanded enormously.

Take one instance, that of coal carbonisation. The tar and ammonia resulting from this in coke-ovens and gas-works are now recovered to the value of millions sterling each year, but until the chemist began to investigate these by-products, they were simply looked upon as waste to be got rid of by any means available. From coal used for metallurgical purposes, it is only recently that Britain began to save these valuable by-products; and as late as 1913, out of twenty million tons of coal used in this way no less than six and a half millions were consumed in the old beehive ovens in which the gas, tar, ammonia, benzol, &c. were absolutely lost to the value of over two million pounds.

In the iron and steel industries, our exports are not growing as they should do. Forty years ago Great Britain produced more than America, Germany, France, and Belgium together; to-day America heads the list with a production of twenty-seven million tons of pig-iron, Germany comes second with fourteen million five hundred thousand tons, and Great Britain third with just over ten million tons; and of steel, America again comes first with an output of twenty-six million tons, Germany follows with thirteen million five hundred tons, and Great Britain a bad third with only six million tons.

The figures relating to the exports of iron and steel goods show conclusively how America and Germany have overtaken us. In 1890 we exported thirty-one million pounds' worth; America, one million eight hundred thousand pounds' worth; and Germany, eleven million three hundred thousand pounds' worth. Twenty-one years later, in 1911, we exported forty-three million five hundred thousand pounds' worth. Germany has nearly quadrupled her exports in the same time to forty-one million three hundred thousand pounds, and America has increased hers to twenty-three million five hundred thousand pounds.

Another industry which we have allowed Germany and Austria to capture is the glass trade. In 1910 we exported glass to the value of one million five hundred and seventy-two thousand pounds, and Germany very nearly five million pounds' worth.

Now, without labouring the point, it is quite evident that there is a reason for the way in which our two great rivals have gone ahead lately, and we may discover something of the facts of the case if we care to. They may be summed up as follows: chemical control, commercial methods, freightage, and a higher standard of education.

With reference to the first-named, research-work has been left very largely to men (often with a private income) imbued with a love for it, men who demanded little or no remuneration, but who had a passion for discovering new truths, and industry, as a whole, owes more than it can ever repay to the scientists who have so willingly spent their lives in this manner; but the problems requiring solution are increasing too quickly for the few men who can thus afford to spend laborious days, and the time has come when the various industries must spend some of their wealth in endowing research scholarships and laboratories on a lavish scale in order to solve the numerous problems that confront them. The capital of the various industries throughout Great Britain is almost inconceivable, and a very small percentage on that capital would yield funds that would be ample for such research, and there is no doubt

that the results would be far-reaching in their effects.

Turning to the question of commercial methods, we find that Germany has obtained an immense volume of trade, not only on the Continent, but even in Great Britain and our own colonies, that we shall have great difficulty in wresting from her. She has done this largely by what we may term scientific advertising, for she sends out large numbers of commercial travellers who are familiar with the customs, the language, and the trade of the country they visit, while the few we condescend to send are often *not;* her catalogues and printed matter are in the language of the country to which they are sent, as are the prices and terms of discount, &c.

Here is a little sidelight on this subject. Switzerland takes the trouble to publish the number of commercial travellers who visit her each year; the following are the figures for a year a little prior to the war:

Country.	Goods sold in Switzerland.	No. of Travellers.
Germany . .	£21,520,000	4711
France . .	12,720,000	1531
Italy . . .	8,160,000	1405
United Kingdom.	3,640,000	61

As the proportion probably holds good for other countries similarly situated, we begin to see why Germany has doubled her exports in the last fifteen years or so to the nations round about her, while Great Britain has gained very little in the European markets. There is also more co-operation among manufacturers; consequently they are better able to regulate and increase the output, and to organise an industrial plan of campaign.

Freightage enters very largely into the question of costs, especially in the transport of heavy materials such as iron and steel, coke, &c. Comparing the three countries, we find that in England iron products cost about three halfpence per ton-mile, whereas in America the cost is only about a farthing to a halfpenny, and in Germany from a halfpenny to three farthings; or, to put it another way, it costs eight shillings to send iron from Staffordshire to Liverpool, a distance of about seventy miles, and only six shillings and eightpence to eight shillings from Pittsburg to New York, a distance of four hundred and sixty miles. The German manufacturer can send his iron and steel products from Westphalia to Amsterdam—one hundred and forty-seven miles—for six shillings and fourpence. A good deal of the heavy freightage in England is due to over-capitalisation; thus, for the same mileage, English capital is thirteen hundred million pounds, and Prussian only four hundred and fifty million pounds; and in the case of the German railways, over 90 per cent. are owned by the State, which profits to the extent of fifty million pounds sterling each year, in addition to giving such low transport rates.

In Britain the canal system of transporting heavy goods has been very greatly neglected, whereas on the Continent it has been increasingly used. Prussia alone has spent twenty-seven million pounds in constructing and improving her waterways. Between 1875 and 1905 German water traffic increased from thirteen million six hundred thousand tons per annum to sixty-seven million tons per annum. Our canal traffic is practically stagnant, and only small boats are used, compared with the three-hundred-ton boats used on the German canals. A scheme was submitted to Parliament years ago to canalise England at a cost of some thirty million pounds, but nothing came of it; yet the benefits to trade would be enormous, as freightage would be reduced to about one-third of rail charge; and we may be sure that Germany would not spend the huge sums she is doing if no advantages are to accrue!

Much more might be written about this important subject; one could easily fill in the foregoing almost *ad nauseam*, but it is to be hoped it is not necessary. Surely we shall never again allow ourselves to be thrust into the background in so many vital industries as we have been in the past.

Germany's control of the steel and iron and chemical industries, if allowed to proceed unchallenged, will be a menace to the peace of the whole world, and in our own interests, if for no other reason, it is essential that we should have a bigger say in matters such as these in the future, but we cannot accomplish this without an immense amount of real hard work on the part of every fit person in the kingdom.

THE RAID.

By O. C. Platoon.

'YOU are to have a rest this time up,' said O. C. Company. 'You're for a sort of course; attached to the artillery for information, the order says. Anyway, you're not for the front line. You've eight clear days, and a bed at the end of every one of them. You lucky blighter!'

'Sounds all right,' said Second-Lieutenant Penne. 'Wonder what "attached to the artillery" means!'

'When I was attached to the artillery,' said O. C. Company, 'it chiefly meant that I turned up at the battery about eleven o'clock, and went down to the O.P. with the observing-officer; at twelve o'clock I came back with the officer he'd relieved, and stayed to lunch. In the afternoons

I used to contrive to be invited to tea at C Battery; they have an excellent gramophone.'

'What made them choose me for this great honour?'

'Well, you've been doing your share lately, you know. We're all to have a turn out some day.'

Penne wandered away to his own billet. He had few illusions about the favour he was receiving.

Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes is an excellent rule of conduct, and applies equally well to orderly-rooms which grant unasked-for periods of rest. Really, he did not want the rest. Every one would be in the front line, save one or two others who had also received the unexpected favour. Altogether he found there would be six of them, two from each of A, B, and C Companies.

'Shall I put your equipment together, sir?'

'No; we're not going up this time.'

Harris, Penne's batman, stared. 'Not goin' up, sir? Ain't the battalion goin'?'

'Yes, they're going all right; but you and I and five other officers and their batmen are staying behind—for a rest.'

Harris had no answer to this save a soft whistle. Then, after a while, he said, 'It's a stunt, isn't is, sir?'

'I hope so,' said Penne.

'You'll take me, sir?'

'We'll see, Harris. Time enough for that when it comes off.'

For six days the six subalterns had a delightful time. After breakfast at the comfortable hour of nine, they sallied forth to shop in the village. They bought plums, salad, fresh vegetables, and French bread, which they later took up to the officers in the line. After that they split up among the various batteries in the neighbourhood, and from various O.P.'s studied No Man's Land diligently through a telescope. At night they gathered in their temporary mess and swopped lies which they had collected from the artillery during the day.

On the night of the sixth day they were sitting down to dinner when an orderly arrived. 'Second-Lieutenants Hudson and Williams will report to Major Wilson by 9 A.M. to-morrow the 6th inst.'

'Six little subalterns
Far from battle's roar;
Down came an orderly,
And then there were four,'

said Penne. 'Wonder what's up!'

Before dinner was over the two B Company subalterns had also received a similar notice, and by the time coffee arrived a runner from A Company presented Penne with a chit requesting the pleasure of his company *chez* Major Wilson on the morrow.

'Second-Lieutenant P. Fletcher Carr,' said Penne, 'you are hereby requested to accompany me to the abode of one hight Major Wilson on the morrow to receive instructions.'

'Oh! am I?' said that worthy. 'And I was going to lunch with D Battery to-morrow!'

'I think some one ought to make a speech on this auspicious occasion,' said Hudson. 'Something is going to happen. I think we ought to celebrate.'

'By going to bed early,' put in Carr.—'Prior?'

Prior, his batman, appeared from the kitchen.

'Call me early'——

'Mother dear, for I'm to be queen of the May,' suggested Hudson.

——'About seven, I think. Breakfast at half-past, and have everything ready to move off by a quarter-past eight.'

'And before you go, gentlemen,' said Penne, 'I'll trouble you for a little item of thirty francs apiece for messing expenses.'

'If that's your sole contribution to the evening's gaiety,' said Williams, 'it's about time this little haven of rest was broken up.'

. . . . . .

Major Wilson's headquarters were in a large, airy cellar in the reserve billets. The six subalterns sat round on boxes and chairs, while the three company sergeant-majors stood near the door.

'Briefly,' said the major, 'there is to be a raid to-morrow night. Penne and Carr are to take one party, and Hudson and Williams another. Carson and Holmes are to have a reserve-party to cover the others and lend a hand in case of accidents. The spots you are to raid are marked on that map over there, and here are aeroplane photographs of the section of trench, so that you'll know what to expect. Your parties will be thirty strong, and each of you will have two runners. The idea is to do as much damage as possible, and, if possible, bring back prisoners.'

'What about the wire?' said Hudson.

'Each of the two parties will be preceded by a party of six men and two R.E.'s, who will place a Bangalore torpedo under the German wire. Penne, you will see to your torpedo, and Hudson will look after his own. You'll get them from the R.E. dump to-morrow not later than 5 P.M. You will superintend the fixing of them in the wire also.'

'To-morrow night is going to be a pleasant little outing, I can see,' whispered Penne to Carr. 'Ever seen a Bangalore?'

'No.'

'Charming things, I assure you. Buy them by the yard from the R.E. We'll want about thirty feet of it.'

'As regards the disposition of your parties, I leave you to make your own—subject, of course, to criticism from me. You can also decide what equipment you will carry. There is one more thing. Each party will carry a mobile charge,

also supplied by the R.E., with which to blow up emplacements or dug-outs.'

'What time does the balloon—I mean the Bangalore—go up, sir?' asked Carr.

'Eleven o'clock. You must be in position and ready to rush the gap by ten minutes to eleven at the latest. Any questions?'

'Where are reports to be sent?'

'Where will you be, sir?'

'How long is it to last?'

'Who's going to fire the torpedo?'

'Suppose there's nobody there when we get there?'

'Are we to have a password?'

'Is there to be any artillery preparation?'

They fired questions one after the other for the best part of an hour. Sketches were made from the maps, and positions noted. The C.S.M.'s noted details in their pocket-books for the edification of their men. Finally everybody was satisfied.

'To-night, of course, you six will spend up here. There'll be all kinds of details to settle, and you'd better be on the spot. We might all have dinner together here. I think the larder will about run to it.'

'Sergeant-major,' said Penne, 'we'll fix up which men we're having now. Come on to the other room.'

Penne, Carr, and the A Company sergeant-major went into the adjoining cellar, and squatted on the remains of a bed.

'Best fix up the orderlies first. I want Scott and Harris for mine.'

'And I want Prior and Ward.'

'Warn those four to meet us here at eight o'clock to-morrow morning.'

Then they went through their platoons, discussing the merits of '82 Smith and '74 Jones, and their suitability for the work in hand.

'What about equipment, sir?' said the C.S.M. when the lists were completed.

'Rifle and bayonet, skeleton order, and bombs, eh?'

'How many bombs each, sir?'

'Every man to carry six, and one man in six to have a bomb-bucket with twenty-four bombs. That ought to be enough.'

The thirty men were divided into three groups of six and an N.C.O., and one group of eight and an N.C.O., and the exact work of each was carefully detailed. The C.S.M. departed, and Carr and Penne discussed their own part in the operations. Carr was to enter the trench, while Penne looked after matters on top, disposed of prisoners, and, in case of accidents, took command.

In the other cellar, Hudson and Williams were likewise busy arranging matters. Carson and Holmes were cursing their uninteresting reserve position, and deciding on the best tactical position. Major Wilson was writing out a report in triplicate for the orderly-room, the three C.S.M.'s were making arrangements for the supply of bombs, and away at the back three sappers of the R.E. were working overtime on long lengths of Bangalore torpedo.

. . . . . .

'Well, Scott,' said Penne the following day, 'there's going to be a stunt. We're going to wake Fritz up a little—a raid to-night. I want you to be my orderly along with Harris. All right?'

'Yessir,' said Scott.

'Your job is to look after me; see that I don't get into trouble. You may have to take messages, but in the main you will be with me. Job suit you?'

'Yessir,' said Scott.

Harris was delighted. Prior and Ward said very much the same as Scott. In fact, they didn't understand why they were asked about it at all. Ward asked anxiously if he would see any of the fun.

'Fun!' said Carr. 'You'll be right in the middle of it. There'll be enough to satisfy anybody.'

The other men were also warned, and for the rest of the day they sang loudly in their billets or cheered derisively when an occasional shell plumped down among the houses.

'Goin' to be a proper rough 'ouse this evenin',' said one.

'Yes, we'll give 'em little 'amlet. I'm goin' to nab a 'elmet, I am.'

'What cher want a 'elmet for?'

'Old girl in the billet in the village arsked me for one, an' I promised 'er she should 'ave it.'

Others took the unnecessary precaution of sharpening their bayonets on the window-sills. One and all were highly excited, and delighted at the idea of getting to close quarters. The Bangalore torpedoes arrived, and were stored in the company office. The mobile charge also came up, and Harris was deputed to carry it. As it weighed some seven pounds, he was not pleased.

Penne moved off at 9.15 with the six men and the two sappers. The torpedo was carried in three sections, each ten feet long. Penne carried the detonator, and the two sappers had the coil of wire and the firing-lever. Everything was quiet in No Man's Land as they crept over the parapet. Odd shots from fixed rifles plumped into the ground here and there, but no one was hit on the way across. The three sections were fitted together, and the pointed end inserted under the wire. This was one of the most dangerous parts of the raid, for the torpedo nosing through the wire made a considerable noise, and took some twenty minutes to fix. An unlucky Verey light might betray the whole party, and the raid have to be abandoned. At last it was fixed, and Penne carefully put in the detonator; the electric wires were attached, and the party made for home. A hap-hazard bullet

from one of the rifles broke one of the fingers of Scott's left hand as they returned, but he continued with the raid as though nothing had happened. Hudson had fixed his torpedo farther down on the right; it was twenty minutes to eleven when they met the raiding-parties coming to join them.

Penne led the way, crawling on his belly, and by ten minutes to the hour every one was in position some thirty yards from the torpedoes to allow for the effect of the explosion. Thirty yards is about the minimum of safety to allow. If you are any nearer, there is danger of shell-shock as well as from flying bits of wire. It is essential to get as close as possible in order to take full advantage of the surprise effect. The judging of that minimum safety distance gave Penne more trouble than anything else. It had to be done in an instant, practically in the dark, and without any means of verification. This was 'judging distance,' and no mistake!

Every one lay flat, awaiting the firing of the torpedo. There was a long silence, the night-wind creeping coldly through the grasses. Nothing happened. Carr, in rear, began to grow uneasy at the long wait, and crept back to find out the cause of the delay. Penne lay flat, clutching his revolver, wondering vaguely what he was doing out there at all. Before the war he had been an assistant-manager in a suburban bank, knowing nothing of explosives. Now he was lying out there, in that perilous strip of country, waiting for that long tube of ammonal to explode; he had with him some thirty men carrying bombs; and Harris, at his side, carried the mobile charge which was to blow something or other sky-high. He remembered an officer he had once known who had told him that explosives sometimes go off by a sort of sympathetic action. Suppose his mobile charge went off in sympathy with the torpedo? He wondered why it was so long. The sound of a dog barking a great distance away came down the wind. Some of the men fidgeted behind him. One of them spat. Then Carr came running back to his place, casting caution to the winds. He shouted at the top of his voice, 'Look out, Penne. It 's going up!'

With a terrifying roar the Boche wire leapt into the air. Penne rose to his feet and ran swiftly forward into a moving cloud of smoke, through which fragments of wire, wood, and iron flew. The men raced behind him. Down on the right another explosion shook the ground, while from all sides Verey lights swished and curved. But Penne was already in the trench, and two of his parties of six with him.

When Hudson's torpedo burst, Hudson and his men also ran forward; but something had gone wrong, for Hudson stumbled and fell. There was trip-wire here, all unsuspected and uncut. The first seven went down in the gap like nine-pins, while bombs rained over on to them from the trench. One dropped full on Hudson's orderly, killing him almost instantly; pieces of it also tore strips from Hudson's leg, and one pierced his knee, so that he could not walk.

'Find Mr Williams quickly,' he said to his remaining orderly. 'Tell him I 'm wounded, and he is to take over.'

But Williams, knowing something had gone amiss, had worked up towards the front, and found out for himself the trouble. It was almost as light as day with Verey lights, and bombs were still raining over.

'Give 'em hell, boys, and don't show yourselves,' he shouted; and the men, hearing his voice, lay close in to the edge of the wire and pitched bombs into the trench in front of them. Williams crawled up into the gap to look for Hudson. There was no sign of him. Bombs were still dropping there. There were several wounded men crawling painfully back home. One of them stopped crawling, and did not move. He went across, and found a dead body. The bombs were lessening now, but as he looked along there was a line of fire splashing through the wire. The Boches were abandoning their front line, and firing on them from the support line. On his left there was a continual bursting of bombs. The other party had evidently succeeded.

He investigated the gap again, only to find that the front section of the torpedo had worked loose and failed to explode, so that some seven feet of wire remained to be cut. He cursed his luck, and set about the difficult task of getting his men home, taking with them the bodies of the two men who had been killed. Hudson had managed to crawl in unaided.

In the meantime, Penne, on leaping into the trench, found himself opposite the entrance to a dug-out. He heard footsteps on the stairs, and fired a Verey pistol down the entrance. He followed this up with two shots with his revolver. His men had followed him by this time. One party immediately worked to the left, and the second party to the right, bombing round the traverses as they went. Scott and Harris heaved three or four bombs down the dug-out stairs, until the arrival of the third party, who were instructed to hold the top of the dug-out and prevent any one from coming out. Penne then followed swiftly on the heels of the first party. He passed the bodies of three Germans, and finding them dead, swiftly detached their numerals and identification discs. Then he came upon his own party halting at the junction of a communication-trench with the front line. Here they had raised a temporary barricade. As Penne reached the spot a German officer appeared, running up the communication-trench toward them.

'Surrender!' shouted Penne.

The only answer was a revolver-shot, which

clipped a piece from the side of the trench. The two German orderlies bolted.

'Surrender!' shouted Penne once more.

The German officer attempted to fire again, but his pistol jammed. He made a swift movement as though to pick up a bomb; but Penne's revolver spat twice, and he fell dead.

'Get him and bring him along,' he said, and pushed back rapidly to the other party. Outside the dug-out he found four men left.

'Three prisoners, sir,' they told him. 'We've sent them off.'

He pushed on, recalled the right-hand party, and, returning, heard Carr's party on the top firing furiously over them at a party of Germans who were trying to cross the ground between the support-trench and front line to bomb the raiders from above.

'Hold up. We're coming out.'

Carr's men continued firing on either side, leaving a space through which the men clambered out, two of them carrying the dead officer, others with caps and souvenirs of various kinds. The last man out, Penne took the mobile charge from Harris, and pulling out the pin that ignited the fuse, thrust the charge down the dug-out steps.

'Now get out quickly.'

They were through the wire, when another violent explosion told them that the dug-out was no more.

On the way back they passed the reserve-party, who were only too glad to see them come in, for any minute No Man's Land might be covered by shrapnel. As it was, there was quite a lot of machine-gun fire.

'Is the right-hand party in?' asked Penne of Carson.

'Yes. They reported about five minutes ago.'

'All right. Follow us in. We're the last.'

The souvenirs and the prisoners were sent down to headquarters, and the wounded (there were four, all slight, in Penne's party) to the aid post; the roll was called, and the men dismissed.

'A reg'lar little outin' we've had, an' no mistake,' said one.

'Yes; an' I only wrote 'ome this mornin', and told my missus that we was 'avin' a very quiet time. If she only knew the larks we was gettin' up to, eh?'

Three hours later Penne and Carr lay sound asleep on the sand-bags in the company office cellar. Major Wilson was writing a report. 'One officer (dead), three unwounded prisoners, and a number of identifications were obtained. Many casualties were inflicted on the enemy.'

Carr stirred uneasily in his sleep. Suddenly he stiffened. 'Look out, Penne. It's going up,' he shouted. He half awoke, then muttering, fell asleep again. Major Wilson looked at him for a minute, and then wrote on: 'I beg to bring to your notice the determination and coolness which marked the conduct of Second-Lieutenant Penne and of Second-Lieutenant P. Fletcher Carr.'

DUST FROM AN ENGLISH LAWYER'S PAPERS.

By G. H. Browning, Author of *A Will o' the Wisp Happiness*, *That Love is Blind*, *Compromising with Fate*, &c.

I.

ANY road, if it do but continue long enough, will sooner or later involve itself in twists and bends, and perhaps even double on its own track in its efforts to bewilder the innocent traveller. The strongest wind that ever blew will presently forget its stride and fall into raging confusion in some sudden hollow of the hills. Life itself is a maze of inconsistencies, of actions and reactions, and rock-firm principles that eventually dissolve like trodden snow, soiling their white vesture in the process. So it is not surprising, but rather to be expected, that the law of England, which has had its growth for more than a thousand years, should be fruitful of amazing anomalies and twisted inconsistencies.

The old system which bound landed property to the family tree—the law of entail, as it is called—was prolific of bizarre situations and dubious shifts. It was the custom of the great families to tie up their estates in such a way that the head of the house for the time being should be entitled for his life to the use of the family mansion with its appurtenant demesne, and the enjoyment of the rents of such of the lands as were let to their tenants; but he had no power to sell the family property, which it was intended to preserve intact for the delight of his successor, who in turn would enjoy its benefits for his life, and so *ad infinitum*.

As a result of this system there was often much conflict and bitterness of heart between the life-tenant, as he was called, and his heir, who was generally his eldest son. For, on the one hand, the father would often depreciate the value of the estate by neglect and mismanagement, and sometimes downright spoliation; and, on the other hand, the son, be he ever so wild and prodigal, could pursue his career of license and rebellion to the large measure of his content, defying the authority of his irascible and outraged parent in the comfortable knowledge that nothing he could do had power to take away the inheritance that would fall to the

young scamp so soon as his sire put off the mortal flesh.

During one period of history there arose from time to time a complication so amazing that we should be fully justified in disbelieving it were the tale not supported by the weight of divers heavy legal tomes. Suppose Lord Upways to be the life-tenant of the family estates of Blankdown, and thus entitled to the use of them for his life. Now so long as he lived he could dwell in the mansion, or, if he so preferred, spend a merry life away up in London on the income of the estate. But suppose, as often happened, the swift pace of life in the capital outran the slow steps of his rents, there was another course open to him if he were sufficiently deep in folly or debt to adopt it, which was to sell his life-interest. That is to say, he might go to a business acquaintance, Mr Grinder, and say, 'See here, fellow; I have a most prosperous estate in the county of Sussex that yieldeth me nigh on a thousand pounds a year. A thousand pounds every year, mark you! In sooth, a goodly sum. But, by Heaven! 'tis not enough for me, for what with the life at Court, and the state which I fain must maintain, i' faith I am a full three years' rents overspent. Now, sirrah! mark what I say. This estate is mine so long as I live, and that should be a long time yet—unless some knave worsts me in fight, which God forbid! Ha! ha! my heir will have a good thirty years to wait before he takes my place. So there—if fortune favours me—are thirty years at a thousand pounds a year. What make you of that, sirrah? What would you give for it?' And after a certain amount of haggling, which the impatient aristocrat would quickly terminate, a bargain would be struck. Lord Upways executes a deed conveying his interest to Mr Grinder, and Mr Grinder, having paid over his gold, is entitled to the income of the estate so long as Lord Upways lives. But the ways of life are uncertain, and no manifestation of it more so than its termination; and so Mr Grinder, being an elderly man, dies before the impecunious lord. Never mind; he has paid his money, and if he cannot live to enjoy his pound of flesh, the just law decrees that his heir shall finish the meal, or, in other words, shall follow in the steps of his deceased father by receiving the rents of the estate until Lord Upways's career of debauchery shall terminate.

All very well and good. Or at least it was so when the deed of sale was properly drawn, and to that end it was essential that in the wordy mazes of that yellow parchment Lord Upways should convey his life-interest to Mr Grinder '*and his heirs.*' If those three vital words should by design, inadvertence, or ignorance be omitted, Mr Grinder's heir could have no part or lot in the spoils, and the Grinder family disappeared from the play. Remains but one actor, Lord Upways. But his lordship has received the full price of his inheritance, and the law will not permit him to take advantage of an error to re-enter into the enjoyment of his bartered estates. Thus is the stage clear, and the estate awaits a claimant to collect and spend its accumulating rents. Who is entitled? Who shall profit by the omission of those three fateful words 'and his heirs'? Not Lord Upways's heir, for he has no right to the property so long as his lordship lives.

The English judicial system rose equal to the occasion, and solved the riddle in its characteristic, masterful fashion. And this is what it decreed. The first person, be he rich or poor, noble or mean, to set foot upon the estate and claim it for his own was to be entitled to the full use and enjoyment thereof so long as Lord Upways should live!

Thus did the English law overcome a difficulty which to any less powerful and self-confident system might have seemed insuperable, save through the expedient of seizing the property for itself.

II.

If a man desire to effect any transactions with property, let him see to it that he first consults his lawyer; for, though he may have to pay what seems a heavy fee for the privilege, it is more than probable that if he neglects this step, he, or those whom he intends to benefit, will pay a heavier price in the end for having their affairs extricated from the tangle into which the short-sighted act of economy has involved them. Indeed, the snares and pitfalls that beset the inexperienced traveller along the legal way are so cunning and so deep that one can fully sympathise with the injured sufferer as he furiously declares they were deliberately contrived for his downfall.

There is no better illustration of these dangers than the innumerable technical terms that are employed in almost every legal document—terms which, having through hundreds of years received special construction from the legislature or the courts, have acquired a meaning that is all-unknown to the layman. And yet when common prudence waves a warning light the foolish man ignores the danger-signal, and plunges heedlessly into the unknown darkness, which seems to draw him onwards with an irresistible fascination. This is particularly the case with the expression 'in trust.' It is such a fine-sounding phrase to employ; it looks so well in your will—'I give all my property to my son John in trust.' But the testator must be extremely careful how it is used, or he will find that instead of giving his property to his son John free and unfettered, as he intended, he has merely left behind him an unintelligible document, which the courts will have to construe in the best way they can; while poor John may be disappointed of his inheritance, and see his father's property shrink alarmingly under the process of the law.

There are many peculiarities to be met with in the description of a house and its adjoining grounds which one is conveying by deed, and, fortunately for themselves, very few people attempt the task of drawing such a deed without legal advice. It is the rule in these cases to describe not the house so much as the piece of land on which it stands, for a conveyance of land passes everything that is below or above it, from the centre of the earth to the heavens. And in connection with this, it is clear that, in the absence of special powers, a telegraph company commits a trespass whenever it carries its wires across a man's property; and it is probable that an aviator perpetrates the same offence over and over again every time he wings his way into the blue. It is a curious circumstance, by the way, that the legal description of a lake is 'a piece of land covered with water.'

To revert, however, to the subject of trespass, it is not generally known that thousands of people, whilst indulging in their annual holiday by the sea, innocently infringe the rights of a person whose existence is probably quite unknown to them—to wit, the owner of the shore. It seems such a natural thing that every one should be at liberty to have access to the sea that it never occurs to them that the shore may be the exclusive property of some private owner. Yet this is frequently the case, and the outraged proprietor can, if he so desires, take measures to exclude the public from his property. Of course, in the popular seaside resorts the local authorities have themselves acquired the ownership of, or rights over, most of the shore, and in this way the public is spared any interruption of its pleasures.

III.

There is a good deal of satisfaction in finality as regards business affairs. Most of us find it a disturbing circumstance to have such matters trailing their ragged ends across our minds; and of all the tasks which clamour for completion, the making of a will is perhaps one of the most insistent. It is a disturbing subject, that question of a will—a subject unpleasantly suggestive of a time in which we shall play no part; but it has to be tackled, and the sooner the better. So we brace ourselves to the effort, and face the disagreeable necessity; the disposal of our goods—which gives us a hand in the turning of the wheel of fortune even when we are done with life—is settled. And then follows the satisfaction of the *fait accompli*. 'Ha!' we exclaim; 'thank goodness, that's done! That matter's settled for good.'

But is it? There are many things arising from time to time that can alter the effect of a will—judicial decisions, new enactments, and the like. But one rule of law in particular should be more generally known than it is, a rule which concerns all manner of men and women. And the rule is this: if you make your will and subsequently marry, your work is entirely undone, for marriage revokes all previous testamentary dispositions.

The advent of aircraft has introduced an element of doubt into the liability of a tenant to his landlord for making good damage caused by these manifestations of Teutonic might. Some question arises over even a short and simple tenancy; but where a man holding a long lease has agreed to maintain his landlord's property in full repair, and to deliver it up in that state at the end of the term, he certainly ought to weigh his obligations, for the judges have imposed very heavy burdens upon the shoulders of tenants. It is perfectly clear that, in cases of the kind referred to, a man would be liable to rebuild a property which had been destroyed by fire or tempest, because the law declares that when the tenant signed his lease he must have been aware of the vicissitudes of life, including such things as fires and tempests and the unnamed disasters comprised in the lawyer's term 'acts of God,' which, though distinctly unpleasant facts, were nevertheless within the scope of his possible contemplation. But it is a different thing with Zeppelin damage, because, assuming that the lease was granted before these monsters invaded the sky, he could not possibly have intended to load himself with the responsibility of making good their damage, since they then had no existence. However, paradoxically enough, the only thing certain about the point is the doubt, and, until the law has resolved it, every tenant who holds a full repairing lease should protect himself by insurance, or he may live to rue his neglect.

This law of England is a queer thing indeed, a system full of inconsistencies and bizarre results, and yet one that in the main is continually striving after justice. But it needs deep and careful study for a right understanding of its manifold complexities, and the layman, in his dealings with its mysteries, chafe and declaim as he may, will not, if he be wise, venture to act upon that little learning which is a dangerous thing.

SONNET.—TO THE CLYDE.

If aught should mar the sense whereby I view
The green and gracious earth and fair blue sea,
And ne'er again through flesh should come to me
More than remembrance garlanded with rue,
What should I treasure most, of all the free,
The blest, the beauteous, the glad, the true
Scenes my unfettered youth and manhood knew?
What, save the bliss-brimmed moments born of thee?

Of thee, O Clyde, whose ever-noble stream
Floods through my being in a vision of truth,
Ever unveiling in unaging dream
Some new enchantment of eternal youth—
Whether proud Tinto mark thine upland flow,
Or 'mong rich orchard haughs thy waters glow.

JOHN SMELLIE MARTIN.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE DOG-WATCHES.

By TAFFRAIL, Author of *Carry On! Stand By! Pincher Martin, O.D.*, &c.

I.

IT was the last time I was on leave in London —I forget how many months ago—that I sat in a drawing-room not so very far from the Marble Arch, and listened to two ladies discussing the war.

'My dear, I'm sure I don't know what I shall do,' said the first, with a gesture of despair. 'The war is being terribly brought home to me. Only last week my cook gave notice because I asked why Cuthbert's porridge was burnt—the dear fellow has it with cream for his breakfast—and I'm sure I don't know where on earth I shall get another like her. I've tried all the registry-offices; but it's perfectly hopeless!'

I did not know the speaker personally, though I had been introduced without hearing her name. But I rather envied Cuthbert, who had cream with his porridge. The milk they give me with mine generally comes out of a tin.

The other lady, a middle-aged woman, whose husband was serving his country as a 'dug-out' colonel, and all of whose three sons were in the navy or the army, snorted indignantly.

'My dear Amelia,' she said, with her eyes flashing, 'it's high time you gave up living in the lap of luxury. The first thing you'd better do is to get rid of your pack of yapping curs. They eat far too much, and aren't the least use to any one.'

Amelia raised her eyebrows in mild surprise. 'My dear Connie, they're not curs, and have all got the most excellent pedigrees. Just think of what I paid for them. I couldn't possibly get rid of the poor little darlings! I'm sure the Food Controller doesn't mind my having them.'

'If I were the Food Controller I'd have them all destroyed,' the lady called Connie retorted with acerbity.

'But they eat so little, the pets,' came the reply. 'Of course, if I had half-a-dozen dogs, like some people, it would be very wrong. But I've only got four: Fluffy, the Pekinese; Blogg and Snog, the two Poms; and my angelic Cuthbert, the Yorkshire terrier.'

So Cuthbert was a dog. He ate cream with his porridge, did he? I longed to kick the pampered little beast—to kick him really hard.

'I don't agree with you,' snapped the austere lady. 'It's not right for any decent-minded woman to keep four dogs—useless dogs—in wartime.'

'But think of what my dear doggies have done for their country!' Amelia wailed. 'At our last Red Cross bazaar they wore the sweetest little collecting-boxes, and made no end of money.'

'Pish!' sniffed Constance.

Amelia bridled. 'You needn't say "Pish!" in that nasty, vulgar way!' she retorted. 'Even though I am your sister, it's not my fault I haven't a husband and children, like you. I love my doggies. And think how many of their dear brothers are fighting in the trenches! I know for certain, too, that they keep watches on board the battleships in the North Sea when they anchor for the night, and the poor, tired sailors are allowed to sleep in their bunks. The dogs warn them by barking when the Germans are coming, like the dear white mice they have in submarines.—Isn't that so, Mr Tadpole?' she asked, turning to me.

I was glad that she knew enough about naval uniforms to realise that I was not a sleeping-car attendant, a cinema-man, or yet a glorified railway porter.

(It may be rather a sore point, for it was at Newcastle railway station, in the early days of the war, that I had been accosted by an elderly woman in a bonnet who thrust a small hand-bag at me.

'Young man,' she had said, 'take me to the train for South Shields.'

I took the bag and conducted the lady to a third-class carriage, receiving two coppers, which I was too flabbergasted to refuse. It was only after the train steamed out of the station that I discovered it went to *North* Shields.)

Nevertheless, I most strongly object to being called 'Tadpole' when my proper name is 'Taffrail.' Who would not?'

Also, I did not quite understand what the lady named Amelia was driving at, for, though I believe they used to keep white mice in the earliest submarines for detecting the escape of dangerous petrol-fumes, I had never heard of their barking.

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'What is it you wish to know, Miss—er—Hum—hum?' I asked, slurring over her unknown name and putting on my sweetest society smile.

'I was only asking about the dear doggies on board the men-of-war, Mr Tadpole,' she said. 'I thought you would be sure to know.'

'Taffrail, please,' I corrected feebly. 'Of course we do have dogs on board men-of-war—all sorts of dogs. They generally belong to the officers, and are looked upon as pets.'

'Ah, I thought so,' said Amelia triumphantly, glancing at her sister. 'I knew they had them at sea, the dear, dear doggies!'

'But I'm afraid they don't bark when the Germans are coming,' said I with a grin.

Is that so?' she cried. 'I was given to understand that they did.'

I shook my head. 'Who told you?' I demanded.

'I have a nephew who is a sub-lieutenant on a torpedo,' she told me. 'He said they always had dog-watches on his ship.'

I blew my nose hastily, for it was all I could do to conceal my amusement. I proceeded to explain, but I could see that she did not believe a word I said. Moreover, her manner was distinctly frigid, and the more her married sister laughed the more Amelia glared. In fact, there was what one might call a distinct frost. It was a terrible experience.

II.

But, if the truth be known, I have never really discovered why, in nautical language, the four hours between four and eight P.M. are referred to as the 'dog'-watches. We have the 'first' watch, from eight P.M. till midnight; the 'middle,' midnight till four A.M.; the 'morning,' four till eight A.M.; 'forenoon,' eight A.M. till noon; and the 'afternoon,' noon till four P.M. These names are quite understandable. But for some inexplicable reason the period between four and six P.M. is the 'first dog'-watch, and that between six and eight the 'last dog,' not the 'second' dog, as some un-nautical people would have us believe.

It does not require very much ingenuity to realise why these two-hour watches exist. They divide the day into seven watches instead of six, and were introduced so that seamen who kept 'watch and watch,' or 'watch on and watch off,' should not have the same period of vigil day after day. For instance, if a man kept the morning, afternoon, and last dog-watches one day, he had the middle, forenoon, first dog, and first the next, and so on.

What I am rather puzzled about, however, is to find some reason for our ancient seafaring forefathers rushing into zoology for the naming of their watches. Moreover, why, of all the animals in existence, did they select the dog, a creature which never took kindly to the sea, and which, so far as I can find out, rarely went afloat in medieval days? Why did they not choose the cat, the cow, the elephant, the porpoise, or the turtle, either of which animals, mammal, or reptile they surely must have met with during their travels?

Honestly, I do not know; but while we still have ships that sail the sea, I suppose the period between four and eight P.M. will still be known as the 'dog-watches.' He would be a very brave man who tried to call it by some other name.

In the Royal Navy of the present year of grace the dog-watches represent the slackest portion of a busy day. Even if his ship is in harbour, the sailor is rousted out of his hammock at some unearthly hour of the morning, while no small proportion of the ship's company will be keeping regular watch, day and night, as quartermasters, sentries, messengers, signalmen, telegraphists, and in the engine-room and stokeholds.

So from cockcrow until four P.M., except for Sunday afternoon and one other weekly half-holiday which is nominally set apart for making and mending clothes, but is really spent in 'caulking' or sleeping, the bluejacket is hard at work. He gets his forty-five minutes or so for breakfast, and an hour and ten minutes for dinner in the middle of the day, but at four in the afternoon, after 'Evening quarters,' or parade, he has his tea, and is supposed to be more or less free for the rest of the day except for such duties as are really necessary. But even then it is the unwritten law of the Service that the 'watch below' shall not be disturbed during the dog-watches if it can possibly be avoided, and that what work has to be done is carried out with the minimum number of men belonging to the 'watch on deck.'

With the ship at sea in war conditions watch-keeping is far and away more rigorous and employs more men, while even the watch below must be instantly available at any time of the day or night. But the bluejacket is nothing if not a past-master in the art of sleeping, and during the afternoon at sea the tables and stools on the mess-decks will be covered with figures enjoying their afternoon caulk. Most of the officers, moreover, except those actually on duty on deck, will be indulging in a similar occupation in their cabins, for practically every soul in the ship will have had four or more hours out of his bunk the night before.

But at four o'clock the ship wakes up. No self-respecting naval man sleeps during the dog-watches, and then is the time when he sits down to write his letters and occupies himself with his hobbies or amusements. And how diverse and varied the hobbies are! You may see men doing fancy wool-work, wood-carving, manufacturing gaudy hearthrugs out of canvas and bunches of wool, or cutting jig-saw puzzles

or knick-knacks with a fret-saw; while I even know of one seaman who sketches in water-colours, and right well he does it. The blue-jacket is also a great reader, and, contrary to popular belief, he does not always read trash. I once came upon an A.B. perusing Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

Card-playing is also permitted provided there is no gambling, while the barbers will be busy shaving the faces and cutting the hair of their shipmates, for a consideration; the 'snobs,' or bootmakers, will be mending boots, also for a consideration; and the tailors will be earning money with their sewing-machines in mending or making their friends' garments. The men have generally taught themselves these trades, and, besides being of great use in a ship, they amass no small sums by their labours.

When the ship is in harbour it is no unusual sight in the dog-watches to see men roller-skating on deck, boxing, fencing, wrestling, or otherwise taking exercise. It is the time, too, when the ship's company have their weekly or bi-weekly 'all over' baths in hot water, and when the schoolmaster, a specially selected man of superior knowledge, retires with his pupils to some remote flat below the water-line, and instructs the young idea in academic learning with the help of a blackboard and chalk. The padre, moreover, holds his choir practices and his Bible-classes at the same time of day; while the pierrot troupe or nigger minstrels—for no self-respecting battleship or cruiser is without her 'funny party'—will muster in some secluded spot to rehearse their gags and ditties for the next sing-song.

And the officers. Their hobbies and amusements are every bit as diverse as those of their men. They may play a blood-thirsty game of deck hockey with a chunk of wood or a rope grummet instead of a ball, or keep in their hands at golf by addressing and smiting a captive ball or a harmless cork. Others may be reading or writing letters in the fastnesses of their cabins, or hurling a huge 'medicine ball' about the quarter-deck. Then for some time there was a revival of that long-defunct game ping-pong; while many of the battleships of the Grand Fleet have their billiard-tables. Billiards at sea are naturally out of the question; but the ships are not always at sea. There is always bridge, while the engineer-commander and the fleet paymaster of one ship I have in my mind have spent the dog-watches of the last two years in playing chess. All this, of course, if they cannot get ashore.

But there are occasions when leave is granted provided officers and men do not go far from the ship and are available for immediate recall. Some of them may have their wives living in the locality; while the elder bachelors will retire to the nearest golf-links, or to the club to read the papers and to meet their friends from other ships. The more juvenile officers may visit a restaurant for tea, and to gladden their tired eyes with the sight of something fluffy and feminine in petticoats; while another shore occupation beloved of all N.O.'s is being shampooed and having their hair cut. Another ship has what it calls a 'Guzzle Club.' There are six members, and each one is bound by the rules of the fraternity to produce something edible and tasty whenever he returns to the ship from 'the beach.' It may be anchovies in oil, salted almonds, some rather 'ormolu' brand of sardines, or anything unusual in the gastronomic line. Only once have the members of the Guzzle Club ever passed a vote of censure, and that was when its junior member appeared on board with six packets of American chewing-gum.

(The word 'ormolu,' by the same token, is not used in its dictionary sense. It is a recently coined naval word meaning 'recherché.')

In a certain port not so very far from where I am now we have our 'Klondyke.' This is not its real name. Our Klondyke is a four-acre field, which is in the process of being turned into allotments for the cultivation of the chief of vegetables, the highly popular but rather scarce potato. On fine afternoons, crowded with earnest amateur gardeners of all shapes and sizes, and of both sexes, the scene rather reminds one of the gold-diggings, and hence its name.

Klondyke is quite a fashionable rendezvous. Many of the allotments have been taken by naval officers, a captain, several commanders, and some lieutenant-commanders and lieutenants among them, and they spend their afternoons ashore in digging, delving, and trenching, as if their very lives depended on it. So we frequently go there to pass the time of day with our friends, to discuss the merits of top-dressings of soot or sulphate of ammonia, and to inquire after the health of their cabbages and early potatoes. We are all very keen gardeners, though we do not know much about it. Last year I planted several stones of seed-potatoes; but something happened, with the result that I didn't get a single potato larger than a walnut. Moreover, an army of Hunnish slugs came out at night and devoured my lettuces and mustard and cress; but the spinach grew very well. I made one mistake, however. I planted about one square yard of it—there was no room for any more—whereas I believe market-gardeners sow it by the acre. Nevertheless, it was a success. The seed cost two shillings, and the result provided us with two dishes.

But well I remember a certain naval officer coming home to his wife after a strenuous time at sea.

'Jim dear,' she said, 'I have rented you an allotment, bought a spade and a fork, and now you can spend your afternoons in growing potatoes.'

So Jim, with mingled feelings, went off to look at his domain of fifty by thirty feet, and found a

patch of ground covered with stones and rank, firmly rooted grass. He gazed at it, scratched his head, thought a great deal, stuck in a peg at each corner, and—went home to tea.

The sight had so depressed him that for ten days he never ventured near the spot again; but then, seized by a sudden fit of enthusiasm, he shouldered his implements and sallied forth. For an hour or more, watched by his wife, he dug as he had never dug before. The perspiration rolled off his face as he shed his garments one by one, but still he dug. Then arrived the inevitable small boy with his mother.

'Ow!' shrieked the young hopeful delightedly. 'Come 'ere, ma! Come and look at this bloke a-diggin' 'is grave!'

History does not relate what the exhausted digger did to the small boy, but I should have been sorely tempted to kill him on the spot, and to use him as fertiliser.

Thus, thus, and thus do we spend our dog-watches.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—OF TRAGEDY.

IT was close on the hour of sunset when Ravenslee stopped his car before a quiet hotel in Englewood and sprang out.

'Will you be long, sir?' inquired Joe, seating himself at the wheel and preparing to turn into the garage.

'Probably an hour, Joe.'

'Very good, sir.'

But, as the big car turned, Ravenslee spoke over his shoulder. 'By the way, if I shouldn't be back in an hour, come and meet me.' Then, having given Joe full and particular directions as to the little wood, he turned and went upon his way.

It had been a stifling day, and even now, though a soft air was abroad, tempering the humid heat, when this light wind languished there was over all things a brooding stillness foreboding storm. But Ravenslee strode on, unheeding dust and heat, hasting on to that which awaited him, full of strength and life and the zest of life, glad-hearted and with pulses that throbbed in expectation. Thus, as the sun sank in fiery splendour, he reached the little wood. Evening was falling, and already, among the trees, shadows were deepening to twilight, but in the west was a flaming glory; and upon the edge of the wood he turned to glance back at this radiance, splashes of gold and pink flushing to an ominous red. For a long moment he stood thus, to stare round about the solitary countryside, joying in life and the glory of it. Then he turned, and, with a smile on his lips, stepped into the gloom of the wood. On he went, forcing his way through the underbrush, until, reaching the clearing, he halted suddenly and faced about, fancying he had heard a rustle in the leaves hard by; and Spike, cowering behind a bush, with M'Ginnis's fingers gripping his arm, shivered and sweated and held his breath until Ravenslee moved on again, and, coming to a fallen tree, seated himself there, and sat chin on fist, expectation in every tense line of him.

'Now!' whispered M'Ginnis hoarsely. 'Get him now—before Hermy comes t' him!'

Shuddering, Spike levelled the weapon he held, but at that moment Ravenslee was filling his pipe, and something in this homely action checked the lad, paralysed finger on trigger, and, shrinking, he cowered down upon the grass despite the fierce hand that gripped him.

'Get him now, kid—get him now! Aim f'r his chest; ye can't miss at this distance.'

'I—I can't, Bud!' gasped the boy, writhing. 'I can't do it—I can't!' Dropping the revolver, he hid his face in sweating hands, and shivered.

From somewhere near by a woodpecker was tapping busily; but save for this no sound broke the pervading stillness, for the gentle wind had died away. But suddenly the quiet was rent and shivered, and Spike, deafened by the report, glanced up to see Ravenslee rise to his feet, stagger forward blindly, then, with arms outflung, pitch forward upon his face and lie there.

'By God, you—you've shot him, Bud!' he whimpered. 'You—you've killed dear old Geoff! Oh, my God!'

'Aw, quit—quit all that!' whispered M'Ginnis breathlessly. 'That's what we came for, ain't it? What you lookin' at?'

'It lays so—still; so awful still!' Spike gasped.

'Well, what ye got t' go starin' at it that ways for? Come on—let's beat it; it's us for th' quick get-away, in case any one heard. Come on, kid!'

'But you've killed Geoff!'

'I guess he don't need no more. 'N' say, kid, you're in on this job too, don't forget! Come on; it's little old N' York for ours!'

But though M'Ginnis dragged at him, Spike huddled limply on his knees, his glaring eyes always staring in the one direction; whereupon M'Ginnis cursed and left him.

And now, all at once, finding himself alone, to horror came fear; and, stumbling to his feet, Spike began to draw away from that awful thing that held his gaze; slowly he retreated, always going backwards; and, though he stumbled often against tree and sapling, yet so long as it was in sight needs must he walk backwards. When

at last a kindly bush hid it from his sight he turned and ran—ran until, panting and wild-eyed, he burst from the wood and was out upon the open road. Even then he paused to stare back into that leafy gloom, but saw and heard nothing. Then, uttering a moan, he turned and ran sobbing along the darkening road.

But within that place of shadows, from amid the leaves of a certain great tree, dropped one who, coming beside that motionless form, knelt there a while. When at last he rose a ring lay upon his open palm—a ring in the shape of two hands clasping each other; then, with this clenched in a pallid fist, he also turned and left that still and awful thing with its face hidden in last year's dead and rotting leaves.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—OF REMORSE.

FOR three miserable days Spike had remained indoors, eating little, sleeping less, venturing abroad only at dusk to hurry back with the latest paper, and locked within his bedroom to scan every scare-head and column with eyes dilating in dreadful expectation of beholding the awful word MURDER.

For three interminable days Hermione, going about her many duties slow of foot and listless, had scarcely heeded him, conscious only of her own pain, the agony of longing, the yearning ache that filled her throbbing in every heart-beat—an ache that would not be satisfied. Thus, lost in her own new sorrow, she spoke seldom, sighed often, and sang not at all; often sitting at her sewing-machine with hands strangely idle and gaze abstracted. Often Spike, watching furtively, had seen her eyes brim over with great, slow-falling tears; more than once he had heard her bitter weeping in the dawn. At such times he had yearned to comfort her; but between them was memory dividing them like a wall—the memory of a still form with arms wide-tossed and face hidden among dead leaves; and at such times Spike writhed in the grip of horror, and groaned under the gnawing fangs of remorse; and sometimes he prayed wild passionate prayers, and sometimes he wetted his pillow with unavailing tears, while in his ears, like a small voice soft and insistent, repeated over and over again, was the dread word MURDER. By day it haunted him also; it stared up at him from the white cloth of the breakfast-table, forbidding him to eat; he read it on floor and walls and ceiling; he saw it in bloody characters that straggled across the very sky; wherever he turned his haggard gaze, there he needs must read it.

And then there were the footsteps. All day long they tramped up and down the stairs outside, everyday sounds that he had never heeded before; but now they were warnings to hearken to and shudder at; and he would sit pretending to read, but with ears straining for the sound of feet upon the landing or on the stair. Now they were feet that crept—the stealthy steps of one that lurked to catch him unaware; or, again, they were the loud tramp of those who came with authority to drag him to doom; and, staring wide-eyed, he would watch the door, waiting for the thundering knock he expected, yet which never came. All day long they haunted him; and at night, locked within his bedroom, he must needs lift heavy head from the pillow to hearken with ears straining even yet, until, haggard and worn, he had shivered and groaned and wept himself to sleep, only to awake and start up in sweating terror, thinking he heard a fierce hand knocking, knocking upon the outer door.

Thus, for three long days, Spike had lived in torment; and to-night, as he leaned throbbing head between clutching hands, his haggard eyes sought vainly for that fell word which he could read everywhere except in the newspaper before him; his sufferings had grown almost beyond his strength, for to his old torments was added harrowing suspense.

Why? why? Why was the word that stared at him from ceiling and walls and blue expanse of heaven, why was it there and not in the news-sheets? Could it be that it was lying there yet, that awful still thing, lying as he remembered it, as he could see it now, its ghastly features hidden among the leaves that rotted, its long arms outflung and strong hands that gripped among the grass with clutching fingers? Could it be?

'Arthur—boy—what 's the matter?'

Spike started and looked up to find Hermione beside him, and instinctively he shrank away.

'Arthur—oh, what is it? Are you sick?'

'N-o; why?'

'You were moaning.'

'Oh, well, I—I 'm all right, I guess. Got a headache, that 's all.'

'Why have you avoided me lately, Arthur? I 'm not angry any more; I 'm only disappointed.'

'Ye mean because I lost me job? They don't want my kind, I—oh, I 'm too mean—too rotten, I guess.'

'I heard you cry out in the night, Arthur. What was it?'

'Nothin'—I didn't cry out las' night, I tell ye.'

'I heard you!'

'Oh, well, I—I was only dreamin', I guess.'

'Why have you acted so strangely lately? You don't eat; you don't go out; you sit around staring big-eyed, and seem to be listening—almost as if you were afraid.'

'I ain't—I ain't afraid. Who says I 'm afraid? An' I don't want you to go worryin' yourself sick over me. I ain't a kid no more.'

'No, I 'm afraid you 're not;' and, sighing, she turned away.

But now, as she crossed the room, her step

slow and listless, he spoke, his head down-bent and face hidden between clenched hands, voicing, almost despite himself, the questions that had tortured him so long. 'Say, Hermy, where 's Geoff? How is he? I mean, you—you ain't heard anythin', have you?'

'No,' she answered softly without turning; 'what should I hear? I only know he 's—gone. How should I hope to hear anything any more?'

'I—I thought he was—goin' t' marry you.'

'So he was, but I—couldn't let him—marry—a thief's sister,' she said in the same low, even voice.

'Ah!' cried Spike, writhing. 'Why did he go an' tell ye about me after he told me he never would? Why did he tell ye?'

'He didn't tell me!' cried Hermione with curling lip.

'Didn't he? Oh, didn't he?' said Spike, his voice high and quivering. 'Didn't Geoff tell ye? Then, say, Hermy, who—who did?'

'It was Bud M'Ginnis, and for once it seems he told the truth!'

'Bud!' cried Spike, stumbling to his feet. 'Oh, my God!'

At sound of his voice she turned, and, seeing his face, cried out in sudden fear, 'Arthur—oh Arthur! what is it?'

'Bud told ye?' he gasped. 'Wasn't it Geoff—oh, wasn't it Geoff?'

'No.'

Spike was down on his knees. 'Oh God! Oh Geoff—dear old Geoff, forgive me!'

Spike was huddled upon the floor, his face pressed to the worn rug, his clenched fingers buried in his curls, while from his lips issued gasping sobs harshly dry and awful to hear. 'Forgive me, Geoff—forgive me! I thought you told her! I thought you meant t' steal her from me! Oh, forgive me, Geoff; I wish I was dead like you.'

'Arthur!' She was down beside him on her knees, shaking him with desperate hands. 'Arthur! oh Arthur—what—what are you saying?'

'Nothin'—nothin'!' he stammered, staring up into her face, suddenly afraid of her. 'Nothin'. I—I was only—thinkin'. I'——

'What did you mean?' she cried, her grasp tightening. 'Tell me what you meant—tell me, tell me!'

'Nothin',' he mumbled, trying to break her hold. 'Lemme go; I—I didn't mean anything.'

'Tell me what you meant—tell me, tell me!'

'No, I can't—I'——

His voice failed suddenly, his whole frame grew tense and rigid, and, lifting a stiff arm, he pointed a trembling finger towards the open doorway.

'Hush! hush!' he panted. 'Oh, for God's sake, hush! There 's—don't you hear?—there 's some one outside on th' landin'—footsteps—hark! They 're comin' to our door! They 're stoppin' outside. Oh, my God, it 's come at'——

The word ended in a scream, drowned all at once in a thunderous knocking on the outer door; and Spike, crouching upon his knees, clutched at her as she rose.

'Don't—don't open—the door!' he gasped, while Hermione gazed at him, terrified by his terror, as again the thunderous summons was heard. Then, despite the boy's passionate prayers and desperate clutching hands, she broke from him, and, hasting into the little passage, opened the door.

Upon the threshold stood a little old man, very smartly dressed, who saluted her with a gallant flourish of his dapper straw hat, and bowed with his two small and glittering patent-leather shoes posed at position No. One in waltzing. 'Ma'am,' said he, 'miss, respectful greetin's. Your name 's Hermione, ain't it?'

'Yes,' she answered, wondering.

'Knowed it was. An' a partic'ler fine gal, too! Though not 'oldin' wi' marridge, I don't blame the guv—'e always 'ad a quick eye for beauty—like me.'

'But who are you? What do you want?'

'Miss, I want you—leastways, 'e does. Been callin' for you the last three days 'e 'as, ever since 'e ketched one as fair doubled 'im up.'

'I—I don't understand. Who are you?'

'A admirer of the guv, ma'am. A trusted friend of 'is, miss, come t' take ye to 'is poor yearnin' arms, lady.'

'But who—oh, what do you mean?'

'Mr Ravenslee, ma'am.'

'Mr Ravenslee!' she echoed, her colour changing.

'Yes. Ye see, he 's dyin', miss!'

Hermione gasped and leaned against the wall as if suddenly faint and sick; perceiving which, the Old Un promptly set his arm about her waist and led her unresisting into the parlour. There, having aided her tenderly into a chair and nodded to pale-faced Spike, he sighed, shook his ancient head, and continued: 'Ho, lor lumme, lady, it fair wrung my old 'eart to 'ave to tell ye; but, 'avin' to tell ye (Joe couldn't), I told ye almighty quick to get it over—sharp an' quick 's my motter. Fate 's crool 'ard when Fate takes the gloves off, miss, an' I know as Fate 's been an' took ye one in the wind wot 's fair doubled ye up; but take time, ma'am, take time—throw back your pretty 'ead, breathe deep an' reg'lar, an' you 'll soon be strong enough to go another round. If I 'd got a towel handy I 'd fan ye a bit; not 'avin' none, no matter. Fate 's 'ard on you, so fair an' young, miss; but Fate 's been 'arder on the guv—ketched the poor young guv a fair spiflicator.'

'Oh, please—please,' cried Hermione, reaching out appealing hands—'oh, tell me, is he hurt—sick—dying? Oh, quick, quick, tell me!'

'Lady, ma'am—my pretty dear,' said the Old Un, taking those pleading hands to pat them tenderly, 'that's what I'm tryin' to do. The guv ain't dead yet—no, not yet.'

'You mean, he's—dying?'

'My dear,' said the old man, blinking at her through sudden tears, 'that's what the doctors say.' Here he loosed one hand to rub at each bright eye with a bony knuckle, 'an' 'im so young, so game an' strong, three days ago.'

'How—did it—happen?' she questioned, her voice low and steady.

'It was Fate!' said the old man, taking her hand again. 'Three days ago, Fate (the perisher) sends 'im a telegram—two on 'em—tellin' 'im to meet you in a wood, an' signed with—with your name, both on 'em.'

At this she cried out and would have risen, but his kindly clasp checked her.

'I sent no telegram!' she whispered.

'Me an' Joe an' the Spider know that now, miss. But, anyway, to this 'ere wood the guv do 'aste away, an' in this wood Fate's a-layin' for 'im wi' a gun, an' down goes the poor guv wi' a perishin' bullet in 'is gizzard. An' there Joe finds 'im, an' 'ome Joe brings 'im in the car, an' Joe an' me an' the Spider 'ushes things up. An' now in bed lays the guv, with nurses an' doctors 'angin' over 'im, a-callin' for you—I mean the guv, d'ye see? So now for you I've come. I've brought Joe an' the car for you. Joe's across wi' Mrs Trapes, an' the car's below—both waitin'. So you'll come t' th' pore young guv, ma'am, won't ye, lady?'

'Have you—any idea—who—did it?' she questioned, speaking as if with an effort.

'We got our suspicions, ho yus!' the Old Un nodded. 'Joe's got a wonnerful gift o' suspicion—oh, a rare 'ead 'as my lad Joe. Joe an' th' Spider's on th' track, an' they're goin' to track Fate to doom, ma'am—to perishin' doom! Ye see'—here the old man leaned suddenly nearer—'ye see, Joe's found a cloo!'

'A clue! Yes, yes!' she whispered breathlessly, moistening lips suddenly dry, and conscious that Spike's lax form had stiffened to painful alertness.

'Well, ma'am, Joe an' th' Spider's been a-seekin' an' a-searchin' of that there wood, an' they found'—here the Old Un leaned nearer yet and whispered harshly, 'they found—a coat-button! Lorgorramighty!' he exclaimed suddenly, pointing a trembling bony finger, 'what's took th' lad? Look!'

Spike had risen, and now stood breathing loud, one hand clenched upon his breast, and, turning swiftly, he took a stumbling pace toward the open window, tripped, and fell prone upon his face.

'Oh, poor lad! poor lad!' cried the Old Un, rising hastily. 'Fate's been an' ketched 'im one too—a fair knock-out! Leave 'im to me, ma'am; I'll bring 'im round. Bitin' 'is years is good, or vinegar on a sponge. Leave 'im to a old fightin'-man.'

'No!' cried Hermione passionately; 'no, I say! Leave him to me!'

Quelled by something in her tone and manner, the old man sank back in his chair, while she, kneeling beside Spike, lifted him in her strong young arms so that he was hidden from the Old Un's bright, piercing eyes. Holding him thus, she loosed Spike's rigid fingers and drew away that clutching hand; then, seeing what that hand had striven to hide, she blenched suddenly away, letting the boy's inanimate form slip from her clasp; and, as she knelt there above him, her shapely body was seized with fierce tremors. So she knelt for a long moment until Spike sighed, shivered, sat up; but, beholding the look in her wide eyes, he uttered a hoarse sound that was like a cry of fear, and, starting from her nearness, crouched down, huddled upon his knees.

Then Hermione rose, and, turning to the old man, smiled with pallid lips. 'You see—he's all right—now!' she said. 'If you'll please go and tell Mrs Trapes I'm leaving, I'll get ready'

Obediently the Old Un rose. 'Mrs Trapes is a-gettin' into her bonnet to come along wi' us!' said he, and putting on his hat with a flourish, took his departure. When he was gone, Hermione turned and looked down at Spike, who, meeting her eyes, flinched as from a blow, and made no effort to rise from his knees. So she packed her grip and dressed for the journey, while he watched her with eyes of mute appeal; twice he would have spoken, but her look smote him to silence. At last, as she took up her suit-case and turned to go, he implored her in a hoarse whisper, reaching out his arms to her, 'Hermy!'

But she shrank from his contact, and, hastening from the room and along the little passage, closed the door and left him to his hopeless misery.

As one in a dream she followed the old man down the stairs, was aware of his ushering her through the crowd of women and children who thronged about the big car; as one in a dream she found herself seated beside Mrs Trapes, whose motherly solicitude she heeded no more than the bustle and traffic of the streets through which the swift car whirled her on and on until, turning, it swung in between massive gates, and pulled up before a great, gloomy house; as one in a dream she ascended the broad steps, crossed a stately hall, was ushered up a noble stairway and along thick-carpeted corridors until, at last, she found herself in a darkened chamber, where, his dark head conspicuous upon the white pillow, he lay. A nurse rose from beside the bed as Hermione entered and softly withdrew. Left alone, she stood for a long moment utterly still, her hands tight-clasped, her breath in check, gazing at that dark head upon the pillow, at that outstretched form lying so silent and so very still.

'Hermione!'

A feeble whisper, a sigh faintly breathed; but at the sound she had crossed the wide chamber on feet swift and noiseless, had sunk upon her knees beside the low bed to lean above him all murmurous love and sighing tenderness, while she stole a timid hand to touch the hair that curled upon his pallid brow; then, for all his helplessness, she flushed beneath his look.

'How beautiful—you are!' he said faintly, 'and I—weak as—confounded rat! Hermione—love, they tell me I—must die. But first I want you for—my very own, if only for a little while!'

'Oh my dear,' she whispered, soft mouth against his pale cheek, 'I always was yours—yours from the very first; I always shall be.'

'Then you 'll—marry me?'

'Yes, dear.'

'Now?'

'Yes, dear.'

'I—hoped you would, so—I arranged—minister's waiting now. Will you—ring?' And he motioned feebly towards an electric bell-push that stood upon a small table beside the bed. And now once again, as one in a dream, she obeyed, and was presently aware of soft-treading figures about her in the dim chamber—among them the Old Un, whose shoes for once creaked not at all; as one in a dream she made the responses, felt the feeble clasp of that hand whose strength and masterful power had thrilled her, heard the faint echo of that loved voice that had wooed her so passionately once, yet wooed in vain; while now——

She was alone again, alone with him who lay so very still and pale, with eyes closed wearily; from him she glanced to that which gleamed so bright and new upon her finger; and, bending her head, she pressed the wedding-ring to her lips.

'Wife!' he whispered; the weary eyes were open and his look drew her. So she knelt beside the bed again, stooping above him low and lower until her head lay beside his upon the pillow. Slowly, slowly his feeble hand crept up to her glowing cheek, to the soft waves of her hair, and to the little curl that wantoned above her eyebrows. 'Hermione—wife—kiss me!'

Tenderly her arms enfolded him, and with a soft little cry that was half a sob she kissed him—his brows, his hair, his lips—kissed him even while she wetted him with her falling tears.

'Beloved,' he murmured, 'my glorious—scrub-woman—if I must—leave you—those dear hands need never—never slave again. Never—any—more, my Hermione.'

Long after he had fallen to sleep she knelt there, cradling his weakness in her arms, looking down on him with eyes bright with love.

After this were days and nights when the soul of him wandered in dark places filled with chaotic dreams and wild fancies; but there was ever one beside him whose gentle voice reached him in the darkness, and whose tender hands hushed his delirium and soothed his woes and troubles.

(*Continued on page 530.*)

A PERTHSHIRE COVENANTER.

By R. W. Reid.

MANY singularly erroneous conceptions are met with in these times concerning the views of life and the habits of our Scottish ancestors. The Scots of, say, two hundred years ago are supposed to have been all Covenanters, and are invariably described as a type of humanity at once grim and repellent. Scotland in olden times, many people still believe, was a desperately melancholy and vastly disagreeable place wherein to live. This strange conclusion seems to have been reached by a remarkable and almost unaccountable inversion of our ordinary methods of deductive reasoning. Innumerable sermons and exhortations of divines are extant in which the games, the frivolities, the light-heartedness of the people are strenuously railed against, and at times most sternly denounced. This interesting circumstance is apparently responsible for the belief that, not so very long ago, the Scottish were a heavy, sour, and joyless people. The truth is that they were quite the opposite. Had the nation consisted of solemn individuals—all sad, dull, and decorous—little need would have existed, one would think, for the ministerial reproofs which appear to have been forthcoming in great and uninterrupted abundance. The Scots of whom we read to-day undoubtedly possessed a happy and contented disposition; their sense of humour was keen; their estimate of personal independence was high; they cherished profound religious convictions.

This introduction I have deemed necessary to a brief recital of certain simple incidents in the life of one of my ancestors, a Perthshire Scot, who still clung to the faith of his Covenanter forefathers. He was born, so far as I may determine, about 1750, and died when not far from his hundredth year. All his life was spent on the farm of Whinnyknowe, near to the junction of the Isla and the Tay, in the fair valley of Strathmore. For three hundred years and more members of the family were buried in the old churchyard of Kinclaven. The family

was a branch of the Clan Macdonald, possibly the Macdonalds of Glengarry.

A perusal of Sir Alexander Muir Mackenzie's vivid sketches of old rural life in this very part of Scotland always leaves the writer wondering whether the observant baronet knew of this Perthshire Covenanter who lived so near, if not actually upon, the Delvine estates.

William Reid was a tenant-farmer, as his forebears had been for many generations. No picture remains of the man or of his home, but both may be imagined without difficulty. The man was of middle height, inclined to be thin, with white hair that once was fair, and open blue eyes that betokened ready speech and kindly thoughts. The abode would be one storey, built of dark-blue stone and heavily slated. South of the dwelling, at the base of a green bank that sloped to the extent of about a hundred feet from the front-door, swirled the bright waters of the newly united Tay and Isla. The steading, or farm buildings, was in rear of the old home, and to the west was, first, a garden, and then an extensive orchard. At the far end of the orchard, and almost concealed from view, stood the farmer's famous 'fog house.' This was a small circular building, its roof thatched with reeds, its walls composed of intertwined willow-wands and moss.

To this quiet retreat among the apple-trees every morning at daybreak, save in the winter months, William Reid repaired, and there, until it was time to begin the labours of the day, he closely studied one or more chapters of the Bible. When the snow lay thick around, and the Tay was a roaring flood, in the dark mornings while northern blasts rocked the high woods of Delvine, the Covenanter read the old Book at the ingle-side by the dim light of fire and 'crusie.'

No great imagination is required to vision the white-haired, patriarchal figure seated with open Book in the early morning sunshine, the green leaves and the white blossoms overhead; or by his fireside with 'crusie' near, intent on the sacred page, the inky darkness and the howling tempest without. Such as this is the glimpse we have of a Scottish Covenanter at home a hundred years ago.

In time came the railway, and among the first lines laid down in North Britain—if it was not the very first—was that which connected the ancient city of Perth with the northern capital, Aberdeen. This railway passed either through part of the old orchard or so near to it that the occupant of Whinnyknowe was subjected to an inconvenience or a loss that called for compensation. William Reid, there is no reason to doubt, gave the question of injury careful consideration, for by the time a railway official waited upon him, he had decided the exact value of the damage inflicted.

The affable official informed the farmer that his directors had agreed to allow him the sum of one hundred pounds by way of recompense.

'A hundred pounds!' exclaimed the old Covenanter. 'I winna touch it. I have considered the matter, and I have made up my mind as to what I should get. I winna tak' a hunder.'

'I would strongly advise you to accept,' replied the official. 'You are not likely to get more. The directors, I think, have been quite generous towards you.'

'Too much so—too much so,' was the startling reply. 'I winna tak' the hunder; I'll hae forty pounds, and not a penny more.'

'Oh, is that your trouble?' was doubtless the official's laughing response. 'Here is the order for one hundred pounds, which amount you will receive on calling at the office in Perth.'

William Reid accepted the order, and a week later presented it at the company's head office. A clerk asked him to sign a receipt, and this the farmer did, for forty pounds.

'You receive one hundred pounds, not forty pounds,' said the clerk, counting out the money.

The old farmer was angry, and looked it.

'I told your man,' he cried, 'that I would tak' forty, and not a penny more; and I will not hae it. I want nae man's siller that I've nae richt to.' And William Reid, after twice counting his forty pounds, pushed the remainder back across the counter, and walked into the street.

In what light would the world to-day look upon a man like this Perthshire Covenanter?

JOHN CORNELIUS COMES HOME.

CHAPTER II.—HOW JOHN CORNELIUS WAS RECEIVED AT BIFORD AND TORRINGHAM.

AS might be supposed, John Cornelius, or Handsome Johnnie, by which sobriquet he had been known in Arizona, Texas, and sundry other states of the Union, seldom did things like other people. Although he had experienced a severe financial storm whilst waiting for his coffee-plantation to bear crops, and needed every *centavo* he was able to lay his hands on, he did not write to Lawyer Jones, and he did not hasten home. He just went about his work as if nothing had happened—put down concrete floors, and cut water-channels for the new pulpers; erected a building for the new separator; coached the most intelligent Mexican *empleddo* in his service in the management of the *finca*. Then, as soon as he had received a telegram from Davison that the new machinery had been shipped, he rode down from the foot-

hills of the Sierra Madre to the Pan American Railroad, and started homewards.

Arrived in London, he visited Somerset House, paid his shilling, and committed his uncle's will to memory; that is, he read it through a dozen times at least. As Davison had declared, John Cornelius the elder had left him the whole of his property, with the exception of a few legacies to old servants and an annuity to a Mrs Charteris, his housekeeper, whose name John Cornelius the younger remembered. The sole executor was Archibald Jones, the testator's 'trusted legal adviser.'

'Smart fellow, Squire Jones,' reflected John Cornelius. 'Put that in himself.'

His next step was to take a ticket to Biford, in Worcestershire, that being the nearest railway station to Torringham Hall, and about six miles distant. Essaying to hire a fly and drive to the Hall—there were no taxis at Biford—he met with his first experience as an unknown and much-doubted owner of landed estate.

'You 'm wantin' Squire Jones's place, bain't ye, sir?' said the flyman. 'They calls it Archibald's Hall now, an' if you was to wait half-an-hour or so, you might get a lift in tha squire 's own motor-car. I be told he 'm comin' down from Lunnon this arternoon.'

'I prefer not to wait,' said John Cornelius.

'As you says, sir. I jest mentioned it like, it bein' a longish way there an' back, an' my old 'oss not bein' a very good un.'

'He 'll do it,' said John Cornelius. 'Put my bags in the fly and let us be off.'

The ancient jarvey obeyed, and in so doing chanced to read an address label on one of the bags: 'John Cornelius, passenger to Biford.'

'Lordy—lordy!' he cried. 'You bain't—sure-*lie* you bain't goin' to say as you 'm tha old Squire Cornelius's missin' nevvy?'

'I certainly am,' replied John Cornelius; 'no longer missing, though.'

The ancient flyman stood for a moment bewildered. Finally he said, 'Then I darsn't drive you, sir. Squire Jones be my landlord, an' nobody 'll believe ye. You don't feature tha old squire nohow.' Glancing up at the sunburnt, dark face, he added, 'He hadn't no looks to speak on,' which was by way of being a compliment.

'Were you a tenant of his?' asked John Cornelius.

'I were, sir.'

'Then I am your landlord. Get up on the box, and don't be an old fool.'

By this time a small crowd had collected. The alarmed jarvey appealed to it. 'Says his name 's John Cornelius,' he said, 'an' wants me to drive 'im to the 'All, an' he not a bit like tha old un.'

'An' lose yer cottage an' bit o' land,' said one, addressing the flyman.

'Nobody here 'll drive you,' said another, addressing John Cornelius.

'Then I 'll walk.—Here, porter! Take my things to the cloakroom. Bring me the ticket;' which obtained, John Cornelius set out on foot, quite unruffled.

It was his first visit to Biford, or Torringham by Biford, but he had only found it necessary to make one inquiry before he arrived at a pair of very ornate wrought-iron gates, opening into a park, with a trim lodge on the park side. He noticed that the terminals of the upright bars had been newly gilded, as also the family coat of arms. Pushing open the gate, he entered, to be immediately accosted by the lodge-keeper, a woman.

'Wheer be you a-goin', sir?' she asked.

'To the Hall,' said John Cornelius. 'This is the way, isn't it?'

'It be one way, but only the family an' the carriage folks uses on it. You mun goa a bit farther up the road, to a wicket.'

'Oh, indeed!' said John Cornelius; 'and who are the family?'

'Squire Jones's family, sir.'

'And the carriage folks?'

'Well, there be Lord Oventry, an' Sir Harry Verner, an' Squire Bamford, an' a lot more, sir.'

'Thank you. Well, Mrs—— What is your name?'

'Badger, sir.'

'Well, Mrs Badger, I'm much obliged for your information, but my name 's John Cornelius, and I am going to the Hall this way, like the family and the carriage folks. Been here long, Mrs Badger?'

But Mrs Badger was quite unable to reply. She could only stare in amazement. The gamekeeper's wife, she and her husband had lived on the estate thirty years.

John Cornelius tramped on. He was beginning to enjoy himself. Presently he arrived in front of the Hall, a great, oblong, thirty-roomed mansion. He remembered having been told that John Cornelius the elder, a money-grubbing curmudgeon, according to Andrew Cornelius, had allowed the place to get into disrepair, but a glance showed him that everything now was in spick-and-span condition. The broad lawn was beautifully kept. The rhododendrons bordering it were in full blossom, but not a stray petal lay on the close-trimmed grass.

'Good steward, Squire Jones,' reflected John Cornelius.

Catching sight of an expanse of glass near the southern wing of the house, John Cornelius skirted the lawn, passed by the great front-door with its gilded knob, knocker, and engraved plate, and made his way to the conservatories. A gardener who was at work on a border stared, but said nothing, not even when John Cornelius bade him a cheery 'Good-afternoon.'

Entering the first conservatory he came to, John Cornelius found himself in a 'hot' orchid-

house, full of Cattleyas, Vandas, Peristerias, Angræcums, and their heat-loving like.

'Shut that door, confound yer!' shouted a gruff voice from somewhere amongst the massed loveliness.

John Cornelius knew very little of orchids, except as parasites which burdened most of the trees in the open spaces in his part of Mexico, and even infested the older coffee-plants; but he closed the door carefully as ordered, and proceeded along the water-channelled pathway between the banked-up bulbs and flowers.

'Expensive tastes, Squire Jones,' he said to himself, and halted in front of a beautiful blue Vanda, to observe and to admire.

Again the gruff voice greeted him: 'Who be you, and what be you doing here?'

The speaker, perched on a step-ladder, was the man who had so unceremoniously ordered him to close the door. As he was working near the glass roof, he had escaped observation.

'Answering your last question first,' John Cornelius replied, 'I am admiring these beautiful flowers and wondering how much they cost.'

'Does the squire know you be here?'

'Eh? Oh, I suppose so. Oh, certainly he does,' said John Cornelius.

'You 'm a foreigner friend of his, I reckon, but I don't know your face—I ain't seen you before—an' nobody ain't allowed in here when the squire be away 'cept the family.'

'Oh! Then what the dickens are *you* doing here?' countered John Cornelius.

The man nearly fell off the step-ladder. 'Me!' he cried. 'Why, I 'm the gardener from Kew. I 'm in charge of the squire's collection.

'That 's odd,' returned John Cornelius. 'I don't know *your* face. I haven't seen *you* before. Didn't know I had an orchid collection. Didn't know I had a family. How much do I pay you a week?'

The gardener from Kew promptly descended from his perch. He did it in a hurry. His cheeks were very red, but that may have been owing to their recent proximity to the glass roof. 'Who d'ye think you 're getting at?' he demanded with unmistakable bellicosity.

'I am trying to get at the score you run me into a week by way of wages,' replied John Cornelius.

That answer was too much for the Kew gardener. 'Me—you!' he blurted out angrily. 'Who d'ye reckon you are, then?'

'My name is John Cornelius,' was the reply.

The gardener was comparatively a new man, but he had heard of the old squire. He strode to the door and flung it wide open, regardless of the current of cold air so admitted and the damage it might do. 'Hi!—you—Mole!' he shouted to the man working on the border. 'You was born here, wasn't you? Here 's a foreigner fellow as says his name 's John Cornelius.'

'Take him to Poyke,' Mole replied, and went on forking manure into the border.

'Sounds a pleasant place, Poyke,' commented John Cornelius. 'Well, good-afternoon, Mr Gardener from Kew. I 'll look you up to-morrow. By the way, I think you had better let a little more air into this place. It 's frightfully hot and stuffy. These plants must have cost a lot, and I hate to lose money.' And he walked away smiling. Certainly he was enjoying himself finely.

'Hinsultin' hignoramus!' muttered the gardener from Kew. 'Cost him a lot, I don't think.'

Repassing Mr Mole, John Cornelius halted. 'Can you direct me to Poyke,' he asked; 'and are there any people named Davison living about here?'

'Ay,' replied Mr Mole. 'They 'm Hagricultural Himplementers in the village; and the first bobby you meets 'll take you to Poyke.'

'Thank you,' said John Cornelius. 'May I ask why Poyke is so well known, and apparently such a popular place of resort?'

'County Lunatic Asylum,' answered Mr Mole, with a guffaw.

John Cornelius, who could not be expected to know that Poyke was the local way of pronouncing Powick, strolled on, still smiling. He certainly was enjoying himself. No doubt about that.

Again approaching the ornate door of the mansion, he decided not to call at present, but to continue his very enlightening and entertaining walk. A quarter of an hour's tramp across a well-timbered park took him to a house and buildings on what he correctly judged was the home farm.

It should be remarked that the clothes worn by John Cornelius had been made in Mexico, while his hat was a Stetson from the States; consequently there was an outlandish look about him likely to provoke derision amongst rustics and suspicion amongst dogs.

From the park a small gate led into an apple-orchard, laden with rosy fruit. He had scarcely taken a dozen steps in the orchard, however, when from somewhere or other a large, gray, bob-tailed sheep-dog sprang at him with a growl. John Cornelius placed a hand on his hip-pocket, but stood still to await the onset, which, however, was not continued. A tall man in corduroys, who also seemed to have sprung from nowhere, intervened.

'Come here, Bob!—D'ye know you 're trespassing?' he called nastily.

'I know that I am not,' said John Cornelius.

'But I say you are,' retorted the man. 'My name 's Martin, and I 'm the squire's bailiff. He don't like tramps and strangers. I don't, neither. Better get back the way you came, and be quick about it—— But there, you 'd be trespassing again. You 'll find a gate into the

road the other side of this orchard. That's your place, and for such as you.'

'I prefer to return the way I came,' said John Cornelius.

'If you do, I'll have to take your name and address,' rejoined Mr Martin, 'and that'll mean a summons and a fine—pound and costs at the lowest. Besides, I'm not blooming well going to let you go back through the park. If you tries it on, I'll set the dog on you.—Mind him, Bob!'

The sheep-dog, which had lain down during the colloquy, sprang to its feet and growled, while the hairs on its back rose up like a hogged mane.

'I'll give you my name and address now with pleasure,' said John Cornelius. 'As I intend to return across the park, you had better write them down in case of an accident to your valuable and very obedient dog. The name is John Cornelius, and the address is Torringham Hall by Biford. Got them?'

The farm-bailiff stared at John Cornelius, and his eyes narrowed. 'I've a dashed good mind to set the dog on you now for that lie,' he growled.

'Where I come from,' rejoined John Cornelius equably, 'it is the custom to carry a revolver. I have one in my hip-pocket. If you were to set your dog on me, I should be under the painful necessity of shooting it.' And John Cornelius produced a wicked-looking black Colt. 'In fifteen minutes, Mr Martin,' he went on, 'I shall be at the Hall, where I shall remain. You will find me there, if you want me. To-morrow I shall want you.' And, revolver still in hand, John Cornelius backed out through the small gate and walked away towards the Hall, unsmilingly. There is a limit to everything except eternity, and he had reached the end of his patience. Look at this last encounter how he would, he could extract no enjoyment out of it—no exhilaration at all.

(*Continued on page 535.*)

NITRO-GLYCERINE.

SOME few years ago, when the Suffragette campaign was in its most vigorous stage, it will be remembered that a well-known analyst was arrested for helping the militants to make bombs. He was sent to prison, and his laboratory was disposed of. Among the articles found there was a large piece of wood with a big hole in it, and a label stating that the hole had been made by the accidental explosion of a few drops of nitro-glycerine.

This 'explosive oil,' as it used to be called, is not a substance that can be handled with impunity. Slight shocks will sometimes set it off, and when not quite pure it has even been known to go off spontaneously.

But in the early days of its manufacture its bad habits were not so well known, and the Swedish chemist Nobel—the first man to make it on the large scale—actually sent it in tins to various parts of the world. Many of these tins exploded either on the voyage or upon reaching their destinations.

One such accident occurred in the office of a San Francisco carriers' agency. A clerk noticed that a small quantity of oil was oozing from a wooden package where one of the sides had become loosened, and thinking to stop the flow, he took a nail and a hammer and commenced to close up the side of the box; but he never finished, for the 'oil' exploded and killed him.

It is rather wonderful that the manufacture was continued after such accidents as this, and especially so as one of Nobel's sons was killed by an explosion in the factory. Nobel himself, indeed, would probably have given it up; but his other son, the famous Alfred Nobel, who subsequently made so many great discoveries in connection with explosives, was not deterred, and resolved to go on and make the explosive safer to handle.

In this he was quite successful. His first discovery was that nitro-glycerine could be absorbed by a certain earthy substance formed from the remains of sea-animalculæ, and called Kieselguhr. When so absorbed it became much less sensitive to shock. This mixture is now known as common dynamite. But common dynamite is not much used now, for later on Alfred Nobel discovered that a sort of jelly could be made by gently warming nitro-glycerine with nitro-cotton (gun-cotton)—a substance made by the action of nitric and sulphuric acids upon ordinary cotton.

This jelly is very convenient to handle, and much safer than either nitro-glycerine or dynamite. It received the name of 'blasting gelatine,' and has been very largely used in mining operations, either by itself or mixed with fillers to tone down its action.

Nitro-glycerine has never been displaced from its high position, and nearly all the powerful mining explosives contain it.

We are more interested, however, just now in the explosive cordite, which is a mixture of nitro-glycerine, gun-cotton, and vaseline, worked into the form of sticks or cords, that are done up in bundles, and are used to send our shells on their deadly mission to the Germans.

There is a great advantage in having the explosive in this form, for the velocity imparted to the shell is regulated by the thickness and length of the sticks—the fatter the sticks the less the velocity. The action of the vaseline is

rather curious. Both nitro-glycerine and gun-cotton by themselves are extremely rapid and shattering in their effects. The addition of 5 per cent. of vaseline slows down their action very considerably. There is very little loss of power, but the power is exerted more slowly and regularly.

There was a great discussion in the daily papers some time ago as to whether it was correct to say that our high explosives depended upon glycerine for their manufacture, and there was at first a considerable amount of misunderstanding. The facts are that nitro-glycerine is the main ingredient in all the *propelling* explosives, but not in the high explosive of the shells themselves. It would not be safe to have nitro-glycerine in the latter, because the shell would then probably explode in the gun.

It has been pointed out that most of the animal and vegetable oils and fats are capable of yielding glycerine, and that it is extremely important that we should do our utmost to prevent such oils and fats from passing into Germany.

It is curious how great a change takes place in the quiet substance glycerine when it is acted upon by the nitric and sulphuric acids used in the making of nitro-glycerine.

Very great precautions have to be taken in its manufacture. The buildings are very light in character, and each is surrounded by substantial grass-covered mounds, so that if an explosion occurs the shock will be prevented to some extent from spreading to other houses; and these houses are always placed at suitable distances from one another.

All sorts of strict rules and regulations are enforced, and inspectors visit the factories to see that they are carried out. No matches are allowed to be taken into the danger area, and in the houses the men wear special clothes and boots. Sometimes during the operations it may be noticed that red fumes are commencing to form, and show themselves through the small show-glass that is always fixed at the top of the apparatus. Then is the time to be active, and if the man in charge finds that the thermometer in his apparatus rises ominously, he opens a special cock and lets the whole of his charge run into a drowning-tank that is generally fixed somewhere below the building and contains a large volume of cold water. After he has turned the cock, one may be pretty certain that he will remove himself as far as possible from the house, because even the running of the charge into the cold water does not always prevent an explosion.

But as a general rule things go quite smoothly; the nitro-glycerine, after it is made, is separated from the acids and very carefully washed in large lead tanks, where it is stirred up with water and carbonate of soda by means of compressed air that is made to bubble through. When the washing is finished the nitro-glycerine is filtered and tested, and is then ready to be sent out into other parts of the factory, after being mixed with gun-cotton or other materials. Nitro-glycerine itself is usually carried about and measured or weighed in rubber buckets, in order to lessen the chance of explosion by shock.

One of the great difficulties connected with the manufacture is found in the easiness with which nitro-glycerine freezes. Not only is it a slow and difficult matter to thaw it again, but the frozen material has certain properties that may lead to an explosion; for example, explosions have been known to occur through the jerking of frozen taps. In cold weather, therefore, it is necessary to surround all tanks and vessels with warm water.

The men who make nitro-glycerine are not only exposed to great danger, but often suffer severely from headache and sickness. Most of them get more or less immune after a while; but a number are very sensitive. Some of the men will get a bad attack merely from the effect of a drop of the oil on their hands, or from breathing the vapour; and a really bad attack is a thing never to be forgotten. But many of these men have the knowledge that they are doing something to help their comrades at the front, and go along quite cheerfully.

One wonders what the ghost of the elder Nobel would think of the use of explosive oil to send huge shells ten miles or more. It is rather curious to note that one of the Nobel awards that are given periodically is for him who has done most to further the cause of peace.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON AT BARBIZON.

By A. J. Daplyn.

THE memory of Robert Louis Stevenson is still cherished with peculiar affection, and it is not difficult to account for this, as the great writer had a delightful way of making friends with the public, of taking it into his confidence, frankly avowing his little weaknesses and accounting for his prejudices. It was done in so unaffected and natural a manner that all felt it an honour to be thus taken into the confidence of this man of genius.

Though more than twenty years have elapsed since his untimely death, his memory is still green, and he continues to be the theme of innumerable memoirs, biographies, letters, &c. He has told us himself much that concerns his childhood and youth, and others have written

of his philosophy, his religion, travels, and style. We know of his constant ill-health, his long sojourns in the land of counterpane, and of the brave spirit that sustained him under these depressing circumstances. But it was my privilege to make his acquaintance when, in good health and spirits, he was enjoying himself in congenial society at Barbizon about the year 1875.

This little village, now celebrated in connection with so many great painters, was not at that time known to the public. It is situated on the edge of the forest of Fontainebleau, many miles from a railway station, and was the happy hunting-ground of impecunious art-students and painters, and the Auberge Siron had become their headquarters. This old inn was originally a farmhouse, and still bore traces of its origin; the entrance was by a gateway, over which was seen the sign done by a celebrated painter; this led to a courtyard, in one corner of which stood a new wing used as a dining-room; it also served as an art gallery, for round its panelled walls were placed the works contributed by well-known painters. It was in this room over forty years ago that the writer met Robert Louis Stevenson. Here is a description of the place by the master: 'The old familiar room with the tables like a Greek P, and the sideboard and the aphasic piano, and the panels on the wall, Romeo and Juliet, Antwerp from the River, Enfield's Ships among the Ice, and the huge huntsman winding a huge horn. The lamps are lit, the soup served, the company are all at table, and the room sounds with multitudinous talk.' Again he tells us, when speaking of Siron's inn, 'That excellent barrack was managed upon easy principles. At any hour of the night, when you returned from wandering in the forest, you went to the billiard-room and helped yourself to liquors, descended to the cellar and returned laden with beer or wines. Theoretically the house was open to all comers, practically it was a kind of club. The guests protected themselves, and in so doing protected Siron. Formal manners being laid aside, essential courtesy was the more rigidly enacted; the new arrival had to feel the pulse of the society, and a breach of its undefined observances was promptly punished. I have seen people driven forth from Barbizon; it would be difficult to say what they had done, but they deserved their fate.'

I am told Siron's inn is a thing of the past. A large modern hotel stands in its place, where may be found every luxury and convenience; but one thing it lacks—the memories of times past. Some day perhaps the new inn, becoming old, will have its own memories, but assuredly the list of names will not contain greater ones than those who have 'heard the chimes at midnight' in the old Auberge. Delacroix, Corot, Diaz, Rousseau, Millet, and a host of men known to fame have made merry in its dingy parlour, and last, but not least, Robert Louis Stevenson.

On entering the dining-room at Siron's one evening I caught sight of a stranger, and as he appeared to have for companion my friend the late R. A. M. Stevenson, the well-known art critic and author of the *Life of Velazquez*, I made my way to his side, and was duly introduced to his cousin, Robert Louis.

The cousins resembled each other greatly, but Robert Louis was a few years the younger, being about five-and-twenty. Though he was somewhat slight of build, his face showed no signs of ill-health; long, fair hair fell on either side of a high forehead, and his bright eyes sparkled with wit and humour. His dress anywhere else would have attracted attention, as it consisted of an old boating-jacket, and round his neck was knotted a black-silk handkerchief, which concealed the absence of the conventional white collar. This article of dress seems to have been discarded at an early age, for I remember, on the mail-boat going to Australia, hearing a discussion on the literary merits of R. L. S. 'I can't stand his books,' said a young exquisite. 'I was at college with him, but of course I couldn't know him, he wore such horrid clothes and no collar.' This unconventional attire did not indicate that its wearer had ideas of social equality not generally accepted, but was his manner of offering a protest against the humdrum monotony of bourgeois existence. It was to escape this that he paid his first visit to Barbizon, and fell into its ways as if to the manner born.

The practice of the fine arts develops originality, and causes its followers to depart from convention and be a law unto themselves—in other words, to become 'Bohemians.' Robert Louis, perhaps without knowing it, had practised the cult in his native Edinburgh, and had tried to induce his friends to do so; but the good seed fell on stony ground, and he realised the truth of the old saying, 'A prophet has no honour in his own country.' But to the Anglo-Saxon community of Barbizon, which had put into practice his doctrines without waiting to hear them preached, this eloquent young fellow came as a revelation, and before dinner was finished we were all his sworn disciples.

He touched on all things between heaven and earth, but his principal theme was the rights of youth. It seemed that the world was created for the young, that the rôle of the middle-aged and elderly consisted in forming a sort of background for glorious youth. This was a doctrine that appealed to us all; and the speaker proceeded to demonstrate that all the wise laws and musty proverbs heard from generation to generation were inventions of the aged, for the purpose of casting contumely on the natural aspirations of generous youth. With this end in view, they had certain hackneyed phrases descriptive of all youthful pleasures. For instance, the ennobling

passion of love was called 'silly nonsense;' the disinclination for continuous work, 'incorrigible idleness;' the cultivation of high spirits, 'deplorable levity;' delight in the companionship of one's fellows, 'love of bad company;' in short, every attempt was made to destroy every generous impulse or elevated idea. And what, after all, are the faults of which so much is made? Merely virtues in disguise, not to be compared with the excesses of crabbed age. Has youth that sordid love of pelf for its own sake, that willingness to cringe for the sake of place and power, or the pandering to the lower appetite in the indulgence of the table or the weakness for strong drink? 'And note,' said the young philosopher, 'the aged cannot plead inexperience, for they are only too familiar with the consequences of their indiscretions in the shape of gout and other maladies. Can it be that these constant sermons on youthful weaknesses are used as a cloak to cover their own lapses from virtue, and thus add to their other vices that of hypocrisy? Alas! I much fear it to be the case, for it was only a short while back, in my native city of Edinburgh, that an incident occurred which illustrates my point.

'You must know that I have the honour to be an humble member of the Scottish Bar, and it is an unwritten law of that honourable body that none of its members shall appear in the street unless dressed in the regulation black coat and tall hat. Now from my earliest youth I have objected to all laws made in the interest of uniformity in costume, and have honoured them more in the breach than the observance, thereby giving great offence to many grave and reverend seigniors, who were apt to regard my dilapidated straw hat and well-worn boating jacket almost as signs of original sin. A certain worthy judge was tireless in his endeavours to induce a reformation, and when by accident we encountered each other in the street, would take me by the button, and with grave face inquire if I thought my costume suitable to a member of an honourable profession? Was it calculated to inspire the populace with proper respect; was it not, in fact, more suitable for a law-breaker than for one of its upholders? This deluge of "wise saws and modern instances," while boring me extremely, had the effect of making me use my best endeavours to avoid meeting with the worthy judge, but it was not always possible.

'One day, in a narrow lane in one of the worst parts of Edinburgh, his portly figure loomed in sight. To escape the threatened homily, I rushed down the steps of a cellar into a whisky shop. It had all the characteristics of a den of thieves, but was, nevertheless, more to my taste than a lecture from the Philistine. I was congratulating myself on the escape, when, to my astonishment, the door opened and the portly figure of my enemy appeared. Resigning myself to listen to the impending sermon, I awaited the interview with something nearly approaching admiration for a man so greatly in earnest that he thought nothing of entering a thieves' den for the purpose of delivering a lecture on dress. In the prevailing obscurity it was difficult to decipher faces, but the judge did not waste time in that way, but walked straight to the bar, and with a familiar nod to the keeper, called for a noggin of whisky. This was quickly followed by another; then, wiping his mouth, the old gentleman departed, apparently much refreshed. The scales fell from my eyes and any admiration I might have had for the judge's tenacity vanished, for it was not in the character of mentor to careless youth that the old man had sought this den, but rather to indulge his depraved taste for strong drink in freedom. In his own quarter of the town there were better hotels and better liquor, but it would hardly do for one of Her Majesty's judges to be seen there at a public bar. "Do you often have customers like that?" I inquired of the barkeeper. "Dod, mon, I'd like to have mair; he's taken his whisky here regular for years."'

All the young fellows seemed to derive great satisfaction from these strictures on their elders, but Macfarlane from Aberdeen gave it as his opinion that it was bad for an advocate to fa' out wi' a judge before whom he might have to plead. This view was fiercely condemned by others as bowing to the mammon of unrighteousness, but Stevenson ended the discussion by owning that he had appeared before the judge. 'And how did he receive you?' cried Mac. 'Ah! that's a long story,' said Stevenson. 'Strange to relate, for certain unknown reasons a confiding firm entrusted me with a brief. I was very proud of it, for, in fact, it was my first—and probably my last. "A poor thing, but mine own." Much valuable time was spent in absorbing its contents—time, alas! that I might have spent in profitable idleness. In spite of a slipshod style that set my teeth on edge, ungrammatical construction, and complete absence of punctuation, I gathered from its contents that at a certain hour on a certain day I was to attend at the court-house, and on the calling of my case, arise and exclaim, "Your honour, I appear for the Plaintiff in the matter of X. Y. Z." This just amounted to putting in an appearance, and seemed well within the scope of my abilities. So on the eventful morning, clothed for once in my right mind—that is, dressed in the garb of the Philistine—I, full of confidence, made my way to the court.

'It was a lovely morning in early summer, and the cool breeze that fanned my cheeks seemed to bring a message from the distant hills, bidding me quit the dusty town with all its abominations, and seek peace in their quiet depths. But it was not to be, and with a sigh

I turned towards the hall of justice and entered its gloomy portals; not leaving hope behind, but hugging it to my bosom in the shape of my first brief.

'Seated among my fellow-advocates, I glanced round the dingy court, and was disagreeably surprised to see that the judge's bench was occupied by my old enemy, the lecturer on deportment.

'The proceedings were not calculated to enhance my respect for the majesty of the law, consisting as they did of meaningless formalities, which, with the musty atmosphere of the court and the fearful monotony, quickly induced slumber. "Sleep, gentle sleep, did weigh mine eyelids down and steep my senses in forgetfulness." But I was soon brought to life by my neighbour digging me in the ribs, and, half awake, I started to my feet crying, "My Lord! Your honour! I appear! I appear!" "Well, sir," snapped the judge, "you must not waste the court's time; go on." But, alas! my mind was a blank, and I had forgotten whether I was for the plaintiff or the defendant, and even the names of the parties to the suit. All, all had faded like the baseless fabric of a vision.

'But though an ancient judge frown, shall there be no more cakes and ale? Let us drink, boys. Here 's to youth—eternal youth; but such a toast demands a rare vintage, so let our host set before us of his best.'

Our host Siron, his face beaming with satisfaction, soon appeared, bearing in his arms numerous bottles, and the toast was duly honoured. After this the conversation became very animated, some one having started a discussion on the merits of the various schools of art. The Impressionists, who had numerous representatives among the younger artists, put forth their doctrine at great length, and Manet, Courbet, Monet, &c. seemed to be names to conjure with. The students of the École des Beaux Arts replied with the names of their professors—Jerome, Cabanel, Ivon, &c.—and complained bitterly of the absence of any high ideal in the work of the Impressionists, and still less in that of the Realists. Stevenson, of course, took no part in this discussion, as he made no pretensions to a knowledge of art, but his receptive mind must have retained the greater part, for we find reminiscences of it in that admirable account of art-student life contained in *The Wrecker*. It is easy to trace the original of Loudan Dodd and the prototype of Broken-Stool Pinkerton and the Armenian student who objected so fiercely to be hazed. Nobody suspected then that there was a chiel among them taking notes, for Stevenson had not at that time published anything of importance.

The earnestness of the artists in discussing the value of the different schools, their excited tones and furious gestures, interested Stevenson greatly; but the novelty soon wore off, and he grew restless, and, of course, his proposal to quit the heated room and go for a walk in the moonlight was accepted with alacrity by his cousin and myself.

THE BABYLON ROAD.

HEAPS and ages of years ago, before I was really born,
We both woke up together one day and we heard the Hunting Horn.
You were the Boy who Comes in Dreams, and you shouted to me, 'Come on!
We 're going to hunt the Bad People on the road to Babylon.'

Up we jumped on our fiery steeds and rode for a hundred miles
Over ditches and dikes and fences, hedges and gates and stiles;
And first we came to the Red River, where the Prince was changed to a toad,
And the bridge fell down, but we swam it through, and there was the Babylon Road.

And on it were ever so many people going that very way—
The White Knight and the Brushwood Boy and the Emperor of Cathay,
All of them riding their fiery steeds, for they 'd heard the Hunting Horn,
And they said we should catch the Bad People before next Midsummer Morn.

But Babylon was a long way off, with adventures thick between,
And we came to the Lodestone Mountain and the house of the Serpent Queen;
But the Third Calendar met us there, and *he* knew a wonderful charm,
For he turned his ring and he said The Word, and nothing could do us harm.

The Djinns came flying to catch us then, but the Calendar killed them dead,
And the Brushwood Boy turned round and cried, 'Look out for the Gorgon's Head!'
And we *almost* saw it—and that was *fine*—but we managed to look away,
And the good ship *Argo* came up in time and took us across the Bay.

We were chased by wolves and witches, but always we raced them done;
And once we were caught by pirates, who were hiding behind the sun,
But it turned out to be Silver, and he gallantly cheered us on,
Crying, 'Send 'em along, my hearties; it 's a year to Babylon.'

And then it was awf'ly fright'ning and everything awf'ly queer,
For we knew, though we couldn't see them, that the People were near as near;
And Peter Pan cried, 'Now, my lads, we must strike for England's sake!'
And *then* we came to the People; and that 's where I always wake.

And I think it 's perfectly dreadful to feel I must wait and wait,
For that was ages and ages ago, and still I am only eight;
And I want to get back to the Babylon Road and hear the Hunting Horn,
And be in at the death of the Bad People before next Midsummer Morn.

HILTON SEVERN.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE ARAB REVOLT AND ITS ADVANTAGES TO THE BRITISH EMPIRE.

By TANKERVILLE CHAMBERLAINE BEY.

ON the 27th of June 1916 El Hussein-Ali, Grand Shereef of Mecca, and guardian of the Seat and the Shrines of Islam, proclaimed to the Moslem world his independence of Turkish rule. This event is of great importance in its bearing on the conflict between Turkey and the Allies, and on the position of the British Empire in the Mohammedan world.

Enver Bey, now Enver Pasha, the ex-military attaché at Berlin, and to-day War Minister in Turkey, is an unscrupulous, wily, and conceited person. This evil genius of Turkey received his military training in Germany, and became the active tool of the Kaiser and his military caste, with the object of paving the way to an alliance with Turkey. At the head of the Young Turk party he commenced his scheme of operations by deposing Abdul Hamid. Mohammed V., a weak tool in the hands of the Young Turk party, a man of no brain, will, or capacity, was named Sultan, and by his position was recognised Caliph of Islam. Then by his violent and sanguinary acts, both before and after the Balkan war, Enver Pasha crushed the Old Turk party, which, owing to the trend of our policy in the Near East, had been friendly to us for years. He took advantage of the disturbed state of affairs both to foster a German alliance and to further his own ambitious schemes by 'removing' many who were likely to prove obstacles in his path, including Prince Izzadeen, the presumptive heir to the throne.

Enver Pasha's principles are similar to those of the Huns—namely, to surmount obstacles by any means, caring nothing about laws, human or divine, so long as the goal is reached. The Arabs in the Yemen and the Hedjas, headed by the Grand Shereef of Mecca, who had been shocked by the impious sentiments, atrocities, and actions of Enver Pasha, and by his contempt for Islamic laws and tenets, determined to put an end, once for all, to the Turkish cruelty and injustice which had so long oppressed them. The Grand Shereef piloted, with his son, a general uprising which overthrew the Turkish garrisons, and proclaimed himself an independent king, thus casting off the yoke of Turkish sovereignty. It may be remarked in passing that although the Young Turk party, in conjunction with Mohammed V., at that moment Caliph in full power, had proclaimed a 'Jehad' (Holy War) against the Entente nations, considered in Turkey as 'Jawars' (infidels), the Mohammedan world of two hundred and twenty millions had never responded to their appeal. The only adherents of the new policy, and that mainly through fear, were confined to Constantinople.

In considering the Shereef's revolt it must not be forgotten that the Arabs are not restricted to the country we call Arabia. Oman, El Hasa, and Mesopotamia; the Yemen and the Hedjas; Syria and Palestine; Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, and Morocco, all contain men of Arab blood. The majority profess Islam, and are of the Sunnite sect, which the Mohammedans of that persuasion believe to be the true and orthodox Islam as taught by their prophet according to the Sunna.

In the year 622 (the year 1 of the Mohammedan calendar) occurred the Hegira, the flight of Mohammed, a pure Arab of the Koreishite tribe, and the founder of the religion that bears his name. For centuries the Mohammedan faith has continued to spread, especially in Southern Asia and in Northern Africa. In Persia a schism took place through the Persians refusing to accept the successor of Mohammed named by the Arabs. The contention of the Persians was that the succession should be by inheritance and not by election—that, Mohammed being the head of their religion by divine right, the succession was inherent in the members of his family. The Sunnites dissented, and the Persians became Shiites, followers of Ali, Mohammed's cousin and son-in-law. Although this divergence exists, the Shiites, like the Sunnites, regard it as a religious duty to perform the pilgrimage to the shrine of Mohammed at Mecca.

One of the differences between the two sects is that the Sunnites perform their ablutions downwards from the elbow to the wrist, whilst the Shiites, on the contrary, perform theirs from the wrist upwards to the elbow.

It has long been the policy of our Empire to

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afford religious freedom within its bounds, and amongst our subjects we have a large number of Mohammedans in India, in Zanzibar, in Egypt, in the Soudan, in Nigeria, and elsewhere. Mesopotamia is inhabited by an Arab race, and their Arabic is somewhat similar to the language written in Egypt. The Egyptian oral Arabic differs from this, the differences being analogous to those between Spanish and Portuguese. The Portuguese understand Spanish, but the Spanish have some difficulty in understanding Portuguese, owing to the pronunciation. Both these languages, it may be noted, have letters and words derived from Arabic, incorporated during the Saracenic period of occupation.

Now my reason for detailing the above facts is to show how the Shereef's successful revolt will favour our Empire. The British Empire, with its policy of freedom to religious belief, having been treacherously treated by the Young Turk Government, the ally of our bitterest enemy, will protect the Arabs from the cruel domination of the Turk which has lasted for centuries, and which has prevented the development of an intelligent and hardy race. Every country which has been in the grasp of the Turk has been misgoverned, misruled, cruelly persecuted, even if not completely ruined. The British Government, in protecting this regenerated nation, will receive advantages as well as give them, and will strengthen and increase its moral and political power, and confirm its reputation as the protector of free nationalities. Consider only the influence over the Arab territories enjoyed by the Entente—a cemented British Empire, a reunited France, a free Russia, and an aggrandised Italy. Turkey being conquered by the Entente, the Caliphate will pass from Mohammed V. to the Grand Shereef of Mecca, who has stigmatised in his proclamation the profanations, murders, and infringements of the laws, tenets, and principles of the Koran, to which Mohammed V. consented through the influence of Enver and Jemal Pashas and Talát Bey. The fact of Mohammedans not taking any notice of the Sultan's call to the faithful for a holy war shows the contempt in which they hold Mohammed V. and his advisers as representatives of Islam. There is no doubt that after the war the Caliphate will pass to the Arab race, as the Caliphate was wrested from them by the conquest of their territories by the Turks.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXXV.—HOW GEOFFREY RAVENSLEE CAME OUT OF THE DARK.

SHE was knitting; and, opening sleepy eyes, he watched drowsily and wondered what it might be, and was minded to inquire, but sighed instead and fell asleep again.

She was knitting—knitting something in red wool; and, opening his eyes again, he lay watching awhile, and pondered dreamily as to what it could be she wrought at so busily, for the wool was so very red and so extremely woolly.

Her chin was set at an angle somewhat grim; she was sitting very upright in her chair; and, though scrupulously hidden from sight, her elbows—truly how portentous were the undisguisable points of those elbows! And she was knitting fiercely in wool that was so remarkably red and woolly.

'Pray, what is it, Mrs Trapes?'

A feeble whisper; but at the sound, faint though it was, Mrs Trapes started, half rose from her chair, sank down again heavily, and letting fall her knitting, stared at the invalid. 'Land sakes alive!' she gasped.

'Now you've dropped it!' said Ravenslee, his voice a little stronger.

'Oh, dear beloved land o' my fathers—it's come!' she exclaimed, clasping her hands. 'The Lord be praised for evermore; it's come!'

'What has?'

'The turn! An' you've took it! Dr Dennison says last night as you'd take it soon one way or t'other. But all night long, while they waited an' watched, here you've laid so pale an' still as a corp'. An' now, while I'm a-settin' here, you go an' take th' turn so sudden as fair takes my breath away. Lord be praised! I mean—I mean—oh, I guess I'll go an' wake the doctor.'

'But you haven't told me what it is,' said Ravenslee drowsily.

'What what is?'

'That very peculiar—woolly thing.'

'This?' said Mrs Trapes, picking up the object in question. 'This is my knittin'. Doctor said t'call him th' moment th' turn came.' Her voice seemed to sink to a slumberous murmur as, having smoothed his pillow, she crossed the room and very softly closed the door behind her; wherefore Ravenslee blinked sleepily at the door until its panels seemed slowly to become confused and merge one into another, changing gradually to a cloud, soft, billowy, and ever growing until it had engulfed him altogether, and he sank down and down into unknown deeps of forgetfulness and blessed quietude.

. . . . . .

She was knitting—knitting a shapeless something in red wool, and Ravenslee thought he had never known her elbows more threatening of aspect or seen wool quite so red and woolly; wherefore he presently spoke, and his voice was

no longer a feeble croak. 'Pray, what is it, Mrs Trapes?'

Mrs Trapes jumped. 'Well, for th' love o' heaven!' she exclaimed, and down fell her knitting.

'Now you 've dropped it!' said Ravenslee a little petulantly.

'Your very—identical words!' said Mrs Trapes in awed tones. 'Nacher sure moves in a mysterious way her wonders to perform!'

'What do you mean?'

'I mean as them was the identical words as you addressed to me when you took th' turn two days ago!'

'Two days!' exclaimed Ravenslee, staring at her.

'Ever since you did take the turn two days ago you 've laid there so quiet an' peaceful—no more dreams an' ravin'—you 've jest laid there "wrapped in infant slumbers pure an' light," Mr Geoffrey—Ravenslee, I mean.'

'Why, then, it 's about time I got up. If you 'll kindly—er—retire and send Patterson I 'll get dressed.'

'Dressed?' echoed Mrs Trapes, hollow-voiced and grim. 'Get up? Lord, Mr Geoffrey!'

'Certainly. Why not?'

'What! you—you as is only jest out o' the valley o' th' shadder! You as we 've all give up for dead over an' over! You get up! Lord, Mr Geoffrey—I mean Ravenslee!'

'Oh!' said Ravenslee, knitting his dark brows thoughtfully, 'have I been sick long?'

'Four weeks.'

'Weeks!' he exclaimed, staring incredulously.

'Four weeks an' a bit! For four weary, woeful weeks you 've been layin' here with death hoverin' over you, Mr Geoffrey. For four long weeks we 've been waitin' for ye t' draw your las' breath, Mr Ravenslee. For four 'eart-rendin' weeks your servants has been carryin' on below stairs an' robbin' you somethin' shameful.'

'My servants? Oh yes, they generally do. But tell me'——

'The amount o' food as they consoom constant! The waste! The extravagance! The beer an' wine an' sperrits they swaller! Them is sure the thirstiest menials ever I heard tell of! An' the butler—such airs; such a appetite! An' sherry an' bitters t' make it worse! Lord, Mr Geoffrey, your servants sure is a ravenin' horde!'

'Don't be too hard on 'em, Mrs Trapes,' he answered gravely. 'I 'm afraid I 've neglected them quite a good deal. But it 's a woman's hand they need over them.'

'It 's a pleeceman's club they need on 'em—frequent! I 'd learn 'em different, I guess.'

'So you shall, Mrs Trapes, if you will. You are precisely the kind of housekeeper I need.'

'What! me?'

'You, Mrs Trapes. A lonely bachelor needs some one to—er—take care of his servants for him, to see they don't overeat themselves too often, or—er—strain themselves spring-cleaning out of season, or'——

'But you got a wife t' do all that for you. I guess Hermy 'll know how to manage.'

'Hermione!' said Ravenslee, starting. 'Wife! Am I really—married?'

'Sure! Didn't she go an' let you wed 'er when we all thought you was dyin'?'

'Oh, did she?' said he very gently. 'Why, then, it—it—wasn't all a dream?'

'Mr Geoffrey, Hermy 's been Mrs Ravenslee, your lawful wedded wife, just exactly four weeks.'

Ravenslee stared up at the ceiling dreamy-eyed. 'Good heavens!' he murmured, 'I thought I 'd only dreamed it.'

'Hermy 's watched over you night an' day almost—like th' guardian angel she is—prayin' f'r you, workin' f'r you, fightin' death away from you. Oh, I guess it 's her fault as you 're alive this day! Anyway, 'er an' you 's man an' wife till death do you part.'

'But death—hasn't, you see.'

'An' death sure ain't goin' to—yet.'

'No; I 'm—I 'm very much alive still, it seems.'

'You sure are, glory be t' th' Lord of Hosts, to who I have also petitioned frequent on your behoof. An' now I 'll call th' doctor.'

'No, no—not Dennison. Let me see her first. Can't I speak to Hermione first, Mrs Trapes?'

'She was up with you all las' night, sweet lamb! It 'd be a shame to wake 'er.'

'So it would. Don't disturb her.'

'But I guess she 'd never forgive me if I didn't wake 'er. So, if you 'll promise t' be good'——

'I will!'

'An' not go gettin' all worked up an' excited?'

'I will not!'

'Why, then, perhaps ten minutes wouldn't 'urt.'

'God bless you, Mrs Trapes!'

Left alone, he tried to sit up, and finding this strangely difficult, examined his hands and arms, scowling to find himself so weak. Then he clapped hand to bony jaw, and was shocked to feel thereon a growth of ragged beard, and then she was before him. Fresh from her slumbers she came, wrapped in a scanty kimono, whose thin, clinging folds revealed more of her shapely beauty than he had ever seen, as she hurried across the wide chamber.

'Hermione!' he said, and reached out his hands to her. And his voice was no longer the feeble echo it had been; the hand that clasped hers, though still thin and weak, thrilled her anew with its masterful touch; and, because of

all this, her words of tender greeting remained unspoken, the arms which had been eager to cradle his helplessness crossed themselves on her bosom. She became aware of naked ankles and of bare feet thrust into bedroom slippers, and needs must hide them, and, the better to do so, sank upon the bed, her feet tucked under her. So she sat just beyond his reach, and, conscious of scanty draperies, shook her shining hair about her, veiling herself in its glory.

'Hermione,' he said unsteadily, 'I—I never knew quite how beautiful you were—and we—we are married, it seems!'

'Yes,' she said softly.

'And now I'm—I'm afraid I'm going to—live!'

'Afraid?'

'It—it almost seems as though I had married you under false pretences, doesn't it? But the doctors and everybody were so certain I was to die that I thought so too. And now—we're married and I'm going to live, it seems.'

She was silent, and slowly his hand went out to her again, and slowly hers went to meet it; but though her fingers clasped and twined, thrilling in mute passion to his touch, she came no nearer, and watched him from the shadow of her hair with great troubled eyes.

'Dear,' he said, very humbly, 'you do—love me still, don't you?'

'More than ever.'

'Then you're not—sorry to be my wife?'

'No—ah no, no!' she whispered; 'never that!'

'Then, dear, won't you—will you kiss me?' Seeing she hesitated, he sank back on his pillow and laughed a little ruefully. 'I forgot those confounded whiskers; I must look an unholy object. Patterson shall shave me, and then perhaps'—— But sudden and warm and soft her arms were about him, and her eyes, troubled no longer, gazed into his, brimful of yearning tenderness.

'Oh my dear, my dear,' she murmured, quick and passionate, 'as if I should ever care how you looked as long as you were—just you. My dear, my dear, you have come back to me from the very gates of death because I—I'——

'Because you nursed me so tenderly!'

'Ah, no! there were others to do that. No; God gave you back to me because He is merciful, and because I love you—want you—need you so much!'

'Oh my Hermione—kiss me!'

A knock at the door, and, quick-breathing, she drew from him as the voice of Mrs Trapes reached them. 'Ten minutes is up!' she announced as she entered; 'and, Hermy, if you don't want th' doctor t' see you in your night-dress an' that'——

'Ann!' gasped Hermione, drawing the folds of her kimono about her.

'Anyway, 'e 's comin'.'

Up sprang Hermione, in doing which she lost a slipper.

'Give it me!' she pleaded, for Ravenslee had caught it up.

'Dear, you have one—be content,' he answered. 'And surely I may kiss my wife's slipper without you having to blush so—so deliciously, Hermione?'

'It 's so—old and shabby!' said she faintly.

'That 's why I kiss it.'

'An' 'ere comes th' doctor!' said Mrs Trapes. Whereat Hermione incontinently fled away, white foot agleam. Then Ravenslee, having kissed the little slipper quite brazenly under Mrs Trapes's staring eyes, tucked it beneath his pillow.

'Why, Mr Geoffrey!' said Mrs Trapes.

(*Continued on page 548.*)

THE PASSING OF THE KANGAROO.

By Story Whiting.

IN the oblivion of the Australian post-pliocene and cretaceous graveyards lie the bones of the Palorchestes—the old jumpers—enormous primitive kangaroos which weighed about a ton, and stood fourteen feet in height. They were the marsupial representatives of the pachydermal order of other continents. The modern palæontologist treads his way through the labyrinth of broken bones and scattered teeth with his magic-lantern of comparative anatomy, bridging over the countless ages, and projects on the canvas of the present the phantom forms of extinct races long buried in the unknown past of that vast continent under the Southern Cross.

It is, however, principally with the present-day kangaroo (*Macropus giganteus*) that we have to deal in this article.

In the log-book of Captain Cook's first voyage around the world we find this entry, under date 14th July 1770: 'Mr Gore, who went out this day with his gun, had the good fortune to kill one of the animals which had been so much the subject of our speculation, . . . and which is called by the natives kangaroo.'

This specimen was probably the first kangaroo shot by the gun of a white man; but apart from the question of its priority, the circumstance could scarcely have been otherwise remarkable, for at that period Australia literally swarmed with countless millions of these curious crea-

tures. Not one of its desolate plains or ghostly eucalyptus glades but was dotted more or less thickly with some of the many species of Macropodidæ; and it is safe to say that never in any other country in the world has any animal been so widely disseminated or so numerous as was the kangaroo in primeval Australia.

The advent of the white man and a hundred years of civilisation have, however, wrought a change; and the great marsupial has almost disappeared from the most settled portions of the country. For this state of affairs the kangaroo has primarily only to thank his own abnormal appetite. In the early days he was not only tolerated by the colonists, but was even regarded with a certain degree of favour as a harmless creature who could be relied upon to furnish them with a never-failing supply of fresh meat; but when a little closer acquaintance discovered the fact that he was a most voracious feeder, that one kangaroo devoured as much grass as four or five sheep, the squatters declared war upon the whole stupid, mild-eyed tribe, and inaugurated a system of extermination whose relentless prosecution has only been too thoroughly carried out.

Old shepherds have told me that in Victoria they formerly outnumbered the sheep by two to one, and that it was quite a common thing to see the sheep and the kangaroos feeding together upon the plains, as many as two or three thousand kangaroos frequently accompanying a flock of a thousand sheep. Thus it will be seen that a station which in 1850 could barely graze five thousand sheep can now be made to carry forty thousand without any danger of overstocking. Hence the very natural desire of the squatters to rid the country of so formidable a competitor.

The work of extermination was at first prosecuted by means of great stockaded kangaroo pens or yards, which were built with a wide, funnel-shaped entrance, the flanges of which extended out a mile or two into the adjacent country. These were erected at intervals wherever the kangaroos were most numerous, and once a month or so all the neighbouring squatters would join in a grand kangaroo drive. Fifteen or twenty square miles of country would be surrounded, and all the animals within this radius urged gently into the wide mouth of the enclosure, and then forced into the pen at its farther extremity. From three thousand to five thousand kangaroos were frequently secured at a single drive, the sheep, of course, having been the previous day driven out of the region of the proposed battue. When the quarry were all within the pen, the gates were closed, and the dangerous 'old men' shot down with the rifle, the rest being then slaughtered with 'waddies.'

When the kangaroos became so scarce that these drives could no longer be continued with advantage, the scattered survivors were hunted down with dogs and horses. This was a somewhat dangerous but very fascinating form of sport, requiring highly trained horses and the most expert horsemanship; for the kangaroos, when disturbed, always make for the thickest scrub in the region, and if the rider who follows is inexpert in the ways of bush horsemanship he stands an excellent chance of having his brains dashed out against an overhanging limb, or his legs crushed against the trunk of a tree. Sometimes the mild and gentle kangaroo himself becomes a serious source of danger, for an 'old man,' when wounded and brought to bay, frequently proves himself a most redoubtable enemy. When thus cornered he will generally turn fiercely upon his pursuers, and as the dogs attack him he will clasp them one by one in his fore-paws, and disembowel them with a single downward stroke of his sharp and powerful hind-claw. When his only aggressor happens to be a man on horseback, he has been known to leap upon the horse's haunches, seize the rider about the neck from behind, and drag him from his seat; and then woe betide the unfortunate hunter, for his chances are small indeed!

In certain parts of Queensland and Northern Australia this wild style of kangaroo-hunting is still indulged in by the stockmen, boundary-riders, and station-hands of the back blocks; but the day is past in Victoria and New South Wales when that or any other systematic method of extermination was found necessary. The day has not yet come for that leisured class of ardent sportsmen who will one day preserve the kangaroo for hunting purposes as the deer and the wild boar are to-day preserved in the state forests of France and Germany.

The kangaroo is a marsupial or pouch-bearer, the females of the species being provided with a peculiar furry sack under the belly, in which they dispose their young in case of sudden attack or need of hasty flight. It has long been a moot point, and has given rise to interminable arguments among bushmen, as to when and how the young ones first enter the pouch. They can be found there practically from the embryo stage, firmly attached to the nipple, up to the time when their size seriously impedes the mother's movements.

As nearly all the other native mammals of Australia are also marsupial, naturalists have been sorely puzzled to place each specimen in its own proper niche; and he would be a bold man of science who would to-day assert positively that some specious stranger had not been allowed to slip unawares into the family group, and some true, though distant, relative had not been unduly excluded therefrom. However, the naturalists have agreed that there are about thirty distinct varieties of the kangaroo proper,

ranging in size from the big red kangaroo of Queensland, which averages eight feet in height, down to the kangaroo-rat, which is little more than eight inches. But, leaving on one side the Queensland giant and the various species of wallaby, wallaroo, &c., it may be stated in general terms that the true kangaroo, the fellow to whom the term belongs *par excellence*, is the one commonly known as the gray kangaroo.

This is a smooth-haired, mouse-coloured animal, which usually stands about six feet high, and only very occasionally attains to the proportions of its Queensland cousin. The word 'stands' employed in the preceding sentence is used advisedly, and is intended to carry the fullest and most exact meaning of the term, for another singular characteristic of the kangaroo is the biped habit. Save when feeding or lying down, it always maintains an upright position; and the small fore-paws, which closely resemble a pair of diminutive hands, are never used as a means of progression.

This peculiarity of the kangaroo renders it one of the most difficult animals in the world to stalk successfully, for in every feeding herd there is sure to be at least one vigilant 'old man' always standing upon guard, and his upright position, of course, enables him to survey the whole horizon round about him, and to note any unusual object long before it could approach within decent range. When feeding quietly they sometimes drag themselves along on all-fours, but their usual gait is a series of quick hops or undulating bounds, every one of which covers twenty or thirty feet of ground; and when the occasion demands it, a full-grown animal can speed across country at a pace which would try the mettle of the fleetest horse. It is commonly supposed that the kangaroo mainly owes its extreme fleetness to the aid it receives from its muscular caudal appendage; but this is not so. Many opportunities for observation have convinced me that the only use the animal makes of its tail—which is held straight out behind it—is to act as a sort of rudder, and, if further proof were needed, when it is following up a drove in full flight over muddy soil the only imprints to be found will be those of the sharp-pointed claws of the hind-feet.

An 'old man's' pelt is worth considerably over a pound sterling in the colonial market, for kangaroo leather is in great demand for the higher grades of bookbinding and kindred purposes. Such is the irony of fate—the much-hated pest of fifty years ago has become the much-prized rarity of to-day, and the hide alone of one kangaroo is worth the price of several fine sheep.

The older generation of Australians have the strongest objection to consuming the flesh of the kangaroo in any shape or form, a prejudice only to be accounted for by supposing that they must have suffered from a surfeit of this form of diet in their youth, for the younger generation are rather partial to kangaroo-flesh than otherwise. It has a delicate gamey flavour, something between that of venison and grouse, and, like venison, it is better for a week's hanging before being eaten. The best part of the animal—the especial delicacy—is the great fleshy tail. This is excellent, prepared in any of the various styles known to the art of cookery; but it is more especially to be recommended in the form of soup. Kangaroo-tail soup is a sort of glorified ox-tail and turtle rolled into one, and will tickle the jaded palate of the veriest old epicure.

Kangaroos make delightful pets. They are very easily domesticated, and when tamed are full of pretty, affectionate ways. Although not especially clever in the way of tricks, they are possessed of very retentive memories, and never forget or forgive any injury in the form of ill-treatment.

The only natural enemy the kangaroo has to contend with is the dingo, or wild dog of Australia, and naturalists believe this dog was one of the most ancient of the indigenous mammals of the country. It seems almost incredible that this comparatively slow-footed animal could run down and catch the speedier kangaroo, but such is the case. Old bushmen will tell you that when once the dingo is on the scent of some particular kangaroo he will follow him for days and nights on end, giving him no rest or time for feeding, and sooner or later the terror-stricken marsupial will have to succumb to the inevitable.

If the colonisation of Australia continues at the same pace at which it is now proceeding, and the laws enacted for the preservation of the kangaroo are not more rigidly enforced, it is hardly too much to say that in a comparatively few years this gentle and interesting animal will only be known as a domestic pet, or preserved, perhaps, upon some gentleman's private estate, like the deer in the royal park at Windsor. Its place will then be taken by the red deer and the foxes, which have during the past decade increased so enormously as to indicate that transportation to the southern hemisphere has augmented their vitality and increased their procreative energy.

JOHN CORNELIUS COMES HOME.

CHAPTER III.—ARABELLA.

JOHN CORNELIUS felt that he did well to be angry, and the sharp walk across the park had little effect in soothing his ruffled feelings. Threats and a savage sheep-dog—ordered off his own land as a tramp—called a liar! On Maravillas he would have shot any insubordinate *mozo*, drunk or sober, who had dared to do the last, and the district *jefé* would have held him justified, *extranjero* though he was.

At the vagaries of the flymen at Biford, at the insults of Mole and the gardener from Kew, he could laugh, knowing well that the ultimate laugh would be his; but Martin's brutal insolence continued to rankle, so that when he arrived at the mansion's massive front-door he carried out with a vengeance the instructions engraved on the gilded plate attached thereto. He knocked and rang as loudly as he could, and the knock was still echoing and the distant bell pealing when the door suddenly opened.

'Yes, sir?' questioned a very astonished footman in a smart livery. 'Whom do you wish to see?'

The man's tone was perfectly civil, and his speech as perfectly grammatical, notwithstanding the thundering knock, and the resounding ring, still audible somewhere far away.

'Is Mr Jones at home?' asked John Cornelius, surprised in his turn at the unlooked-for civility.

'No, sir; I am sorry to say he isn't,' the man replied in the colourless voice of the well-trained domestic. 'He was expected home this afternoon, but he has telegraphed to say that he will be detained until to-morrow. Have you an appointment?'

'No; and he doesn't expect me. Any of the family at home?'

'Only Miss Arabella, sir.'

'Very well, I will see her.'

'I will ask her, sir,' rejoined the man, with just a shade of reproof. 'What name shall I say, sir?'

'John Cornelius.'

Afterwards John Cornelius learned that Smithson had been a house-boy at the Hall in the old squire's time, but for all the signs he showed, he might never before have heard the name.

'Very good, sir,' he replied. 'Will you take a seat? I think Miss Arabella is in the blue drawing-room. I will tell her at once.'

Proverbially the soft answer turneth away wrath. Not invariably, perhaps, and only partially in the case of John Cornelius. Unbending, he accepted the proffered chair in the great house of his ancestors—in a hall well stocked with trophies—and the footman disappeared with noiseless steps along a corridor. The sound of a piano could be heard from the direction he had taken, and John Cornelius knew that the player, whoever it might be, was a skilful musician. Suddenly the music stopped, and presently the footman returned.

'Miss Arabella will see you, sir,' he said. 'Will you please to come this way?'

John Cornelius followed his guide, who opened a door and announced the visitor. The next moment John Cornelius found himself face to face with a flushed and evidently startled, but exceedingly pretty, young lady.

'Oh!' she cried. 'I beg your pardon; but did Smithson give the right name? Do you say it is John Cornelius?'

'I do, and it is,' he replied rather defiantly. The words 'Do you say' had rekindled his anger. 'I didn't have time in London to get any cards printed, or a birth certificate,' he added. 'Shouldn't have done, either, if I had.'

'Oh!' she cried again, evidently distressed; 'but do you mean to say that you are the nephew of the Mr John Cornelius who died when I was a little girl?'

'I haven't said so yet. I say it now. I certainly am,' he answered, still more defiantly.

'Have you come to—to'——

'Take possession of what belongs to me? No doubt about it, Miss—Miss Jones.'

'Arabella,' she corrected. 'My sister is with father in London. Please excuse me. I must ring for Mrs Charteris—— Oh, here she is,' as a very old lady entered the room, clad in the exceedingly stiff, rustling, black silk of the mid-Victorian lady housekeeper. She glanced at the girl's flushed face, and then at John Cornelius, standing stiffly, cold and stern, broad-brimmed Stetson in hand. The girl was prettier, as he thought afterwards, than the prettiest *señorita* he had ever seen in Mexico; but the bailiff and his sheep-dog had soured him, and blinded him also.

'Why, Andrew,' cried the old lady, 'you have come at last!—too late to make it up. John is long dead. What am I talking about? Andrew is dead too, and Lucy—all dead. I am getting old and forgetful.'

'I am Andrew's son, Mrs Charteris,' said John Cornelius quickly. 'I remember your name well. My father often spoke of you as his only friend at Torringham.'

'You are John! Of course you are John—the image of your father. John, come home at last! I always said you would. But how did you come? I didn't hear a conveyance.'

'I walked from Biford.'

'Oh, then you must be hungry.—Arabella, my dear, John has walked from Biford. I will order tea at once.'

'I'd rather have a whisky-and-soda—a long one, if I may. I want a cooler badly,' said John Cornelius. 'We are not great tea-drinkers in Mexico,' he added.

'Mexico!' exclaimed the girl. 'I know a Mr Davison who has been to Mexico recently.'

'Yes. He got in a river. I pulled him out. Then he told me about this. Curious, wasn't it?' said John Cornelius, thawing.

'I will order the whisky at once,' rejoined the girl, and rang a bell. 'Do please sit down!' she went on, having given the order. 'I am so sorry I said—that I seemed to doubt. I hope you will forgive me. I am sorry that father is absent. I will telegraph to his hotel.'

John Cornelius sat down facing the girl.

'Will Mr Jones be pleased to see me?' he asked. 'Will he be likely to question my identity?'

'Oh, I—don't—know,' she cried hesitantly. 'Rosa and I have lived here so long. It will be a shock.'

'Archibald and Rosa Jones will welcome you whether they are pleased or not,' said the old lady very determinedly. 'I shall make a point of being at the railway station when they arrive. But where is your luggage?'

John Cornelius explained, but said nothing about the flymen.

'It shall be sent for,' said the girl, and turned to Smithson, who had brought in a tantalus and a siphon of soda-water. 'Send Thomas in the runabout to Biford for Mr Cornelius's things.—Tell him to hurry,' she added.

'Take the ticket—two bags,' said John Cornelius, with a long glass near his lips. 'Are you going to put me up?' he asked of the girl.

'Of course. What did you expect?'

'Well, I've been here nearly two hours, walking round,' he replied. 'I have had some curious experiences. I will talk about them another time. I scarcely knew what to expect.—Mrs Charteris,' turning to the old lady, 'I want you to tell me why my father quarrelled so bitterly with Uncle John.'

'It was over Lucy—your poor, dear mother,' she answered. 'It's a long story, and painful.'

'Oh!' said John Cornelius.

He drank his whisky-and-soda, and presently ate a pile of buttered scones and drank three cups of tea. It was just about this time that a great fact entered his hitherto anger-clouded brain—that the girl so deftly handling the tea-cups was the most beautiful that he had ever set eyes on. Of course she wasn't, but he thought so, and from that moment he felt less of an interloper and more at ease—indeed, inclined to treat his reception by Mr Martin as a rather unpleasant joke, but a joke all the same. As for his encounters with the gardener from Kew and Mr Mole, they never had rankled.

The small car soon returned with his bags, and Smithson showed him to his room, where he discarded his Mexican clothes and his Stetson for a suit made by an English tailor in San Francisco and a cap. Thus attired, and seated on his own lawn, he told the story of his reception to the ladies.

Mrs Charteris was greatly shocked and pained; but the girl, who had a keen sense of humour, burst into peals of laughter at each incident.

'The gardener from Kew!' she cried. 'His name is Clutterbuck. He understands orchids, and hates any sort of interference. I hardly dare look at some of his treasures. I will introduce him to you to-morrow—he will have gone home now—but I must do it my own way. And Martin—he is a surly fellow, but dad says he is a good farmer—it will be fine. And Mole and Mrs Badger and the carriage folks. It's a wonder she didn't say the "quality;" only, Mrs Badger doesn't think we Joneses rightly belong to the "quality." The Corneliuses were the quality *pur sang* in these parts, and she told one of them to go up the road to the wicket—the tradesmen's entrance—the back-door. Can you drive a car, Mr Cornelius?'

'No,' he answered; 'but I can ride every sort of bucking bronco. I had three years of cow-punching in Arizona before I went to Mexico. I have also won prizes in roping contests at San Antonio, Texas. That accounts for my being here.'

'How?'

'Oh, Davison was in real danger. He couldn't swim, and it wouldn't have been of much use if he'd been able to. When I made his acquaintance he was hanging on for dear life to a rock in a bad flood. I yanked him out with a lasso, which I couldn't have done if I hadn't been a bit of an expert. If he'd been drowned, he couldn't have told me that I had been left this place.'

'No, of course not,' said the girl; 'but I wonder why he never told us. We see him often. Rosa must have met him a dozen times since he came home.'

'I put him on his honour,' said John Cornelius. 'But why did you ask if I can drive a car?'

'Oh, I thought you might take Mrs Charteris and me for a spin to-morrow; but I must take you. You have lots of cars, Mr Cornelius, but there isn't a bucking bronco on the estate, or in the county, that I am aware of.'

'Worcestershire is very old-fashioned,' said

Mrs Charteris, suddenly waking up. 'I don't know what a bucking bronco is, unless it is some sort of hacking bronchial cough—some new-fangled name.'

'A bucking bronco, Mrs Charteris, is the greatest quick-stop on coughs that ever was,' said John Cornelius. 'A real bad one doesn't leave you breath enough.'

All of which talk, and much more of the same sort that followed, shows that John Cornelius had really come home.

CHAPTER IV.—HOW JOHN CORNELIUS GOT HIS OWN BACK.

SOMETIME in the early morning John Cornelius, spending his first night at Torringham Hall, had a dream which was quite foreign to any personal experience of his own.

He dreamt that he was in a little *rancho* on the Rio Copalita, which he seemed to remember as the place where the 'Third Degree' police-officers of the State of Chiapas took recalcitrant Mexican horse and cattle thieves to make them confess their crimes. From a cross-pole near the roof a man was dangling head downwards, and the man was Mr Martin of the home farm, who had been slung up by his big toes. Mr Martin was yelling for mercy—not to '*Don Wan*,' as any Mexican criminal of the dreamer's acquaintance might have been expected to do, but to 'Mr Cornelius — Mr Cornelius — Mr Cornelius!'

It was only Smithson, who desired to inform him that his bath and breakfast were ready, and that Miss Arabella had the Daimler at the door.

Within three quarters of an hour John Cornelius was seated in a big car beside that energetic young lady, who assured him that she could manage it quite well.

'We're going to the home farm first,' she said; 'but if Martin doesn't recognise you—and I don't think he will without that big hat and those loose travelling-clothes—I want you to behave as if you had never seen him before. He needs a lesson.'

'I agree,' said John Cornelius—'*muy bueno. Vamos!*'

'What does that mean?'

'Oh, you must ask Davison when you next see him, if you can remember it.'

'You must tell it to my sister Rosa when you see her,' she called, for the car was snorting up a hill. 'Mr Davison is her property.'

'Oh, indeed!' said John Cornelius. 'May I ask whose property you are?'

'My own,' she answered.

'*Muy bueno*,' repeated John Cornelius.

They encountered the farm-bailiff in the yard, with the big gray sheep-dog, Bob, at his heels. As the girl stopped the car, the man lifted his cap rather casually.

'Morning, miss,' he said.

'I've brought this gentleman to see some of your stock,' said the girl. 'You have some wonderful fat pigs, haven't you? You look after them yourself, don't you?'

'Yes, miss, I does my duty by them.'

'And model your behaviour on theirs?'

Mr Martin flushed. 'I don't follow you, miss.' He had not recognised John Cornelius in his San Francisco cut clothes. Evidently the sheep-dog had, however, for the animal suddenly growled. 'What's the matter with you?' demanded his master, aiming a kick, which missed.

'Don't kick your dog, Martin,' remonstrated the girl. 'Bob is much more intelligent than you are.'

'I don't know what you're driving at, Miss Arabella,' cried the man angrily.

'I will tell you. You met Mr John Cornelius yesterday.'

'I met somebody as said he was, miss.'

'And you were very insolent!'

'That's as may be. My orders are to allow no trespassing.'

John Cornelius intervened. 'The owner of a property farmed by himself or for him isn't a trespasser in any country. But you don't recognise me. You were exceedingly abusive yesterday, but Miss Arabella tells me you are a good farmer, and I am disposed to overlook your conduct.'

'But, sir, I never set eyes on you before,' protested Mr Martin.

'Not in the orchard, where I had to draw my revolver?'

'Gosh!' exclaimed the bailiff, enlightened at last.

John Cornelius turned to his companion. 'Do you really wish to see the pigs?'

'No,' she answered; 'we have seen the piggiest of them all.' And she got into the car.

They left the farm-bailiff capless and staring. He had snatched off his cap as the truth struck into his thick skull, but he was not a bit penitent. 'What did he want to come around in them tramp things for?' he muttered, and kicked at his dog again.

'You were pretty rough on him,' remarked John Cornelius as they drove out of the yard. 'You almost called him a pig.'

'Not a bit too rough,' she answered. 'George Martin wouldn't understand gentle methods. I wanted to make him feel. By the way, what is the Mexican for a pig?'

'*Puerco*.'

'Thank you. I'll think of him as a *puerco*, if you wish.'

'But the Mexican *puerco* is the very worst kind of a pig.'

'Well, so is George Martin.'

One thing was certain; whatever fuss Lawyer Jones might make, John Cornelius had found an outspoken champion, and he knew it.

The girl drove him over the greater part of the estate, and introduced him to a score of the tenants and their wives and families. To a man, woman, and child, all were very much astonished, but not one had a word to say in depreciation of Squire Jones.

'He's bin a good landlord. You'll find everything in rippin' order,' he was assured again and again.

It appeared that Arabella had left strict injunctions with Smithson that none of the servants was to talk outside about the astonishing arrival of the real owner of Torringham Hall, and, so far as the gardener from Kew and Mole were concerned, the orders had been obeyed. Mole was sweeping the front lawn when the car returned, and he pulled at his cap as its occupants alighted.

'Good-morning, Mole,' said John Cornelius. 'I haven't met that policeman you spoke about yesterday.'

The under-gardener grinned and scratched his head through the holes in his cap. 'Don't rec'lect no policeman, sir,' he said.

'Not the one who was to take me to Poyke Asylum—the first one I met, I think you remarked?'

Mole dropped his besom and stared at John Cornelius. 'Be you the genelman as got acrost wi' Master Clutterbuck—as said as you was John Cornelius—as wore a big, new-fangled hat?' he asked.

'The same,' said John Cornelius.

'Dang me!' and Mole started to run towards the conservatories.

He was stopped by Arabella. 'Where are you going?' she asked sharply.

'To draw five bob off Clutterbuck, miss,' was the answer. 'I bet him five shillin's as he'd hear agen of what he done, and as I'd hear of what I'd said.'

'Wait a moment,' interposed John Cornelius. 'I don't recollect that he did anything except be very rude. What did he say he had done?'

'Chucked John Cornelius out of the orkard-houses, sir.'

'Well, you have won your bet. He will hear of it again, although I don't remember the incident. But as John Cornelius happens to be my name, and as I am your *padron*—I mean employer—I order you to return to your work. I'll see Mr Clutterbuck, and I promise you that he shall pay you the five shillings.'

'Dang me!' muttered the under-gardener, as he went back to his besom.

Leaving the car in the charge of a chauffeur who came to take it to the sumptuous garage, John Cornelius and Arabella went at once to the conservatories and the 'hot' orchid-house, which they entered, taking care to close the door very carefully behind them.

The gardener from Kew was at work with a syringe, douching his treasures with tepid water from the tanks which ran the whole length of the house. Seeing the girl, and not recognising her companion—for John Cornelius kept in the background—he put away the syringe and stepped forward. Visitors who came with Miss Arabella, the orchid, so to say, of the family, generally left a tip behind them—half-a-sovereign was not unusual. By dispensing information freely, Clutterbuck generally managed to get paid for his trouble.

'Morning, miss.—Morning, sir,' he began. 'Well worth looking at, aren't they? You wouldn't think it, sir, but this here Vanda, pointing to a pencil-stemmed *teres*, travelled a good many thousand miles before it settled down at Torringham. Comes from the Philippines, it do. This here Cattleya comes from the Amazon—biggest river in the world. This Peristeria comes from Central America, or South Mexico.'

'So do I,' interrupted John Cornelius. 'Aren't you keeping all these plants much too stuffy? Down in South Mexico we always grow them in the open air.'

The gardener from Kew looked at the speaker with something like contempt. He was well up in orchids, and quite aware of it. 'Does you, sir?' he rejoined. 'Not Vandas and Cattleyas, you don't, for they don't grow there, as far as I ever heard.'

'Perhaps not,' said John Cornelius; 'but this house really smells very stuffy—far too close and steamy. Hadn't you better open the door, and keep it open?'

'Not me. No, sir. Nor nobody else, not no more than I can help,' replied the gardener from Kew, with dignity.

The girl began to laugh, but John Cornelius persisted.

'Why, what would happen to them?'

'They'd die of the flu,' said Clutterbuck, with a grin.—'You'd better come into the "cool" house, miss, and let me show your friend some Crispums and Cypripediums. They're cold subjects, they are.'

'You are very obliging to-day,' said John Cornelius. And they followed the gardener from Kew into the next house. John Cornelius closed the door very carefully, coming last.

'It don't matter about that so much here,' remarked Mr Clutterbuck.

'Doesn't it? But isn't this place much too cold for orchids?'

'No, sir. Just right for these orchids. Them Crispums—*Odontoglossum*—you'll see on the label—comes from Colombia, from right up in the mountains—six thousand feet; they can stand a bit of cold.'

'Indeed!' said John Cornelius. 'Are you quite sure about that? Not making a mistake,

are you? Colombia's a very hot country, in parts.'

'Not much,' said Clutterbuck snappishly.

It being lunch-time, they went through the 'cool' house quickly. The gardener from Kew opened the door to let them out, and John Cornelius dived into a trousers-pocket. 'Here's half-a-sovereign,' he said, producing the coin, 'but five shillings of it belong to Mole. You owe him five shillings, you know, and I promised him to see that he got it.'

'I don't know what you mean, sir,' said the gardener from Kew.

'Oh yes. He bet you five shillings that you'd hear again of having chucked me out of the other orchid-house yesterday. You're hearing of it again, and he's won his bet. Have you got the change?'

'I chucked'——

'No, you didn't; but I think you said you did. As I told you yesterday, my name is John Cornelius. I asked you then what you cost me a week. Perhaps you will tell me now? I shall have to pay your wages in future, you know.'

But Clutterbuck did not know. At least, he did not appear to know anything. He did not produce the change, and he did not take the half-sovereign. He did nothing and said nothing, being unable.

The girl was too convulsed to speak, but John Cornelius had not finished.

'You understand your job, Clutterbuck,' he said, 'but not the gentle art of leg-pulling. Chaff makes you ratty. I noticed it the last time we met. Well, good-day. I'll give Mole the five shillings you owe him.'

(*Continued on page 551.*)

A PARADISE OF THE HONEY-BEE.

IT is safe to state that, with but very few exceptions, there is no region in either the Old or the New World more comparable to a paradise of the honey-bee than the mountainous area of New South Wales, Australia. Those not familiar with the rough mountain-lands of the mother-state of the island continent can form no conception of the enormous quantities of honey produced by the native forest trees and flowering shrubs every year. Certainly the bee-keepers of this state have realised it, to their infinite advantage. During the great honey-flows, as they are termed, which come every year, and sometimes many times in one year, the supply of nectar is so abundant that, say, one hundred and twenty colonies in the apiary bring in two tons of surplus honey in a little more than a week.

The mountain-forests are white with blossoms in the time of general bloom, and the air is laden with the rich honey-perfume. Enormous flocks of paroquets fly shrieking from tree to tree, revelling in the liberal supply of honey, and millions of excited bees tumble over each other in their eagerness to gather the rich stores, their turmoil making a far-reaching, voluminous, steady roar, which at times overpowers the paroquets' racketing.

When the weather conditions are favourable to honey-secretion the honey-flow becomes a honey-deluge. The bee-keeper, with every nerve aquiver, takes up the pace set by the excited apiary, and tiers up the hives three and four and five storeys high, till four strong men can hardly lift a single hive even a few inches because of its weight of honey. Feverishly he works at the extractor to empty the combs and get them back into the hives for a further supply, till the roar of the bees and the whirl of the extractor get on his nerves, and he longs for the comparative silence of night.

But even at night the apiary is filled with a great low sound like that of a train rushing through a mountain-cutting—the sound of millions of fanning wings driving the air-currents through the hives to evaporate the surplus moisture from the nectar, and turn it into rich, ripe honey.

It might be supposed by the uninitiated that so enormous a supply of nectar is drawn from many different sources. This is not the case. The various trees and shrubs have their set times for blooming, different varieties flowering at intervals right throughout the year. The honey from those which bloom in the winter and spring is mainly consumed by the bees themselves in the rearing of the spring broods before swarming-time. The great bulk of the surplus honey comes from a comparatively small number of varieties. During the big summer and autumn honey-flows the apiarist is on the alert, so that the main yields can be extracted separately at the end of each flow, and kept apart. It has been found that where flows from an inferior and a superior variety of bloom are on at the same time, the bees themselves do not mix the different kinds of honey, but that separate colonies gather from separate sources. The business-like apiarist, then, takes the trouble to extract from the hives working on each variety separately, and keeps the good quality apart, and sells it graded as first-class honey, the other variety being among the second-class. To prevent confusion, too, each class of honey is marketed by the up-to-date bee-keeper under the name of the tree or trees from which it is produced.

Where the sources of the nectar are so numer-

ous as throughout the mountain area of New South Wales, it is out of the question to attempt to describe every honey-producing tree and shrub; but a few of the most widely distributed typical trees and their honey product are given.

Among these honey-producing trees the eucalyptus family easily takes the first place, both in respect to the number of species and to the quality of honey produced. It is a fallacy to believe that honey from the eucalypti is inferior and tastes of eucalyptus. The flavour is in the leaves and the bark, and never in the honey secreted in the little cup in the centre of the flower, nor in the manna or sugary sap exuding from the bark of the tree or dripping from the leaves till the ground is covered, as with a light fall of snow, with granulated manna honey.

Among other trees greatly valued by the New South Wales apiarist are the white box (*Eucalyptus Bosistoana*) and the yellow box (*E. melliodora*). The honey from the white box is water-white in hue, clear, and limpid, with a most delicate flavour, and does not granulate readily. The yellow box has equally fine a flavour, but in hue it is a rich golden, and keeps its liquid form for a long time.

But one of the most valuable of the mountain honey-producing trees, and specially sought after for an apiary-settlement, is the red bloodwood (*E. corymbosa*). It flowers in the autumn, and in February and March, but not every year. Its habit is a general bloom one year, then a year of rest to mature its seed, then a year of light bloom, followed by a year of general flowering again. The large white flowers are carried in thick bunches on the tops of the branches, and the nectar is especially abundant. The honey from the bloodwood is of a clear, rich, golden colour, thick, luscious, and of splendid taste. It granulates almost at once after extraction into a creamy white crystal, and can be eaten by the handful. Much honey from this source is exported from New South Wales to London.

Among other nectar-producing trees of this paradise of the bee are the gray gum (*E. punctata*); Sydney peppermint (*E. piperita*), which grows freely on the most rocky and barren spots, and yields immense quantities of honey; gray iron-bark (*E. paniculata*); white stringy-bark (*E. eugenoides*); and the handsome red apple and its brother the white apple, with their red and dark-crimson honeys.

Additional details of great interest are to be found in the publications of the New South Wales Government, which is fully aware of the enormous advantages offered by Mother Nature to apiarists settling in the mountain area of the parent state of Australia.

BAKED POTATOES.

By M. Berkeley.

CARL HEINZ bowed his head to the blow as he had been taught, and, spitting like a cat, the major passed on.

Carl watched him till his burly form vanished round the angle of the trench; then he once more settled himself comfortably on the overturned biscuit-tin. He did not intend to stand in the mud for any damned German if he could sit with greater comfort on a biscuit-tin.

He rubbed his arm where the little cane had bitten into it. It ached, smarted.

Carl swore lustily under his breath a series of oaths which, had he heard them, would have made the stout major send post-haste for the guard.

Having thus relieved his feelings, he glanced along the trench to see if he had been overheard.

The trench was thinly held. Half-a-dozen men of the Landwehr composed the garrison, and a space of twelve yards or so divided them from Carl and each other.

But presently a stream of men would begin to flow inwards. The tramp of their marching feet was already awaking the echoes in the desolated Flemish villages behind the lines. For the great attack which was to commence at dawn meant a vibration in every part of the huge war machine which lay sprawling like some mighty colossus across middle Europe, with its nails dug deep into the face of France, and the soles of its feet pressing with might and main against the panting breast of holy Russia.

But to Carl the manifestation of all this tremendous energy meant that presently there would be twelve men to three yards instead of one man to twelve yards in his portion of the trench; the sharp blowing of a whistle, and a spring over the parapet, followed by a run across the open in the wake of the rolling gas-fumes; and then perhaps—Death. And that was all. But that was not yet. Several hours must elapse before the reinforcements began to arrive. Meanwhile the man on his right, a gray-headed Berliner, was entirely absorbed in potting at invisible Englishmen, who were returning the compliment at intervals; but the one on his left had caught the fag-end of the oaths, and turned towards him a face, big and round, and covered by a smile which threatened to engulf his entire countenance.

Carl snarled at him over his shoulder.

'What are you laughing at?' he muttered in diabolical German.

'I was thinking that it was a pity that the Herr Major did not hear,' answered the

man. 'It would have reminded him of old times.'

'What d'you mean?' growled Carl.

'Maybrick's.'

Carl started.

'What do you know about Maybrick's?'

'Born in Soho,' said the Landwehr man.

Carl leaned back against the side of the trench and emitted a strange sound between blown-out cheeks. It was not a form of expression which commends itself to the Teutonic soul, but it is familiar enough to the porters about Covent Garden.

'Well, I'm——' He completed the sentence with a little whistle.

'Oh, don't be alarmed,' said the Landwehr man. 'I won't mention it.'

'What did you do at Maybrick's?' asked Carl of the Landwehr, after a pause.

'Head-waiter for three years. Seen the major there many a night; but he doesn't remember me.'

The Landwehr man closed the conversation by settling his broad back against the side of the trench, and composing himself to slumber. So, leaning against a pillar with folded arms and nodding head, might he have awaited the first comers amongst those patrons of Maybrick's in Soho who resorted thither when the more reputable cafés were closed.

The man on the other side of Carl was still wasting ammunition on the people opposite. Carl leaned forward on his biscuit-tin, and leaning his head on his hands, began to think.

Carl had done very little thinking during the thirty odd years of his existence, and the process of giving shape to 'winged thoughts' was attended with much mental anguish. But the Landwehr man's remarks about Maybrick's had stirred up memories lying fallow these many years, and 'winged thoughts' beat about him now in the gathering darkness of the trench, and would not be denied.

For Carl Heinz had not always been Carl Heinz. On the contrary, up to ten years ago he had been known as Charles Smart, Covent Garden porter, to the small circle which claimed him as an acquaintance. In this name he had been married, and in this name his children—he had forgotten how many—had been entered in the parish register at their baptism, his wife being very particular about these things. When he ran away to Germany in the trail of the returning singers at the close of the Wagner season, after a domestic explosion which had ended disastrously for Mrs Smart, he had adopted the name of Carl, because they told him it was the German for Charles. So he said it would do as well as any other, though the choosing of a surname to put on his naturalisation papers had been a more weighty matter. It must be a German one, said the close-cropped, bullet-headed official who watched his every move, as he stood, first on one foot, then on the other, put his head on one side, spat on the ground, sucked the point of the pen, and performed all the other antics from which the illiterate seek to gain courage when confronted by pen and paper.

After much puzzled thought he chose the name of Heinz. He had heard nothing about its connection with sauce, but it was the only German name he knew; for had he not seen it blazing against the sky-line every night as he tramped along the Embankment on his way home to the inner dimness of Camberwell, where he dwelt? It was, therefore, settled that he should henceforth be known as Heinz, and the bullet-headed individual duly made record of the same.

So Heinz he became, and a subject of the Imperial German Empire.

Then, because work was hard to find, he enlisted, and had become quite a fair soldier by the time that he passed into the Landwehr.

On the whole, he had not regretted his change of nationality. In times of peace one great city is very much like another in that gray part of it where the very poor live and work. But in time of war. Ah, that was a very different matter!

At the first hint of hostilities the iron hand seized Carl. It stripped him; scrubbed, reclothed, drilled, entrained, and marched him, with a rifle on his shoulder, a weighty pack upon his back, and the Emperor's blessing, through Luxemburg, Belgium, France, till, with his comrades, he came to a dead-halt before the gates of Paris. Then he turned and came back again, with indecent haste, he thought, being an Englishman. But he got to ground at last, and there, with an occasional excursion east, he had stuck in a trench, wide enough to walk in, narrow enough to be his grave; and separated from him by a short fifty yards lay his countrymen in similar trenches. Daily he heard their voices calling to each other and to him. The language of Bermondsey had been wafted across barbed wire on autumn gales, on light summer breezes, on volumes of poisoned gas, and hearing, his heart had warmed within him.

So it came to pass that the erstwhile Charles Smart, now styled Carl Heinz, soldier of the Imperial German Landwehr, was feeling distinctly homesick as he sat chin in hand on his biscuit-tin. He wished sincerely that Hendrich Seiller had not mentioned Maybrick's; it was a link which he would rather not have forged with the people who lived just the other side of those abominable wire entanglements. For he himself had put in days and nights of work at Maybrick's before fate had made of him a porter at Covent Garden. He had almost forgotten that he had been an Englishman before his comrade mentioned Maybrick's, and now——

He was beginning to think about Mrs Smart. He hoped he had not killed her. He did not think he had, but he had considered it mere wisdom not to take any chances; and so, to

put it in his own words, he had 'done a bunk.'

He had many times regretted the loss of Mrs Smart since he became a German, for the buxom 'frau' who had succeeded her could not compare with her in face or form or culinary accomplishments. Particularly the last-named. Sauerkraut was no exchange for Irish stew, or big potatoes baked in their jackets. Carl had pleaded often, and had even added blows to his pleading, but he had never succeeded in making his fat German spouse produce a really properly baked potato.

Carl thought over all this with deep self-pity as he propped himself against the buttress of the trench, and presently he fell asleep and dreamed about it. He dreamed that it was very early morning in Covent Garden, and he had been carrying without rest since before sunrise. The air was filled with the scent of fruit and flowers —fresh from sweet solitudes far from the throbbing heart of London. They were strewn about in gracious profusion, the morning offering of the countryman to the deity of commerce. Many were trampled under foot, and lay withered, broken, crushed to pulp.

In his dream Carl did not greatly trouble about these things, for during a slack ten minutes after the unloading of one fruit transport of motor-lorries and the arrival of another he had sped away to a quiet corner behind a stack of fruit-baskets, and seating himself on the ground, produced from his pocket a baked potato. It was big, it was fluffy, it was altogether desirable; but it lacked one thing—it was not hot. There was no answering warmth to his fingers, nipped with the chill of early morning; there was not that delicious, penetrating smell with which he was wont to warm the cockles of his heart when he bought the article from the coffee-stall; and yet——

Some one else must be having baked potatoes for breakfast somewhere in the vicinity of his stack of fruit-baskets; for, though his own potato smelt not at all, coming from somewhere there certainly was an odour of the right thing, piping hot. Carl sniffed in his sleep, and firmly stuck his teeth into his dream potato. Then he fell off his biscuit-tin. He woke with a start and looked round. In the darkness he could barely discern the forms of his comrades, asleep on the floor of the trench. The impression of the dream was still very vivid. He could almost taste the potato; he could still smell it. Yes, he could certainly smell it.

Carl rubbed his eyes and sat up. He sniffed like a dog doubtful about a scent, except that in this matter there was no doubt whatever. From somewhere in the gloom, upon a gentle westerly breeze, there was floating to his nostrils the odour, not of one baked potato, but of many, grilling hot, and—butter.

Carl smacked his lips.

From whence was that heavenly smell? Not in the German trenches certainly, for every one but the sentries was asleep, and they had already partaken of the last meal which many of them would need in this world. No, it was not his comrades who were eating baked potatoes.

Carl rose cautiously to his feet and peeped through his loop-hole. A modified form of sing-song was evidently going on in the British trenches—a sing-song with the soft pedal on, but he could make out the low droning of mouth-organs. Yes, they were singing the songs of Bow and Bermondsey, of Islington and Shoreditch, and—they were eating baked potatoes.

As he listened, regret for his forsaken nationality surged over Carl in one great flood of sentiment. What had ever possessed him to deny his native land? His true place was with those raucous-voiced, potato-eating Britishers.

The knots which bound him to Germany were loosely tied, and were not of the conventional pattern.

He became suddenly aware that, whatever the consequences, he must get to those potatoes without a moment's delay. The smell drew him as the magnetic north attracts the compass's needle.

He listened intently. Although it was too dark to see them, he could hear the soft snoring of Hendrick Seiller and his other companions. Noiselessly he put out his hand and gathered his few possessions about him, buckling on a pack here and a tool there. When he had completed the operation to his liking, he paused and listened again. Save in the British trenches, absolute silence everywhere. Then he mounted on to the gallery of the trench, and putting both arms on the parapet, began to draw himself cautiously up.

. . . . . .

Lance-Corporal Ascot, 4th Westhamptons, had just completed giving his friend, Joe Cook, corporal in the same regiment, his own private view of the form likely to be displayed by the N.C.O.'s and men of the 10th Humdrums in the approaching football match in which they were to meet his own battalion; he had also helped himself to a fifth baked potato, when Carl Heinz of the Imperial German Landwehr, together with his pack, rifle, entrenching-tools, and sundry belongings which were his, descended upon the top of him.

From out of the seething mass Corporal Cook was able at last to abstract his friend, and set him chattering with annoyance on his feet.

'Don't shoot,' gasped Carl from between his legs. 'I'm British.'

'Where from?' snapped the corporal.

'Soho and Camberwell,' retorted Carl, as a man might say, 'Eton and Trinity.'

'What cher doin' 'ere, an' 'ow did yer get 'ere?' asked the corporal, keeping a firm hold of Carl's collar.

'Fed up,' he said, throwing an expressive

thumb over his shoulder in an unmistakable Bermondsey manner towards the German lines.

The lance-corporal, who had now recovered himself, entered the conversation, rubbing his neck.

'Deserter, eh?' he said.

'British,' persisted Carl.

''Ow did yer get 'ere?' said the corporal again. 'Yer'd best tell it quick, or'——

'Clippers.'

'But, man, we laid the wire new last night; did it meself. Why, you blinkin' liar, it 's impossible.'

Carl shrugged his shoulders. 'A fool could walk through it,' he said, his eyes fixed on a great cookie from which a savoury steam was rising.

'As you 'ave managed to get 'ere, Bosche, there must be some truth in what yer sayin',' said the lance-corporal, still rubbing his neck. 'Yer landed on me fair an' square, any'ow. And what made yer think abaht returnin' t' yer 'appy 'ome, eh?' he added, sniffing treachery.

Carl made no reply. His eyes were fixed on the cookie, and in them stood two large, bright tears.

The lance-corporal's heart softened.

'S'pose you 've bin a Bosche some time?'

Still no answer.

'You must 'ave bin mortal fed up. Was they cruel to yer? S'pect as 'ow yer thought abaht the 'ome fires an' the missus an' the little uns an' all.'

The lance-corporal felt that the occasion required a certain display of sentiment.

No answer.

The lance-corporal and the corporal exchanged glances, and the lance-corporal swore aloud. 'What 's the idjut starin' at? Answer, can't yer, or I 'll tickle yer up with this.' He waved a large fork used to withdraw the potatoes from the cookie in the face of Carl.

'What made yer tired o' bein' a Hun, Fritz?'

Carl Heinz withdrew his eyes slowly from the cookie and fixed them on the lance-corporal's face.

'The smell,' he said. 'The smell o' them things.' He nodded at the cookie. Then as an afterthought, 'They 're sleeping where I 've come from,' he said. 'They 're going to "gas" you at dawn.'

The lance-corporal's jaw dropped. He turned to Corporal Cook as to one having the greater authority. ''Ear that, Joe?' he said.

But the corporal had already seized his rifle, and was presenting the point of the bayonet at Carl's throat.

'Get up,' he snapped; then, as Carl climbed slowly to his feet, 'Yer 'll repeat that little yarn o' yourn at the right time and place,' he added.—'Lance-corporal Ascot, fall in! Company 'eadquarters! Right-abaht turn! Quick march!'

. . . . . .

Thus it came about that, while the realisation of Carl's dream anent the potatoes was postponed indefinitely, the nice little surprise planned with much skill and cunning by the Imperial German Staff, when it began at six o'clock precisely the following morning, was really no surprise at all.

A GIRL'S SCHOOLING—IS IT 'DOMESTIC' OR 'SCIENTIFIC'?

By Mary Hill, A.C.P.

AN alien working-man published a little book a few years ago giving his impressions of the English working-classes, among whom he had lived and worked. He had no fault to find with the *men;* in fact, he carried away nothing but the friendliest feelings towards them, tinged, too, with no small measure of respect. But when he comes to their women-folk, he can scarcely find words with which to describe them —they are slovenly, thriftless, helpless, utterly incapable of preparing a meal; and he sympathises frankly with the men for having such wives! He describes them as he used to see them, morning after morning, in a mining village, standing before their doors for the hour together just gossiping! He declares that their blouses were always pinned down the front, and their skirts hung in festoons. Their houses were on a par with themselves, as untidy and dirty as their clothes; their extravagance was appalling! Needless to say, he winds up by comparing them, to their great disadvantage, with the women of other lands!

Most people may think the picture overdrawn —in fact, condemn it as a caricature. Perhaps it is, his great appreciation of the merits of the men blinding him to the virtues of their wives. But who dare deny that to some extent he is right? Walk down certain streets in any large town in England, particularly in a manufacturing district, during the morning hours, and what does one see? Would he only find the women he depicts in a mining village?

Take a peep inside the houses, where the women stand with arms folded for an hour or more while the children are at school! Watch those children return at noon for *dinner!* Is one writer correct who declares that such women would as soon think of making a motor-car as of making a milk-pudding or concocting a soup?

Is *their* one idea of a savoury dish a fried steak or chop, and would they look with amazement upon any one who suggested stewing, or mentioned tripe or sheep's head? No one can deny that they spend money without stint *sometimes* —a walk around the shops on Saturday night is sufficient to prove that. But what do they buy, and how do they deal with it when it is bought?

Nothing could be more illuminating than to put an alien's distressing picture of the working-class woman beside the paper read at the last meeting of the British Association in Newcastle by the Head of the Domestic Science Training Department of the Battersea Polytechnic. Apparently she sees eye to eye with him, for she speaks of 'the almost universal thriftlessness of the English household,' 'the appalling wastage of infant and child life,' 'the present physical unfitness of so large a proportion of our adult population,' and declares that 'efficiently trained women' are necessary in order to spread that knowledge which will lead to the substitution of wise economy of time, labour, and money for this 'almost universal thriftlessness;' to the checking of the appalling waste of child-life, and to the creation of a future adult population that is physically fit.

Many details were given of the training such women ought to receive in order that they may be fitted for this all-important work. For example, one reads that 'much importance is attached to the study of hygiene, which is treated as a science based largely upon physiology, chemistry, physics, and bacteriology.' Physics and chemistry are the two sciences that intending teachers of domestic craft need to study most deeply. 'The physics course includes general measurement, specific gravity and heat, accuracy in observation and in measurement being one of the paramount aims. The chemistry course comprises the chemistry of air and water, elementary chemical theory; the common acids, alkalies and salts; coal, gas, fuel; sugars, starch, alcohol; the study of the principal food-stuffs; textile fabrics; soap; the outlines of the bacteriology of the air, water, milk, meat; preservation and purification of food-stuffs; antiseptics and disinfectants.'

Of course, the intention is generally that these efficiently trained women shall deliver their message through the schools—one dare hardly hope for any radical reform among the *women;* the trouble lies too deep for that; but from the girls at school one may reasonably expect some results. For many a long day the *school* had no connection with the *home*—in fact, was vastly superior to it in every way; education had no concern with buckets and saucepans, making frocks and darning stockings. That day has surely passed. The establishment of such departments as the Domestic Science Training Department of the Battersea Polytechnic, and others like it all over the country, is sufficient evidence of some change in public opinion. Special teachers have been lecturing on domestic science for quite a number of years in most of the large towns of England. Most of the working-class women under forty years of age in any manufacturing centre spent at least a couple of hours every week for the last two years of their school-life over it. To what extent has it been effective? They certainly studied 'the principal food-stuffs;' but does it help one whit towards the planning of a nutritive dinner? Many hundreds of them examined and tested the various 'textile fabrics' in the orthodox 'domestic science' method—wrapping thermometers in flannel and in calico to test the rival 'conductivity' of wool and cotton—but has the experiment affected one garment that is worn to-day? The microscope revealed to them the wonders and the horrors of the bacteria of the air, water, milk, and meat; but how far, alas! has that helped 'to check the appalling wastage of child-life or to make it impossible for the present physical unfitness of so large a proportion of our adult population to be repeated in future generations?'

Surely these are questions that demand a reply to-day. Educational reform is in the air, particularly 'scientific' education. Would it not be worth while to consider whether the so-called 'domestic science' training of the girls is either 'domestic' or 'scientific'? A close investigation of the matter would probably convince most people that it is 'neither one nor 't'other;' and *whatever* it is, it fails miserably in its primary object. Surely the school must tackle the domestic side of the question from a new standpoint altogether! The *girl* must be considered as the woman of the future, living in an ordinary, commonplace home—*not* as a scholar sitting in a class-room answering questions on a 'scientific subject' for the benefit of an examiner!

Public opinion demands some change in the boy's scientific education—surely the girl's stands in equal need of reform!

[It will interest our readers to know that instruction on the lines suggested by the writer of this article is already being given in many of our elementary schools. One of the pioneers in this direction is Miss Wilena Hitching, Organiser and Inspector of Home Management to the Derbyshire County Council, whose intensely practical scheme of work is fully set forth in her *Home Management*, a book for teachers, and in her *Home Management Manuals*, intended for the use of scholars. The scheme has met with the hearty approval of the Board of Education, which, in a recent memorandum, quotes in detail her 'admirable course, which extends over three years.' Miss Hitching's books show how the important subject of home management may be taught in a thoroughly practical manner in every school in the kingdom, without the aid of special teachers or apparatus.]

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

MANY are on the wheel again who a year ago would have assured you their cycling days were done, some with a certain loftiness of experience as of those who had put away things so cheap and childish, others with sighs of regret for the powers they fancied gone. They have renewed a splendid sensation, and, as with many another renewal of early and simple experience, have found it better than all the fine and complicated means of procuring new sensations ever adopted in their lives. This August, and in the autumn to come, there will be more wise people cycling along the country roads and lanes of Britain than there have been for some twenty years past. In their enthusiasm they will confess their recent folly. Necessity has brought them to the truth. They know to-day that their old practices were right and the best, and that there is no form of exercise and recreation that is superior to this for persons who conform to any of the more general patterns of mankind, and for most of those who have methods and manners of their own. For the pair of wheels is a most adaptable and sympathetic thing; it contributes to the quickening and enjoyment of life at all times; it affords primarily, instantly, and without ceasing that first requirement of human nature, variety; and at the same moment it cunningly ministers to a subtle instinct that lies beneath the thin surface of our civilised and restricted natures, the instinct of freedom.

* * *

Walking is a respected pastime; one believes in it as in all things that are simple and natural. Yet there are many to whom this business with old Shanks's pony is a weariness and a trial. They consider it a thing of jolts and jerks and of too conscious effort; and they murmur that the scene unfolds too slowly for their patience, that the mystery of what is round the distant bend is withheld too long, and that for a full afternoon's march there is too little of the country covered, too little laid to the stock for winter remembrance. The motor-car, which in the general mass has now joined up for war service and is no longer an item in the scheme of recreation and holidays, had its serious faults, as it seemed to those who loved beauty and liked simple, quiet, leisurely contemplation. It was comfortable, it is true; but, being a thing of anti-exercise, it gave us stiffness after ease. We received the rushing wind, but rarely did our vitality seem to quicken as it does with a dozen turnings of the pedals. One who has had much happiness in the car will utter no ungrateful sentiments upon it; he will merely record that some say the car is too much of the modern mood, that it belongs to pleasures of the haste and whirlwind school, and that with the engines working past their forty the world flies by too fast, and the white riband of road in front is gobbled up too greedily. At the end one may strive to remember something seen and considered. For all the speed of it, it is not life and action; it is not knowledge, it makes little for remembrance, and it gives but peculiar and incomplete freedom. Men who marry wives and men who buy fine motor-cars fasten themselves to places and to systems. Independence has gone. Perhaps it is better so, but anyhow it has gone. The car heaps upon its owner the sense of responsibility, the necessity for continual care. It is another thing, a cause for anxiety; in the subconscious working of our simple existence there is the dim realisation that there is always not yourself only, but yourself and the car.

* * *

The cycle, on the other hand, is as a part of us. Flash with it down a gentle incline in an ecstasy of high speed that has the ineffable quality of being home-made, and then you may toss it over a five-barred gate, and scratch your way along a woodland path, or where there is no path at all, and at the end, if there is no corner of a stable or other good place for this friend, you may carry it up to your room. It is your partner in freedom, and a better companion for summer and autumn days is not to be found in war or peace. And these are days when a little freedom, when release not merely from ordinary conventions and systems of life, but from the harsh environment that closes upon us in these warring times, is better than ever it was before. To be free and upon the open road: it is a thought that may often stir a warm emotion now in many a heart that could not have been touched by it before. With the wheel, and a card of registration, a man may be as free upon the roads of Britain as

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ever he was. The law, in its new and comprehensive working for the defence of this harassed realm, has only troubled him to the point of demanding the addition to his equipment of one red lamp for the hinder-part; and in generous compensation the rider in war-time is given an extra hour of precious daylight whereby the red lamp may never be needed. All the rest is freedom and the open roads, the lovely roads of the homeland. A year ago we declared that the cycle was running back to full public favour again, that the roads abounded with delighted people returning to their old love, and that it had been discovered afresh that it is the best of all for summer recreation. Yet some then questioned if this renewal were really such an accomplished fact. Now they know it beyond all question and doubt. The car has nearly gone; the railway train, a poor thing at its best for country enjoyment, and harsh autocrat in its repression of individual freedom, is discountenanced and expensive; but the cycle is here at least as good as ever, and as cheap. Those who return to it after a lapse of many years find it far better than they did before; they wonder they could have deserted it. In the early period, when the cycle was a novel thing, it was a toy and a fashion; it was but dimly understood. They who remained faithful knew, and they were glad, perhaps, that the butterflies of fashion went away to other novelties and left them alone to their delight. The war has brought the prodigals back again. To be awheel in Britain, free and far from one's personal base, is joy as good and legitimate as is to be gained in these perplexing times.

* * *

But an old and well-tried lover of the wheel may sometimes have misgivings that those who thus return to the road may now blunder in their way. They will bring back with them many of the old stupidities and misconceptions. Let us counsel, then, all those who come to it now to do so with an open mind on methods and with forgetfulness of what they did of old. These are days of rebeginnings, of new outlooks and release from old conventions; so let them begin again in their cycling system and in their attitude towards the pastime. The essence of its joy is the freedom that comes with it. That fact cannot be too often stated, and in any consideration, be it of the road, of the nature of the journey, of the place of stopping, of time and circumstance, of clothing, habit, or appurtenances, let this be a point of government. Apply the formula of freedom, which is the spirit of the wheel, to every intention, and see that there is harmony then. That strange contrariness which is set in human nature and leads us so often to stupidities that spoil potential happiness, prompted mankind, as soon as the cycle was discovered and advanced to some practical stage, to shackle itself in new and remarkable ways, to limit and spoil the freedom that was afforded by these responsive wheels. Thus the early cyclists arrayed themselves in wonderful garments. They had tight-fitting suits of smooth, hard cloth, mostly of dark blue, decked with strange braids and cords, or frogged, as is the tailor's term. They wore fancy caps with long peaks. There were touches of silver, perhaps, in this equipment, and there were badges. Those were the Victorian days when soldiers wore scarlet tunics, and when uniforms of every kind seemed to make a peculiar impression upon the emotions of wearers and observers. So the new cyclists delighted to be uniformed, to classify themselves, to give themselves the appearance of a new corps devoted to some exalted mechanical practice, which was indeed far above the comprehension and possibility of the multitude. The uniform was tight; it was hot and extremely uncomfortable; it hindered the cycling movements; but it was a uniform that somehow marked the man and rendered him proudly an object of curiosity. Time brought sanity, and simple rational clothing, loose-fitting and yet good of appearance, took the place of the old uniforms. Cyclists still cultivated a strange gregariousness, by which they assembled in regiments and stormed the countryside in dusty columns, but their garments were of many hues and styles, as sense and taste dictated; and even then the regimental manner was breaking, for, instead of advancing in single or double file, solemnly and somewhat slowly, as did the uniformed riders of the old high bicycles, they became a scattered company. Some went scorching with heads bent over their fore-wheels, and laggards pedalled slowly in the rearguard. This was the dawn of freedom, revolt against the stupid convention whereby so many things that were good were barnacled and spoiled in Victoria's days.

* * *

But conventions in Britain are harder to kill than cats which you drown on Monday, and which mew again for milk on Friday. Even the most appalling wars let the silliest conventions flourish on. So cycling, which was thus born to conventions and absurdities, still has them; and those who begin now, or rebegin in the way of the ex-prodigal, should strive to bring something of the original man and the desert island manner of attitude to bear upon their intention, for that way lie abundant joys that other wheelers know nothing of. Let them think of themselves in a new world—as indeed they are—provided with a new and useful delight for the first time, and consider how best they may employ it. Assuredly they will get no uniform to start with, but they may turn their thoughts towards special cycling-shoes, things made to lace far to the toe, and usually tight, or buckled open affairs that call for the dust. In some such shoes there may

be virtues, but for my part I find that the most comfortable pair of old shoes I have make good things for my pedals. Again, the man cyclist will almost invariably consider that for real cycling, as distinct from the journey of accommodation about the local streets, knickerbockers should be worn—for their comfort and their ease. But again, though it is true such shorts have recommendations, and for brief country trips on cool evenings, or a sprint in the mornings, they have the advantage, for the long day in the saddle, with occasional rests, for the tour through the country, the holiday awheel, one's simple trousers have it. In such ordinary costume when mounted the man may not seem dressed up for the part, but this is only the conventional way of thinking. He is more at comfort, he has greater freedom, he is cooler, the dust does not cake grittily upon his skin, and when he rests, or is free for general practices in the evenings, he is more at his ease and better found. Provided always that the garments indicated are of convenient texture and thickness, as of flannel. For touring in the warm times of summer, stockings and knickers are kill-joys. He, then, who wheels away into the heart of the country in the plain attire of ordinary life has made a becoming bow to freedom, and his future promises well.

* * *

Now there is that regimental tendency; something of it lingers still. At least it is thought there should be two for a trip, that this wheeling is no matter for solitarians. If you would ride in company and find joy that way, there is no more to be said, save that you are right and abundantly justified in your happiness. But if you ride in pairs or trios, or larger formations, and still, being of contemplative ways, sigh for a recreation that will yield full measures of reflection, then let conventions go hang again, for after the fullest experiment we are assured that this is the thing of all for single and contemplative happiness. Add but one to yourself and the freedom you acquire with your cycle is lost completely. Your route must be arranged in consultation, your pace regulated; whims and moods upon the road must be suppressed. If you see a green and flowery bower by the wayside, and thoughts of a rest, a pipe, and some pages of a book pass in the mind, they must be despatched, for such stoppages have to be matters of discussion. Rarely do two souls, however much akin, agree upon the order of such incidents; and even though an understanding be established, all spontaneity has been banished from the affair; it lacks the spice of freedom, and it has been spoiled accordingly. A five-barred gate at a pretty spot has an attraction for me always. But friends may not share my love for gates. Surely cycling is the thing for the meditative person; he has the open road, the changing scene, and the beauty of it all. If the world and yourself are not enough for your thoughts, and you must have some one in company to discuss the petty affairs of families or the concert of the night before, you are no fellow for emancipated cycling. It is best to ride along in reflection, pointed here and there by a definite observation. The scene of itself fills the spiritual being. Now the spirit is bathed in the deep green of the woods and lanes, the green of life, the colour that delights and soothes and rests and is the greatest joy; and in such circumstance the mind of man seems to be cleaned, his thoughts and feelings mount fresh and pure, and happiness comes upon him. He is lost to all but Nature and himself and the gentle humming of his friendly wheel. This is the only time I ever sing. There must be many thousands of these solitarian wheelmen in our country who do not reveal themselves, for in such revelation their practices might be spoiled. I have discovered some of them by a halting process of mutual confession. One friend, who is high controller of fine theatres, a man of clubs, a happy lover of London and its social ways, and unsuspected of such lonely tricks as here described, steals away, as I have discovered from him, in late summer days to the north and to Ireland, and in utter loneliness, upon which he insists most profoundly, goes vagabonding awheel, caring neither where he eats nor where he sleeps, but filling himself with draughts of Nature and a joy of freedom and simplicity that the London he loves cannot yield to him. Another is a distinguished artist, and he too goes alone, and roams on an odd system that somewhat restricts freedom. He starts upon a long route carefully arranged for a week or a fortnight, and at the beginning has only the means for a night or two's lodging with him. In advance he has despatched letters addressed to himself to various hostelries, each containing small financial supplies, and these he takes as he reaches them. The advantage of the system is that a certain progress is assured to those who are otherwise weak of determination and disposed to rest unduly.

* * *

But we who are for solitude yet have a friend on many a run, a patient, good, and happy companion who is in fine sympathy with every event and change. This companion has naught to do with those conventions; he is for freedom too. He is a dog, one of the best of dogs, a strong-built Irish terrier, who loves the wheel as his master, though his part is not to ride, but to sprint ahead in the morning, to be alongside later, and be perhaps a bend of the road behind at the setting of the sun, yet in full equality and high happiness at all meal-times and the special gates. The country round is marked on our imaginary maps for roadside places where there are drinking and canine bathing-places; such is our perfect sympathy and understanding that sometimes we make long detours of some miles to strike upon them. Our original cycling con-

ventions had no place for the companionship of dogs; for me, I would have no other friend on day trips from the home centre, and earnestly now I consider a petition that is often expressed in two big appealing eyes that we twain go a-touring. This good friend loves the chase by wheel as nothing else; he cries his joy to the heavens at every starting and at intervals during the day; he makes his music in the lanes; and he gives the sporting touch by his occasional excursions through the hedges into the woods, and his reappearance perhaps somewhere beyond the next milestone. Or his master may have to wait for him, for these adventures are not always void of difficulty and delay. It was but the other day that from some desperate business he came limping back and one must needs turn surgeon by the roadside. But this is no occupation for parlour or boudoir dogs; be kindly careful of your partner's strength. This Jerry has strong feet and limbs, takes a bounding stride, and is in contentment for many miles, with supper and refreshing sleep to follow. He has something of the Gelert quality about him, for indeed we find him a lamb at home, a lion in the chase. And above all he gives solitude and companionship combined. We together have nothing to do with the conventions, and, if the truth were known, perhaps our instincts bid us go wheeling together because ordinary men and staid house-dogs are not supposed to do such things.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—CONCERNING A CLUE.

'MRS TRAPES,' said Ravenslee, laying aside the book he had been reading and letting his glance wander across smooth lawns and clipped yew-hedges—'Mrs Trapes, what about that stewed shin of beef with carrots and onions you prepared for—our wedding supper?'

'Which,' said Mrs Trapes, glancing up from her everlasting knitting—'which you never stopped to eat.'

'Which omission I will now haste to rectify. Mrs Trapes, pray go and get it ready. I'm ravenous!'

'Good f'r you!' said Mrs Trapes; 'in about 'alf-an-hour you shall 'ave a nice cup o' beef-tea to raven at.'

'Confounded slops!' growled Ravenslee.

'Doctor's orders!' nodded Mrs Trapes, clicking her knitting-needles.

'Can't I have something to chew at?'

'Sure. How 'll a cracker soaked in milk soot?'

'Cracker!' snarled Ravenslee.

'Doctor's orders!'

Ravenslee muttered and took up his book.

'Helen who, did you say?' inquired Mrs Trapes, glancing up. 'Mr Geoffrey—I mean Ravenslee—I 'm surprised at you; swearin' ain't good for a invalid; your temperature 'll be rose if you swear.'

'But, my dear Mrs Trapes, I'm hungry—very hungry—darned hungry!'

'Which is a sign as you're improvin' rapid. Beef-tea 'll be 'ere soon.'

'I won't drink the stuff!'

'Oh, but you will, when Hermy brings it.'

'Hermione!' said Ravenslee, his voice grown gentle, and laying down his book again. 'Mrs Trapes, have you noticed any change in her lately?'

'A bit 'andsomer p'r'aps.'

'Yes; but I don't mean that; it's something that puzzles me. She seems to have grown more—more reserved and shy.'

'Well, she was married to you before she knew it kind of, almost.'

'Do you suppose that's it?'

'Sure. What you got t' do, Mr Geoffrey, is—woo 'er! Woo 'er all you know 'ow. The best woman can't be wooed too 'ard nor too frequent—so you start in an' woo.'

'But sometimes it has almost seemed that she—avoided me.'

'Well, don't let 'er.'

'Do you suppose she 's grieving for Spike?'

'Well, 'e ain't exactly a j'y t' her. There 'e is goin' straight to the devil along o' that Bud M'Ginnis!'

'I must go and fetch him as soon as I can get about again.'

'If 'e 'll come.'

'Oh, he 'll come,' said Ravenslee grimly. 'I 've decided to send him to college.'

'If 'e 'll go.'

'Oh, he 'll go; there 's quite a lot of good in him, Mrs Trapes.'

'Only, it 's mighty 'ard to find, Mr Geoffrey. If that b'y wants t' go t' th' devil, to the devil 'e 'll go. What you got t' do is t' make 'er forget 'im—if you can. Oh, drat 'im, anyway!' and, squaring her elbows, Mrs Trapes knitted so angrily that her knitting-needles clashed like weapons fiercely opposed.

'Yes; but suppose she is grieving for him, Mrs Trapes?'

'Why, then,' said Mrs Trapes—'why, then—— Oh, shucks! I guess I 'll go an' see after that beef-tea.'

When she had gone, Ravenslee sat plunged in gloomy thought until roused by the sound of approaching feet with a creak of shoes, a loud, arrogant creak there was no mistaking, and the Old Un appeared, followed by Joe and the Spider, the latter looking very smart in his new livery.

'Guv,' said the Old Un, 'best respex! 'Ere

we be, come to say 'ow glad we are t' see ye come up smilin' an' ready for more after Fate ketchin' ye a perishin' wallop as we all thought 'ad doubled ye up till the day o' doom. 'Ere ye are, on your pins again, an' 'ere 's us come t' give ye greetin's doo an' j'y o' your marriage.—Shut up, Joe!'

'Why, I wasn't speakin'!' growled Joe.

'No; but you meant to—you 're always meanin' to, you are.—Guv,' continued the Old Un, 'folks is allus a-givin' an' takin' in marriage in this 'ere world, such bein' their natur'—they can't 'elp it! But never in this world nor no other was there ever sich a weddin' as yourn. There was 'er so young an' fair an' full o' life, an' there was you so pale an' nigh to death—one leg in the grave—an' there was me so full o' years an' wisdom an' sorrer for ye both—oh, my pore old bowels was fair yearnin' over ye.'

'Lord, Old Un!' expostulated Joe, 'you keep them bowels o' yours out o' it.'

'Shut up, Joe, in your ignorance; bowels is in the Bible, an' bowels I abide by now an' for ever, amen! Well, there we all were, guv, bendin' o'er your couch o' care very silent an' solemn. "Not a drum was 'eard nor a funereal note," an' there was you s' pale an' nigh t' death.'

'You said all that afore, Old Un!' growled Joe.

'You leave me alone, Joe,' said the Old Un, scowling and flourishing a trembling fist; 'you lemme be, or you 'll be pale an' nigh t' death next.—Well, there was you, guv, an' all s' pale an' still, when, "'Oo giveth this woman?" says the parson-cove very solemn. "That 's me!" says I, quick an' ready. An' so, me 'avin' 'elped t' marry ye, I 've brought Joe an' Spider t' wish ye 'ealth an' 'appiness an' a j'y continual.—Now, Joe, it 's your round—speak up!'

'Sir,' said Joe heavily, 'I—we—I mean—Lord, sir, I am that glad—ah, glad as—as never was.'

'That 'll do for you, Joe!' snapped the Old Un. 'Spider 's round.'

Hereupon the Spider lurched forward, hunched his wide shoulders, took off his smart cap, and stared at it very hard. 'Bo',' said he, chewing vigorously—'I mean boss—er—no, that ain't right either—this is sure a bum start I 'm makin'.'

'"Bo'" will do, Spider,' said Ravenslee; 'let it go at that.'

'Why, then, bo', I ain't one as is ever goin' t' win any gold-mounted testimonials at any talk-fest or heart-throbbin' spiel-act; but what I wanter tell you is this—an' I guess you know I ain't only breathin' out puffs o' hot air—I wancher t' know as I feel about you like—like Joe an' the Old Un does—an' then some more. Ye see, bo', though I ain't never held a straight flush agin four aces, 'n' don't expect to; though I sha'n't ever be a world's champion like Joe here, I guess I know to-day what it feels like, because you ain't goin' t' snuff it after all; and now I guess you 're on.' Saying which, the Spider dexterously shifted his wad to the other cheek and chewed faster than ever.

'I am, Spider; and I want you to know I 'm grateful to you all three. Also, I want to thank you all for keeping this affair out of the papers, though how you managed it beats me.'

'Guv,' cried the Old Un, tremulous and eager, 'oh guv, we 're fair sleuth-hounds, we are—'specially me! There ain't a 'tective nor secret-service cove nor bloomin' bobby fit to black our shoes—'specially mine! Ye see, guv, I know who done it; Joe thinks he knows, an' Spider don't think at all!'

'Oh!' said Ravenslee, and, looking round, caught the Spider watching him wide-eyed, his jaws grimly tense and immobile; but, meeting his glance, the Spider lowered his eyes, shifted his smartly gaitered legs, and chewed viciously.

'So, guv,' piped the Old Un cheerily, 'we 're out for the criminal's gore—'specially me! We 're goin' to track the perisher to 'is 'orrible doom.

Where'er 'e be,
To th' gallers-tree,
Oh guv, we mean t' bring 'im;
An' laugh with j'y
When, nice an' 'igh,
The blinkin' bobbies swing 'im.'

'And you think you know who it was?'

'I do, guv—I do!' nodded the Old Un. 'I knows as 'twas a enemy as done it. Joe thinks it was one o' them gang fellers, an' Spider don't say who 'e thinks done it.'

Once again Ravenslee caught the Spider's eye watching him furtively, and once again he noticed that the Spider's jaws were clamped hard, while he was twisting his natty chauffeur's cap in fingers strangely agitated.

'Sir,' said Joe, 'me an' the Spider searched that wood, an' we found a coat'——

'Shut up, Joe,' snarled the Old Un; 'you 're tellin' it all wrong.—Guv, Joe an' the Spider went a-seekin' an' a-searchin' that wood, an' they found a—cloo.'

'Oh!' said Ravenslee.

'A cloo as is a-goin' t' hang somebody yet—a cloo, guv, as ain't t' be ekalled for blood-guilt an' mystery.—Joe,' said the Old Un, sinking his voice to a hoarse whisper, 'the hour is come—perjooce the cloo!'

Hereupon Joe produced a pocket-book, and took thence a highly ornate coat-button, whereto a shred of cloth was attached. 'I found this, sir,' said he, 'close by where you was a-lyin'.'

So Ravenslee took the button upon his palm, and, as he eyed it, the Spider saw his black brows twitch suddenly together; then he yawned. 'And you found this in the wood, Joe?' he inquired sleepily.

'I did, sir. With that to 'elp 'em the perlice would 'ave the murderin' cove in no time, an' more than once I 've been goin' to 'and it over to 'em. But then I thought I 'd better wait a

bit; if you died was time enough, an' if you didn't I'd keep it for you; so, sir, there it is.'

'You did quite right, Joe. Yes, you did very right indeed!' For a long moment Ravenslee sat languidly twisting the button in thin white fingers, then flicked it far out over the balustrade, down among the dense evergreens in the garden below. The Old Un gasped, Joe gaped, and the Spider sighed audibly.

'Lorgorramighty! Oh guv, guv,' quavered the old man, 'you've throwed away our cloo—our blood-cloo—th' p'lice—you've lost our evidence!'

'Old Un, of course I have! You see, I don't like clues, or blood, or the police. You have all been clever enough, wise enough to keep this confounded business quiet, and so will I.'

'But, oh, guv, arter somebody tryin' t' kill ye like a dog, ain't there goin' t' be no vengeance, no gallers-tree, no 'lectric chair, nor nothin'?'

'Nothing!' answered Ravenslee gently. 'Somebody tried to kill me, but somebody didn't kill me; here I am, getting stronger every day, so we'll let it go at that.'

'Why, then, I'm done!' said the Old Un, rising. 'Guv, you're crool an' stony-'earted! 'Ere's me, a pore old cove as 'as been dreamin' an' dreamin' o' gallers-trees an' 'lectric chairs, an' 'ere's you been an' took 'em off me! Guv, I'm disapp'inted wi' ye. Oh ingratitood, thou art the guv!' So saying, the Old Un clapped on his hat and creaked indignantly away.

'Crumbs!' exclaimed Joe; 'what a blood-thirsty old cove 'e is, with 'is gallers-trees! This means jam, this does.'

'Jam!' repeated Ravenslee, wonderingly.

'Sir, whenever the Old Un's put out 'e flies to jam, same as some chaps do to drink; makes a fair old beast o' hisself, 'e do. If you 'll excuse us, sir, Spider an' me 'll just keep a eye on 'im to see as 'e don't go upsettin' 'is old innards again.'

Ravenslee nodded, and, smiling, watched them hurry after the old man; but gradually his amusement waned, and he became lost in frowning thought. So deeply abstracted was he that he started to find Mrs Trapes regarding him with her sharp, bright eyes.

'Mr Geoffrey, 'ere's a cup o' beef-tea as I've prepared with my own 'and.'

'But where's'——

'She's gone t' bed. 'Ere's a cup o' beef-tea as is stiff with nourishment, so get it into your system good an' quick.'

'Gone to bed!'

'She says it's a 'eadache, o' course—drink it down while it's 'ot—but I reckon it's more 'n a 'eadache—yes, sir. A while back I says t' you, "Woo 'er," I says, Mr Geoffrey. I now says—let 'er alone a while. The pore child's all wore out—it's nerves as is the matter wi' 'er, I reckon. So, Mr Ravenslee, be patient; this ain't no wooin'-time; it's rest she needs, an' change o' air.'

'Why, then, Mrs Trapes, she shall have them!'

(*Continued on page 567.*)

A SALMON-RIVER OF FINLAND.

By F. G. Aflalo.

WHEN peace comes to this troubled earth once more, no land will have greater reason to bless it than Russia, and of all the Tsar's dominions, old Finland, which has suffered least, will profit most, for Finland is going to be one of the great tourist centres of the twentieth century. It particularly behoves the angler, eager for new fields to sport in, and for opportunities less costly than those of Norway, to keep his eye on this beautiful northern province, since the new programme of railway construction promises to open up undreamed-of playgrounds for his delight.

Meanwhile there are already rivers of Finland over which enthusiasts have long thrown the reed high over their arm, to recall a poetic tribute of R. L. S. to Andrew Lang, and of these none has been more beloved than the Vuoksen, which, running out from Lake Saima into Lake Ladoga, affords sport to residents of Petrograd, from which capital it can be reached by train in five or six hours. The premier fish of the Vuoksen is the so-called *lokhi*, or 'land-locked salmon.' The English equivalent is given on the authority of resident experts, and without endorsement by the present writer, and the apparent justification lies in the admitted improbability of these handsome fish going either way through the forbidding rapids, miscalled falls, of Imatra. At the same time, and without any desire to prejudice this theory, it should be mentioned that true sea-going salmon have occasionally been taken on the rod above Imatra, and that where these can go others can follow. However, the *lokhi*, land-locked or otherwise, is a very handsome fish, a good fighter, and toothsome on the table. It apparently grows to a weight of fifteen or twenty pounds, and the average would probably be eight or ten. Out of seven fish that I had in my boat in three moonlight evenings of harling, with a total weight of sixty-eight pounds, one weighed fourteen and another eleven.

This was during the glorious moonlight nights early in August, when the river is comparatively low and little can be done by casting. Harling is not sport for an epicure, but the surroundings are enchanting, and each fish fights to a finish. As, moreover, the finish is occasionally staged

within a few yards of the small rapids (which lead to the rest), it offers just the element of danger which lends a spice even to the gentle art. These fish take a Blue Phantom spun in the broken water or a native bait made of pike-skin, called *nirka*, and used without lead or swivel.

There is also abundance of trout, grayling, pike, and a small-mouthed fish called *seeg*, which only a few persistent experts have taken on dry fly. The pike run large. One in the dining-room of a charming island fishing-lodge belonging to Mr James Whishaw, of Petrograd, weighed twenty-nine pounds. This little island, called Warpa Saari, is one of the little earthly paradises that will spring up elsewhere in the land when the new railway has linked up the backwoods. It is the island of the angler's dreams, and the name of M. Sazonoff in the visitors' book suggests its attraction for a tired statesman, while that of Sir George Buchanan hints at a similar boon for an overworked diplomatist.

Warpa Saari has everything that the fisherman can desire on a brief holiday from a troubled world—good boats and gillies, plenty of fish, an inexhaustible store of tackle and baits, a library of books, and, above all, the blessing of peace ensured by those few yards of swift water that separate it from the mainland. 'House Matti,' a rugged old Finn, untroubled by the somewhat disaffected politics of his countrymen, is an ideal boatman, for he is silent, a non-smoker, and a teetotaler; and his keenness to show sport is stimulated by the excellent scale of pay, which, in addition to his six Finnish marks (rather under five shillings at the present rate of exchange, as two marks go to a rouble), prescribes an additional mark for every fish of five pounds or over, and yet another for every completed fifteen pounds weight.

Without having any pretension to grandeur, save at the rapids themselves, this beautiful little river, which gathers immense velocity within five miles of its source, is more attractive than many with a greater reputation, and the effect of summer moonlight following swiftly on a dazzling sunset that reddens the ingathered harvest on the banks is glorious beyond words. Bird life seems scarce. There was neither heron nor kingfisher to advertise the abundance of fish in the pools, and only the last of the swallows flew to and fro under those Northern skies, with an occasional string of wild duck that nested in the reeds.

The troubles of Finland are said to loom on the political horizon, and there is considerable bitterness in Russian military circles over the immunity of its youth from the call to arms; but the agitators of Helsingfors are powerless to disturb these pleasant retreats, and Finland will in the near future owe more of her prosperity to their attraction for the tourist and the sportsman than to all their diatribes in the Diet.

JOHN CORNELIUS COMES HOME.

CHAPTER V.—SQUIRE JONES RETURNS.

AFTER a satisfactory lunch, John Cornelius felt quite rehabilitated. He, or, rather, Arabella, had scored off Martin. He, personally, had got even with Clutterbuck and Mole, and had piled the proverbial coals of fire upon their respective heads; for had he not paid Mole a bet which would have been very difficult to recover, and practically confirmed the gardener from Kew in his position?

Altogether everything looked rosy. He was the owner—the recognised owner—of a splendidly managed estate, and of a great house, replete, as the auctioneers put it, with all the requirements of a man of wealth and standing—motor-cars, he did not know how many; horses for all purposes; park well stocked with deer and cattle; woods and spinneys full of game, for the girl had pointed them out, and had so assured him. Yet were there two flies in his precious ointment—Maravillas, and what he should do with it, and the prospective meeting with Archibald Jones, who for seven years had been squire of Torringham in his stead.

The lawyer was expected to arrive at Biford at 3.30 P.M. Arabella had telegraphed to him, and had received a reply, just the words, 'Will arrive 3.30. Send the Daimler.' No comment. No message from her sister Rosa. Mrs Charteris had declared that she would be at the station to meet the train, but she was easily dissuaded, and John Cornelius and the girl went alone.

Arabella drove, of course; and John Cornelius sat rather stiffly beside her. At the lodge gates—and this was the first time they had had occasion to pass through them—Mrs Badger was standing. She had heard the car's siren, and had opened the gilded barriers. She bobbed a curtsy as they swept by, but did not recognise John Cornelius. He, however, waved his hand and shouted a cheery 'Good-afternoon, Mrs Badger!' which set that lady wondering where the strange gentleman could have seen her before. A Stetson hat and clothes of careless cut are 'some' disguise.

As they drove into the station yard they scattered a little knot of flymen at the gate. John Cornelius jumped down as the car stopped, and nearly collided with the man who had been afraid to drive him to Torringham Hall.

'Hello!' he cried. 'How's the old horse that couldn't do the journey to Torringham and back?'

The flyman recognised the voice.

'So Miss Arabella took yer in?' he said,

wagging a gray beard doubtingly; 'but wait till you see Squire Jones.'

'I am going to do so,' said John Cornelius, adding, 'you old Thomas Didymus.'

''Tain't my name,' the flyman retorted. 'Thomas Collins I be called, an' Squire Jones be my landlord.'

The small crowd sniggered.

'Tommy knows which side his bread be buttered on,' said one.

Nevertheless, it was plain to see that they were all a little uneasy in their minds, for most of their cottages belonged to the owner of the Torringham estate, whosoever he might chance to be.

The train came in and stopped. From a first-class carriage alighted a short, stout, jolly-looking gentleman in country garb, and a tall, handsome girl. The stout gentleman went to the guard's van to look after the luggage. The girl came forward, flushed and hesitant.

'I will introduce you,' said Arabella. 'Mr Cornelius—my sister Rosa.'

John Cornelius lifted his cap and held out his hand. 'Pleased to make your acquaintance, Miss Jones.'

'So you 're not an ogre, and you don't look as if you would turn us out into the fields,' rejoined the girl.

'Goodness, no!' said John Cornelius. 'Whatever made you'——

'Dad 's nervous, that 's all,' she said; 'but it will be a weight off his mind, anyway.'

Just then the lawyer, who looked rather like a farmer, and had been a country squire for seven years, walked up, followed by a railway porter loaded with baggage. Without waiting for an introduction, he placed himself before John Cornelius, standing with legs apart, and looked at him keenly.

'I have had telegrams from Arabella and Mrs Charteris,' he said. 'I knew Andrew Cornelius almost as well as I knew his brother John. Except as a matter of form, I want no evidence. The Court of Chancery will. But I 'll swear the necessary affidavit that you are the only son of Andrew Cornelius. You couldn't be anybody else's son with that face. When do you want us to quit?'

'Is the property in Chancery?' asked John Cornelius.

'Yes—four years. I am trustee. You 'll find everything in order. When do you wish us to quit?'

'I 'll tell you,' said John Cornelius—'after you have shaken hands.'

'Oh, then, you don't resent my not having discovered you?'

'Lord, no! Put it there,' said John Cornelius.

They shook hands heartily. Clearly, as his elder daughter had found time to say, a heavy weight had been lifted from the lawyer-squire's mind.

'I went to America myself,' he said. 'Texas, Arizona, Colorado, California, goodness knows where. I got on the track of a Johnnie Cornelius in Texas, at a town called San Antonio. My informants—everybody seemed to remember him—said he was a cow-puncher, whatever that may be. Nobody seemed to know where Johnnie had gone, but all declared that you were "some looker," and ought to be found easily. I employed Pinkertons. You know with what result.'

John Cornelius laughed. 'I was rather popular in Santone,' he said. 'Painted the town rather red on occasion. Had to skip finally, and wasn't able to leave an address behind me, because I didn't know where I was going. That 's some years ago now. I went to Mexico, where I 've come from.'

'And where you heard that you were wanted?'

'Yes, from a Torringham man—Davison.'

'Jimmy Davison! Why, I 've seen him almost every day since he came back. I thought I saw him on the platform here.'

'So you did, dad,' intervened Rosa. 'He came to meet us, but he disappeared somewhere when he saw Mr Cornelius with Arabella.'

'H'm! He kept things pretty dark. But we 're getting away from the point. When do you want us to leave the Hall, Mr Cornelius?'

'Suppose we talk about that another time,' said John Cornelius, drawing the lawyer aside. 'I might be able to induce you to remain as steward. I've been thinking that I might persuade Arabella to remain also'——

'As'——

'Mistress of the Hall,' said John Cornelius; and taking the lawyer by the arm, he led him from the platform.

Arabella was already in her place at the wheel and ready to start.

'If we sit behind we 'll be able to talk,' said the lawyer.

'If you don't mind,' returned John Cornelius, 'I 'll sit with the driver. I am taking lessons, and it would be a pity to interrupt the course.'

He sprang in beside Arabella, and as it was rather a chilly day, drew a rug carefully over her knees. She thanked him with a smile and a whispered word.

'So that 's how it goes, Bella Bright-Eyes, is it?' reflected a watcher at the waiting-room window looking into the yard.

They drove away, the deposed squire beaming and talking boyishly to Rosa. The flymen touched their hats as the car swung round, and a sunburnt, stoutish gentleman, who had stepped out of the waiting-room, lifted his.

'Mr Davison,' said Arabella, with a motion of her head.

'Hello, Davison!' cried John Cornelius. 'Lucky for you I was down by the Rio Grande that day!'

Davison waved his hat in greeting. 'Lucky!' he said to himself. 'Well, I admit it; but I fancy

that my best bit of luck was Rosa's absence in town when you turned up. She might have been driving that car this minute, and smiling up at you instead of Bella. In which case'——

'I'll get Davison to go to Mexico and sell Maravillas,' reflected John Cornelius. 'It would be a fine honeymoon trip for Rosa.'

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

SIMPLE ELECTRIC PROCESS FOR CLEANING SILVER.

IN these days, when servants are most difficult to get, housewives will welcome any expedient which reduces the time taken to keep the house and its contents in order. One of the irksome periodical tasks about a house is cleaning the silver, and the process we are about to describe greatly lessens the time and the labour involved. The new method is a very simple one, and without explanation many people would never realise that electricity entered into the process at all. The only article needed which will not be found in every household is an aluminium bowl. Into such a bowl pour a quart of boiling water, and add a teaspoonful each of salt and washing-soda. Then dip the tarnished silver articles into this solution, and leave them in for a few seconds; after which the articles can be wiped, and then polished with an ordinary polishing-cloth. With this process it is quite unnecessary to use any powder or paste for polishing. What really happens is that the aluminium bowl, the silver article, and the salt and soda solution form an electric battery, and the tarnish, which is silver sulphide, is taken from the silver article and deposited on the side of the bowl. The action is similar in principle to that which takes place when the process of electroplating is carried on.

A KNEE PENCIL-HOLDER FOR ARMLESS MEN.

An American doctor has perfected a pencil-holder which clips round the leg close to the knee when in a bent position. A writing-pad is held in a suitable frame at the correct height, and the operator, when sitting down and resting the leg upon the ball of the foot, is able to write much more effectively than could be done with the feet or the teeth.

NEW TYPE OF LAND-TORPEDO.

As the inventors of all the belligerent nations are racking their brains to produce new engines of warfare, it is not surprising that many effective devices have been brought forth. Although the invention described below was suggested by an Englishman, Stafford Talbot, of London, it has been worked out by Mr B. A. Villar, of New York. The appliance is essentially a land-torpedo, and has a much greater resemblance to the sea-torpedo than have the bombs commonly designated land-torpedoes which are projected from trench-mortars or aeroplanes. According to the *Scientific American*, in which the new device is illustrated, it consists of a four-wheeled chassis, driven by a small steam-engine at a speed ranging up to sixty miles an hour. The boiler is heated by a petrol or paraffin burner, and all four wheels are driven by chains from the engine. A torpedo in a bullet-proof casing is mounted upon the front of the chassis, and all the vital parts of the mechanism are armoured. Electric cables wound upon suitable drums, which unwind as the chassis goes forward, are used to control the speed and to fire the torpedo. The function of these torpedoes is to run rapidly across 'No Man's Land' up to the enemy's trenches, where they will break through the wire-entanglements and explode among the defenders. The system is said to be much less costly than gun-fire, in view of the results achieved. The new weapon is particularly suitable for surprise attacks, as no noise need be made until a row of torpedoes is launched upon its deadly mission.

NEW TYPE OF BULLET-PROOF ARMOUR.

Although we have not yet adopted the complete armour of the medieval knight, that invented by Dr Guy Otis Brewster, of Dover, New Jersey, is capable of protecting the whole of the front of the body except the legs. The armour consists of a roomy helmet and a breast-plate. Both helmet and breast-plate are V-shaped, with the point of the V to the front, the idea of the inventor being to present to a bullet coming directly from the front an inclined surface from which it would ricochet. In this armour the inventor was subjected to rifle-fire and to attacks with a ten-pound sledge-hammer without receiving any hurt. The armour, which weighs thirty pounds, is well padded inside to absorb shocks from bullets, pieces of shell, or flying débris.

HOME-GROWN SUGAR AND THE WAR.

With the single exception of wheat, our dependence upon foreign countries has been more emphasised by the shortage of sugar than of any other commodity, and one naturally wonders why the growth of the sugar-beet in this country, which has long since been proved to be practicable, has not been more encouraged by the Government. In fact, it is only the war which has aroused our authorities to the importance of this subject, as shown by a belated grant of £125,000 for the erection of a sugar-beet factory and the purchase of land to keep it supplied with the raw material. An area of 5600

acres has been purchased at Kelham, near Newark, this acreage being large enough to provide sugar-beet for a factory on a commercial scale. The site for the factory has every necessary facility in the way of rail and canal transport. As is well known, grants are not made from the Development Fund to assist enterprises undertaken for the making of profits, and the present scheme is to be carried out by the British Sugar-Beet Growers' Society, Limited, which has no such object in view. Once the scheme is well on the way, however, it will probably be extended, and eventually develop into a commercial undertaking, when no doubt the loan from the Development Fund will be repaid. The growing of the sugar-beet in this country is by no means a novel idea, as our readers will be well aware, many references to this subject having appeared in these pages, including a description of the sugar-beet factory at Cantley, and the growing of sugar-beet in that district. These references, however, have described comparatively recent experiments and undertakings, but it is interesting to note that so long ago as 1831 several enterprising young English farmers visited France with a view to qualifying themselves for establishing a sugar-manufactory for the production of beet-sugar. Eventually a company was formed, and a small factory was erected near Maldon, in Essex. This experiment, however, and others of a like nature which have been tried since, were doomed to failure, owing to the small scale on which the operations were carried on, and it was not until the large factory was laid down at Cantley that sugar-beet was successfully grown and manufactured into sugar in this country. A clear proof that the soil and climate in the eastern counties of England are suitable for growing sugar-beet is afforded by the favourable terms offered to certain farmers several years ago by a Continental firm of sugar-manufacturers for beet to be shipped to their factory. One of the principal drawbacks in growing this crop is the amount of labour involved just at the busiest time of the year for farmers. This labour, moreover, is of a semi-skilled type, and could not be undertaken by the class of men and women employed for hop-picking and other similar work. Then, again, the factories can only be worked for four or five months in the year. These difficulties, however, have been overcome on the Continent, and there is little doubt that they can be surmounted in this country.

MOTOR-CAR CONVERTED INTO A FIRE-ENGINE.

The motor fire-engine would be far more used by the smaller towns in this country if it were made at a reasonable price, even at some sacrifice in power. Before the war the motor fire-engine cost nine hundred pounds, whereas a steam fire-engine could be purchased for about one-third that sum. An American concern has recently introduced a fire-engine consisting of a low-priced motor-car to which has been added a water-pumping engine and a chemical apparatus, together with the usual equipment carried on such vehicles. This fire-engine can be produced at a low price, and, unlike the steam fire-engine, is entirely self-propelled.

ENORMOUS STONE-CRUSHER BUILT IN AMERICA.

As is known to most of our readers, stones for roads and other purposes are often broken up by mechanical stone breakers or crushers. A machine of this type, which is claimed to be the largest in the world, has recently been invented in America. This colossal crusher will reduce stones five feet across to eight-inch pieces at a rate of 1250 pounds an hour, while the hopper or bin surmounting it is capable of holding 65 tons. The crushing mechanism is driven by a 300-horse-power electric motor, through the medium of eighteen cotton ropes, which grip into grooved pulleys upon the motor and the crusher respectively. On leaving the machine the broken stone is delivered to revolving screens by belt conveyers, where the smaller material is separated out for further reduction in less powerful crushers.

A MACHINE FOR PREDICTING THE TIDES.

Our American contemporary *Life* contains an interesting description of a complex machine used in the office of the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey. Every captain of a ship, whether it be a coasting-vessel or an ocean-going liner, must know beforehand the height of the tide at any port which he requires to enter. This information is given in the Nautical Almanac for nearly every port in the world, and, as such ships may remain at sea for a year or more, these almanacs must give the times of high-water at the various ports for at least this period ahead of the time when they are issued. As a matter of fact, the Nautical Almanac issued by the British Government gives the times of high-water at the seaports of the world for three years ahead. The calculations involved in compiling these tide-tables represent an enormous amount of work, and even so long ago as 1872 Lord Kelvin, who was then Sir William Thomson, made a rough model to show the practicability of predicting the tides mechanically. Since that time several tide-predicting machines have been constructed. The apparatus needed is necessarily a very complicated one, as a great many factors have to be allowed for, the time element being one of the most important. In this connection it is necessary to allow not only for the differences of time due to longitude, but also for the standards of time used by the various countries. Then we must remember that the tides are affected not only by the attraction of the moon, but also by that of the sun, and that the relative attractions vary according to latitude,

the time of the year, and the positions of the sun and the moon, which vary with the changing phases of the moon. Altogether thirty-seven factors are allowed for by this machine, all of which are needed in certain cases, and it is capable of giving the times of high-water for any number of years ahead. On the face of the machine are dials which give the height of the tide, the day of the month for any particular year, and the hour and the minute of the day at which high-water occurs. Moreover, it will give upon a slip of paper an actual tide curve for any place in the world, from which, so long as the time of high-water is known, the height of the tide can be computed at any moment. This wonderful machine, which has taken fifteen years to perfect, weighs over a ton, and although the adjustments for certain places and years occupy a considerable amount of time, the saving compared with the ordinary method of calculating the tide is enormous.

ELECTRIC TORCH WHICH LIGHTS WHEN TURNED UPSIDE-DOWN.

The novelties in the way of electric torches appear to be almost endless, and several of them have been described in these notes. One of the most recent has been invented by Mr. W. H. Smith, and was lately described in the *British Journal of Photography*. It consists of a bottle with a wide mouth, into which is fitted a rubber cork. Rods of zinc and carbon respectively are inserted through this cork, and they project down the bottle for about a third of its depth. On the top of the cork is mounted a small electric lamp, similar to those used in the ordinary electric torch, and connections are made to the lamp from the zinc and carbon rods. A mixture of water, bichromate of potash, and sulphuric acid is put into the bottle, and stands at a level about one inch below the end of the zinc and carbon rods when the bottle is upright. Upon the bottle being turned upside-down, it really becomes what is known as a bichromate cell, a well-known type of cell for producing small quantities of electricity for electric bells and similar purposes. The electric current produced when the solution surrounds the zinc and carbon rods is strong enough to light up the lamp, and the apparatus becomes an electric torch. The cork of the bottle must, of course, be made perfectly water-tight. Square bottles with large round mouths, such as are used for pickles and similar products, are very suitable for these torches, as they can be laid down on their sides when light is required. A torch of this description can hardly be recommended for the pocket, but for use in bedrooms and about the house it should prove of considerable value.

SUBSTITUTE FOR PAPER SUGGESTED BY MR EDISON.

At a recent interview, according to *Popular Science Siftings*, Mr Thomas Edison, the noted American inventor, stated that he could produce thin sheets of steel, copper, or nickel that would, so far as books are concerned, serve every purpose for which paper is now employed. Mr Edison considers nickel to be the best metal for this purpose, and states that he can produce sheets only one twenty-thousandth of an inch in thickness, and these will be cheaper, tougher, and more flexible than ordinary book-paper. In the Edison Laboratory a sheet of nickel paper with an area of five square feet can be produced within a minute and a half, but for ordinary commercial purposes the material would be made in long rolls, as is now the case with paper. The advantages of the metal sheets include non-inflammability, the capability of being soaked in water without damage, and a vast reduction in bulk when compared with paper, as a single small volume could contain many thousands of leaves.

RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE KELP INDUSTRY IN THE UNITED STATES DUE TO THE WAR.

All along the Pacific coast of America vast quantities of the brown ribbon seaweed known as kelp are to be found. This seaweed was collected in small quantities before the war, for the purpose of producing potash fertilisers. In addition to the potash, however, it contains other substances, one of which is acetone, a chemical largely used in the manufacture of cordite. In the early days of the war great quantities of cordite were ordered from America, and the manufacturers soon realised that the acetone needed could more easily be produced from kelp than in any other way. The kelp is harvested by vessels resembling dredgers, except that for the usual 'bucket ladder' is substituted an elevator very similar in construction to that used for stacking the straw when corn is threshed out. The lower end of the elevator is submerged to the correct level, and the weed is cut by vibrating two knives similar to those used for reaping corn. The cut weed is then carried up by the elevator, and discharged into a hopper in the cutting-barge, or over the side into separate barges. The machinery in these cutting-vessels is driven by oil-engines, and they are towed to the grounds by motor-tugs. The chemical process for extracting the desired materials from the kelp is a long one, which need not be gone into here further than to state that the weed is first soaked in vats for a considerable period.

INCREASED SUPPLIES OF BASIC SLAG.

The great demand that exists at the present day for increased quantities of artificial fertilisers has caused both the Royal Society of Arts and the Society of Chemical Industry in London to discuss the possibility of tapping fresh sources of supply. The basic slag formed as a waste product in the manufacture of Bessemer steel

has long been esteemed a valuable fertiliser, but the much larger supply of slag produced by the 'open-hearth' system of steel-making has been almost entirely neglected. It is true that the latter is not so rich as the former in phosphoric acid, nor is it so readily soluble in a solution of citric acid, the test generally employed in the past to determine whether a phosphate was readily available as a plant food. But there is a strong suspicion that German chemists have, for ulterior commercial purposes, unduly exploited the citric acid test, and it is believed that further inquiries and experiments will lead to large quantities of 'open-hearth' slag, which is at present merely a waste product, being ground into powder and used to fertilise the soil.

A NEW FORM OF CHART TABLE FOR THE USE OF NAVIGATORS.

The war has brought home to the navigator the importance of a chart-table by means of which a chart may be examined at night without any light being visible from outside. The ideal form of chart, of course, would be a self-luminous one; but as this is not at present feasible, an excellent substitute has been provided in a new chart-table which is lit from below. The table comprises a substantial outer case for protection of the chart against the effects of the weather, and an inner 'light box' fitted with a plate-glass lid, over which the chart is stretched. Within the box, and below the chart, are a number of small electric lamps so distributed as to illuminate evenly the lower surface of the chart, which thus becomes quite readable. The lamps are so arranged that no ray of light can reach the outside, and the degree of illumination is readily regulated by means of a small hand-wheel. Roomy pockets are provided on each side of the 'light box' for holding the necessary drawing instruments; the chart is securely attached to the surface of the box, so as to avoid any possibility of its being blown about; while the top of the table can be revolved to allow for the direction of the wind. Furnished with such a device, the navigator, even on the darkest night, can plot his course, examine landmarks, channels, &c., on deck without the necessity of resorting to the chart-room. When closed, the table forms a convenient writing-desk; or, if desired, it can readily be unshipped when not in use, and stowed elsewhere. It can be supplied in various forms, either mounted on a substantial pillar, or on four legs which may be bolted to the deck, or in a form suitable for attaching to bridge-rails.

A CEREAL-SAVING INVENTION.

'Necessity is the mother of invention.' The proverb, though trite, is still true. The shortage of cereals in this country caused the Food (War) Committee of the Royal Society to carry out last winter a series of experiments for the purpose of discovering a substitute for them in the production of a certain article of great importance in the prosecution of the war. The experiments have met with complete success, and a suitable substitute has been found in the horse-chestnut, which, hitherto of use only as food for deer and goats, will, for the duration of the war at least, indirectly prove of great service to the community by setting free for human consumption a not inconsiderable weight of cereals. Arrangements for the collection of horse-chestnuts in the autumn are now being made, and the gathering of them will afford an opportunity even to very young boys and girls of 'doing their bit' in the service of their country.

HUNGER AND APPETITE.

An interesting book on *The Control of Hunger in Health and Disease*, written by Professor Carlson, of the University of Chicago, has recently been published both in this country and in America. From a series of experiments made upon a man into whose stomach (as the result of an operation in childhood) there was an opening from the outside, supplemented by experiments upon himself and other human beings, as well as upon various animals, including dogs, Professor Carlson has come to the conclusion that the direct cause of hunger is a series of rhythmic contractions which are invariably set up within the stomach when it is empty. These contractions, beginning at the cardiac or left end of the stomach, and spreading thence in a succession of waves over the entire organ, have their origin in certain receptors in the muscular substance of the stomachic walls. Their presence produces a feeling of restlessness and excitability, and are the physiological explanation of the fact that 'a hungry man is often an angry man.' When the sense of taste is brought into play, or when food, water, gastric-juice, acid, alkali, oil, or other substance is introduced into the stomach, these contractions cease, and are succeeded in a few minutes by a series of digestive movements, which, however, begin at the pyloric or right end of the organ. Hunger in the physiological sense, it should be noted, is not the same thing as appetite, which Professor Carlson regards as due to mental rather than physical causes, being largely an anticipation by the mind of pleasurable sensations which it is hoped are in store. Briefly stated, appetite is the measure of our desire, hunger of our need; and in these days of comparative scarcity of food it is our duty to control the former as much as possible, and not to titillate it by means of *apéritifs* and dishes intended to gratify the sense of taste rather than to provide the body with nourishment.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

OYSTERS FOR TABASCO.

By ÆSCULAPIUS.

I.

JOCULAR mariners nicknamed it Haw-Haw Bay, because they were excited to derisive laughter in passing it. Not that there was no note of trepidation in their boisterousness, for the promontory marking its western extremity was known as the Beachy Head of the Mediterranean. Many ships had been sunk without warning, and many passengers had been shelled in their boats.

'What's the service coming to when a fine ship like that is jammed on rocks charted a hundred years ago?' one merchant skipper asked.

The object of his scorn was a comely liner. She had a yellow funnel and white upper works; and a goodly splash of red below showed her to be well on the reef at Cape Mitylene.

'Think of the cargoes she might be carrying!' the purser said mournfully.

'Bah!' the second officer exclaimed in disgust, making out her name, *Tabasco*, Birkenhead; 'she's too saucy for words.'

Anywhere else the first storm would have made short work of her, but summer weather prevailed in these proverbially fine seas, and she might last for months. No doubt, the presence of submarines in the vicinity militated against getting her off. At all events, no effort of the kind was being made at present. There were no signs of salvage craft about, or indeed of any life on board. Evidently all hands had taken to the boats, giving the inhospitable coast a wide berth. The boat-deck itself was cleared, and the davits turned outwards, with the free ends of their ropes swaying in the gentle breeze.

In the days that followed the *Tabasco* was responsible for many a 'cag' on board his Majesty's ships. Even the *Alcibiades*, on her way to the Pitagora station in August, spotted the unfortunate steamship. The R.N. officers roared at the expense of their R.N.R. messmates, for there was great rivalry between the two branches of the service when it came to navigation. Lieutenant Deans, R.N.R., was always boosting his Yellow Funnel Line, and what made it harder for him to swallow the bitter pill of verbal adversity was that the *Tabasco* was one of their latest ships.

'So that's the sort of seamanship you're always yapping about!' Lieutenant Jewell, R.N., remarked.

'Never mind,' Deans retorted. 'What about H.M.S. *Capulet* and Lundy Island? We know how she went ashore, but we don't know the circumstances under which the *Tabasco* came to grief.'

'Circumstances!' repeated Jewell contemptuously. 'I can't imagine any officer of the watch not clearing that shoal, unless a black bottle was responsible; and I bet there wasn't Tabasco in it either,' he declared, turning on his heel.

II.

There was another kind of 'hot stuff' weaving himself into Cape Mitylene affairs in the person of Herr Kommandant Otto Verbrecher. The *kommandant* also resembled a leech in this respect, that when surfeited with bloody spoil he dropped to the bottom and went into retirement for a while. Perhaps this cautious strain in his nature was responsible for his long immunity from destruction at the hands of the 'Fritzstrafers.' At any rate, his fat bank-account kept on increasing. The Fatherland was not at all niggardly when it came to rewarding services such as the *kommandant* rendered.

The Herr himself was a man of colossal build. In fact, when his boat was diving he had to be careful how he changed his position; otherwise the 'trim' was in danger of being upset. His present career was but an offshoot of his natural bent. Ever since his boyhood days Verbrecher had been potting at something or other. Indeed, if practice counted for anything, he ought to have ranked as one of the crack shots of the world. No animal, small or large, was safe from his depredations. In the days when sniping was in its infancy he used to conceal himself in trees, and snipe everything in sight, his invisible person being execrated by owners of animals falling a victim to his lust. Otto's father often patted him on the back, and said, 'Mein sohn, you'll make a good officer for the Kaiser's army.' Unfortunately, when the time was ripe for him to enter that august service, Otto Verbrecher's father lost a lot of his money. That would not have mattered so much were it not for the fact that when the young aspirant's pedigree came to be investigated, the Wilhelmstrasse people discovered, much to their horror, that Otto's grandfather had started life as a barber. He was, therefore, rejected with contumely. Ever since that lamentable episode the *kommandant*, unlike most of his brethren, had worn his hair long, and had not shaved. All was not lost, however. The German Admiralty had no hair-splitting ideas on the subject of ancestry, and gladly received him into their fold. Verbrecher rose rapidly in the service, and sank the *Falaba* in command of his own submarine, for which he was decorated with the Order of Merit, first class. After returning from that honourable exploit, he married Fräulein Finckelstein, and bought a house in the suburbs of Wilhelmshaven. His bank received more prize remittances than

ever, and his expectations greatly increased when his Admiralty transferred him to the Mediterranean. They gave him a big U-boat, and made his ostensible base at Pola, on the Adriatic, whither his Frau removed her domicile. When the Italian liner *Yolande* was recognised as his fiftieth prize, the *kommandant* returned to Pola for a long refit. On that memorable occasion officers and crew were given six weeks' leave, at which the worthy Herr Kommandant rejoiced, for his fruitful Frau had presented him with triplets, of whom, of course, he was immoderately proud.

III.

Just about the time garrulous traffickers had made Haw-Haw Bay a byword in the Mediterranean, Herr Kommandant Verbrecher was once more on the move. Long leave had so whetted the appetite of officers and crew that they prayed for a victim as earnestly as they sang '*Die Wacht am Rhein.*' Their suave spokesman, an *oberleutnant*, endeavoured to speed up the *kommandant* in this respect. The wily Verbrecher, however, was not taking any chances. He only came to the surface by night, when he made all possible speed on his gas-engine. Once or twice he spotted ships through his periscope, but the circumstances were not favourable, and he preferred to hold his torpedoes in readiness for the big bag he expected to make off Cape Mitylene.

When the *kommandant* finally fetched up somewhat under six thousand yards from his favourite *point d'appui*, he was still submerged twenty feet, so he gave orders to the man standing by the lifting-gear to raise the periscope. Grasping the handles on each side of the lower end, and looking through the eye-piece in much the same way as if it were a telescope, Verbrecher had a good look round. '*Gott im himmel,*' he cried out excitedly, as he finally made out two steamers practically dead ahead of him, 'here's a feast fit for the gods!' He proceeded to take a bearing, but became impatient. 'I must have a better look at them on top.—Diving-stations!' the *kommandant* shrieked. There was a general scramble for these. In rising, the crew operate much the same mechanical devices as for diving, only the opposite way. 'Blow tanks!' Verbrecher hissed. An immensity of bubbles agitated the sea as hundreds of gallons of water were forced out of the external tanks by compressed air. At the same time the square-faced coxswain gave his hydroplanes a 'rise' helm, and the U-boat shot to the surface. The *kommandant* then opened the lid of the conning-tower, and clambered out on to the bridge. The coxswain followed him. One of the ships was stranded, and seemingly abandoned, so the *kommandant* decided she could wait. He then turned his attention to the other one. She was a defenceless tramp. When he first looked at her through his periscope she was apparently standing still, but now she had turned round, and was steaming in a westerly direction. The distance was a bit far for a torpedo. Verbrecher must cut her off on the surface. 'Put clutch in,' and 'Go ahead at full speed on Diesel,' the *kommandant* roared, giving the necessary bearing to his coxswain.

IV.

Next to the tanks, the *Tabasco* was perhaps the most brilliant offspring of the Board of Inventions. Her keel had only been laid down a short time by the Yellow Funnel Line when the Admiralty took her over and made certain constructional changes in her design. In the end she was perhaps the most astonishing ship that has ever sailed the high seas. Things were not what they seemed in the *Tabasco*. She violated all the conventions of shipbuilding. Take the hawse-pipes, for example, those nostril-like holes, hoary with tradition, through which the cable urges its rattling course to and from the bottom. It is true that, for the sake of appearances, these were nicely reproduced in their natural colours. The Yellow Funnel liner, however, made fast fore and aft according to an altogether different system. Her anchors were held in specially devised gaps in the ship's bottom. When cables, working in concealed chutes, released them, the *Tabasco* was able to ride at anchor in the most uncanny fashion.

Behind neat white upper work, rapid-firing, high-velocity four-inch guns were mounted in every available part of the ship. Seamen-gunners, pulling certain levers toward them in the chart-house, caused these blind shields to slide back. Lookouts, hidden in ventilating-cowls, estimated the range, and informed the gunnery-lieutenant accordingly by telephone. That officer was in a position to judge of the correctness of these findings from his station by means of a modified periscope arrangement.

Search-lights had, of course, been installed in certain cowls, but these were not switched on during the Cape Mitylene expedition. The 'sleeping beauty' nature of their plans required them to conserve every ampère of electrical current. The source of this was powerful storage batteries, supplying the ship's mechanism with 'juice,' lighting her, and enabling the cooking to be done in electric ovens, so that her funnel did not emit even the tiniest curl of smoke by day or the faintest spark at night. By the same token, dead-lights prevented the smallest chink of life from showing through the portholes.

V.

As a matter of fact, Commander St John Mivart, R.N.R., of H.M.S. *Tabasco*, knew all there was to be known about Cape Mitylene reef, and the particular cleft in it which would receive the Yellow Funnel liner's nose. Then he let go the anchors which operated in such a

peculiar manner. That was the easiest part of it. The hardest was restraining the natural impulses of his crew. Man is at best a careless creature, and Mivart had great difficulty in making them toe the mark in regard to every detail of their present adventure. Not that there was nothing to be said on their behalf. The world may look bright enough through cowls and gun-sights, but when off duty the men wanted to lounge on deck, or at least to feel that they were free to mingle with the atmosphere without encountering a steel bulkhead at every turn. They came to Mivart, begging him to relax the severity of the discipline under which they suffered.

'What 's your trouble?' the commander asked.

'We can't give it a name, sir,' a stoker called Bridewell said, speaking for the community, 'but it 's a queer sort of feeling, and awfully oppressive, that 's been coming over us lately. We believe it 's the result of staying under cover so much. At any rate, the thing 's getting on our nerves fast, so we thought you 'd let us sleep on deck, or at least come out into the open when darkness falls.'

Mivart was sympathetic, but firm. 'I can quite appreciate your point of view,' he said gently, 'but you knew what you were up against when you signed on for this special service. Giving in to you means creating weak spots in our armour. One cigarette-spark on deck might give the whole show away. As for shadows and silhouettes, you know how this limpid air exaggerates them. The slightest exposure of our persons may advertise the decoy nature of the *Tabasco* from here to Kiel. For goodness' sake, then, exercise more mental control, and try to realise that every ripple on the surface of the sea may have eyes!'

What made matters worse was that a lull occurred in the submarine campaign about the time Mivart elected to play the part of shipwrecked liner. The spirits of the crew continued to droop, and their only object in life seemed to be to afford sea-scoffers an opportunity of exercising their ill-timed wit. At least Mivart thought it was when one tramp steamer had the effrontery to lower a pulling-boat, and come so close that the *Tabasco* people could actually hear the seamen's odious remarks. It was touch-and-go for a while as to whether Mivart could restrain his exasperated men from firing on them, and the commander was wondering what he should do if they attempted to clamber on board, when a signal from the tramp caused the pulling-boat to return in haste. Soon dense clouds of smoke, pouring out of her funnel, showed her men to be stoking hard in their endeavour to get away from the neighbourhood of Haw-Haw Bay. It was only after the tramp steamer got off the *Tabasco's* beam that Mivart saw the cause of their anxiety. By means of a powerful glass, the commander was barely able to make out a submarine breaking water in the far distance. Unfortunately she offered an extremely small target, as yet well beyond the range of his guns.

VI.

So far as the tramp was concerned, the result was a foregone conclusion. She made a gallant attempt to escape, but what use is eight knots compared to a super-submarine's fifteen? As soon as Herr Kommandant Verbrecher got within range, he began shelling the unfortunate vessel. He had decided not to waste a torpedo on such an insignificant ship; and, after all, the *kommandant* preferred gunnery to messing about with torpedo-tubes. The old instincts rose stronger within him than the claims of his later training. Watching the effect of the firing through his binoculars, he encouraged the gun's crews by grunts of approval whenever a good hit was made. When the skipper was blown off the bridge, it so bucked Verbrecher that he helped with the shells himself, and even insisted on firing one of the guns. The tramp commenced to settle, and the survivors took to their boats. Their immunity from fire was short-lived, however, for the *kommandant* had determined to remove all traces of his crime. If he were at the end instead of the beginning of his cruise, it might have been different, but Herr Verbrecher considered he could not run the risk of leaving survivors behind to tell the tale. Such ill-advised humanitarianism would interfere with his plans for the next few days. Besides, the *kommandant* considered he owed it to the Fatherland to extirpate Englishmen whenever opportunity offered. While so engaged in shedding blood a reverent feeling would come over him, and he came to look upon his victims in the light of so many sacrificial offerings to the All-Highest. As to the form which such immolations ought to take, the *kommandant's* practical turn of mind deemed such trifling details unworthy of a moment's thought.

The sinking ship screened the boats to some extent, so Verbrecher manœuvred for a better position. After ten minutes of accurate firing he had accomplished his object. The despised tramp would henceforth form new caverns for deep-sea fish to explore and lurk in. No more would her light-hearted officers and crew irritate countrymen of theirs, on whom was to fall the obligation of avenging them.

When all was over, Herr Verbrecher turned his boat round, and headed her in the direction of the *Tabasco*.

'Swine of Englishmen,' the *kommandant* soliloquised as soon as he had come sufficiently near to study the stranded ship—'how they must fear us! Sheer fright makes them run their steamers on the rocks. *Ach!*' he exulted, with a sneering gesture toward the Yellow Funnel liner, 'they 're fast losing their cunning for the sea. *Deutschland über alles.*'

The *kommandant* regarded with pleasure the first-rate target the *Tabasco* would make for his deck-guns, and he rubbed his hands with satisfaction when he considered how easily they would earn more prize-money that fine afternoon.

'It 's a shame to take the money, as those dogs of Yankees would say,' he muttered gleefully. Still gloating over the prospect, he was about to order his crew to man their guns and open fire, when vicissitudinous war intervened. A high-explosive shell struck him. The *kommandant's* head flew off into a thousand bits, leaving his gory body to spurt blood on everybody and everything near it.

VII.

The pent-up feelings of rage and anguish which were experienced on board H.M.S. *Tabasco* during this period can readily be imagined. When the little tramp was receiving her death-thrust, and her crew were being murdered, gunner after gunner pleaded with Mivart to let them have a shot at the U-boat. Perhaps the commander erred on the safe side. He had not had much experience with the latest four-inch with which the *Tabasco* was equipped. At any rate, Mivart declared he would not fire till he was able to pot the submarine at four thousand yards. 'A submarine like that,' he said, 'isn't sunk so easily as some people think, and unless we plug her with the first salvo, she may submerge in time to give us the slip, and then we 'll have to pack up. I 'm confident she 'll come closer if you 'll only have patience,' Mivart assured them.

'Four thousand seven hundred, four thousand five hundred,' Gunner Potter heard through the voice-pipe. He could stand it no longer, so he let bang at the U-boat on his own.

'*Kommandant's* head gone; still four thousand five hundred,' the range-finder called out mechanically.

'Fire!' thundered Mivart, and salvo after salvo straddled the under-water boat until all that remained was a perturbed indigo-blue sea tinged with oily-looking carmine.

VIII.

Somehow or other, the rocks off Cape Mitylene seemed to be as fatal to U-boats as Scylla and Charybdis were to the ancient mariners. One after another left Pola, promising the tearful Frau Verbrecher (*née* Finckelstein) they would do what they could to find her missing lord and master; but they themselves never returned. One day the Frau was down at the naval pier with her two babies (alas! one of the triplets had died of cholera) in a pram, when a submarine came in with a queer story. They had picked up a wireless message from one of their brethren, telling of a Yellow Funnel liner that lured unsuspecting U-boats to their destruction, and that, in fact, the unfortunate sender of this distressful signal was himself being sunk.

Then it was that Frau Verbrecher, who had become a wealthy woman, owing to the late *kommandant's* successful ventures, offered two thousand pounds to any submarine which would do away with the perfidious liner.

One actually did take on the job, but in the meantime Mivart had weighed his funny anchors and departed from Cape Mitylene in the same way as he had come, like a thief in the night.

Neither is Frau Verbrecher likely to pay this amount in the future.

In the first place, an Austrian colonel, who owns a heavily mortgaged *schloss*, and recently returned from Russia minus his right leg, has already occupied the first-line trenches of her affections, so to speak, and is preparing for a rapid advance on the hymeneal altar. That is, of course, as soon as he has been fitted with an artificial limb.

In the next place, the *Tabasco* is a turbine-driven ship, has a speed of thirty knots with oil-fuel, and is quite capable of defending herself.

Incidentally, the Yellow Funnel liner changes colour as often as a chameleon.

THE WAYSIDE SHRINE.

AN INCIDENT IN FLANDERS, 1917.

ONE sunny day,
Far from the battle's roar, some children strayed
In the deep meadow grass, and laughed and played,
As little children may.

But suddenly
A blue-eyed maiden saw a wayside shrine,
The Cross, the form of Him, and with a sign
She murmured plaintively,

'Our Father,' while
The tiny hands pressed tightly to her breast,
As if to still the heart in its unrest;
Then, with a wistful smile,

'Forgive us—our
Trespasses'—the tears fell fast—'as we'—
The little breast heaved like the summer sea—
'As we'—in vain the power

To speak again.
Just then a noble form knelt at the shrine,
A tender voice spoke low, 'Father divine,
Our loss shall be our gain.

'Forgive them, Lord,
That trespass against us;' and the little child
Knelt by the King, who took her hand and smiled.
God's sunlight on them poured.

HARRIET KENDALL.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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SEVENTH SERIES

UNDECIMUS UNTHANK: HEIR OF ENTAIL.

By Sir GEORGE DOUGLAS, Bart.

CHAPTER I.

IT was late October. Throughout the day rain had fallen at intervals. The ground before the house was thickly strewn with sodden ash-leaves, and, as the afternoon drew on, the air seemed truly to merit the epithet of filthy bestowed on it by one of Shakespeare's witches. In the not uncongenial gloom of his solitary gunroom, old Mr Unthank woke up from a doze. He had been dreaming of his nephew, Undecimus, and was not sorry to be awake. His fire had burned very low indeed, and his movements were characteristic, as, kneeling before it, he picked the fallen fragments of wood and coal out of the ash-pan with a small pair of tongs, and restored them to their proper place. Those movements indicated thrift, methodical habits, and a certain degree of self-dependence. For the old man-servant, Maskelyn, was within call.

The gunroom was on the ground-floor, the blinds were undrawn, and whilst old Unthank knelt at his task, a dark shadow appeared at the window on the outside. Though the gloom was deepening sensibly, the faint flicker of the fire-light sufficed to make the interior dimly visible from without. The shadowy form pressed closer, until a face of almost livid pallor disengaged itself against the window-pane. And on that face there was gradually developed a mischievous and cruel smile. Meantime, wholly unsuspicious that he was being watched, the old gentleman wrought on, finding satisfaction in the thoroughness of work which should leave scarce a pennyweight of good fuel unconsumed. The fire had begun to revive, and he greeted its returning energy with a feeble trill of song:

> 'A wee bird cam' to our ha' door,
> He warbled sweet an' clearly.'

His own warbling was scarcely sweet or clear, yet it bore traces of having been studied in some olden school, and was painstaking rather than spontaneous. A soft, swift tapping on the window-glass checked it. The old man started, and, having looked nervously round, trotted over to the window and looked out. The outer darkness had deepened; face and shadow alike had vanished; he saw nothing.

Frugal in his habits, it was Decimus Unthank's way to make the utmost of the daylight. But he felt glad to-night that the time for lighting up had come. It would help to relieve a certain depression under which he was labouring. For he had been troubled lately by noises for which he was at a loss to account—whispering voices, taps upon the door, even strains of far-away music. He had begun to more than suspect that these sounds had their beginning and end in his own ear. But that was scarcely a reassuring solution of the mystery. For, if it served to dispose of certain shadowy apprehensions, it did so at the cost of a conviction that his own physical organs were ceasing to serve him faithfully. And that was melancholy evidence of the advance of age and the approach of dissolution. Sighing, he struck a light and set it to the unprotected gas-jet.

A crude illumination filled the room, revealing its characteristics. It was an ordinary room enough, in an ordinary house—a man's room, fitted with gun-cupboards and racks for fishing-rods, adorned with a case or two of birds, a somewhat mangy stuffed fox, and a few of Alken's coloured sporting-prints. There was no trace of female occupation; whilst of one thing it would have been safe to take an oath—that nothing in the room had been renewed for at least two generations.

And yet, upon closer consideration, it disclosed a unique feature which sufficed to give it startling singularity. It was this. Ranged on the mantelshelf, upon the tops of presses, wherever they could find foothold, were a number of carvings representing animals, for the most part of the reptile class. Swarming, luxuriating, as they did, they might have served to remind a beholder of the fantastic detail of Late Gothic architectural work, or of a canvas of Filippo Lippi's. Endow them with motion and you would realise the accessories of a Dutch artist's vision of the Temptation of St Anthony. Yet, questionable in their suggestiveness as these carvings were, they were in reality innocent enough, for they represented nothing more than the accumulated result of a hobby or recreation of the landlord's—his only one. In the course

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of his daily walks abroad, old Decimus was accustomed to keep a lookout for growing sticks, or knots of fallen wood, which might serve the purposes of his art. It might be that one or the other struck him as suggesting the form of a squatting toad, or the sinuosity of a lizard or a snake. If this were so, the old gentleman had no scruple about possessing himself of the billet, and, having brought it home, he would set to work with his pocket-knife to develop the suggestion inherent in it; to liberate, so to speak, the reptile imprisoned in the block—in which art he took a great delight and had acquired considerable skill. Neighbours who had seen his handiwork would sometimes send him material to work on, though it was by no means certain that he would approve of it; and, as his industry was unremitting, it was scarcely an exaggeration to say that the house fairly swarmed and crawled with his creations: newts, mice, tortoises, natterjacks, and nondescripts.

The sole items on which his expenditure had ever reached extravagance were varnish and glass eyes. There was a cylindrical block of wood beside him now, upon which he had been at work with his clasp-knife until twilight and sleep had overtaken him. After lighting the gas, he picked it up again, set his spectacles astride his nose, and was soon absorbed in the shaping of a coiled snake with lifted head. Imperfect as his work was, it was not wholly lacking in the spirit and suggestiveness which give value to art, and it was easy to see that, whilst he laboured at it—now holding it from him at arm's length, and considering it with head slightly tilted—he enjoyed not a little of that peace, content, and enfranchisement from worldly care which are the artist's compensation and reward. He had reached the most interesting part of his task, having modelled the flat, withdrawn, and lifted head, and hollowed out the eye-sockets, and was now engaged upon the open jaws, with their subtly suggested teeth and flexile tongue, when a slight cough made itself heard close beside him.

'Ahem!'

Faust, on first becoming aware of the presence of Mefisto, was not more taken by surprise than he was, and the painfully violent start with which he let his work fall argued badly for the soundness of his nerves. But, truth to tell, the figure which confronted him was scarcely reassuring. It was, in fact, that which had lately been watching him from the window, and, being seen closer, now resolved itself into that of a young man of seedy and dissipated appearance.

'I appear to have startled you, uncle!' remarked the intruder harshly, laughing over what to him was a joke.

It was no joke to his uncle. 'Of course you startled me,' answered the latter snappishly, his high-pitched voice unsteady with emotion; 'of course you startled me, Undecimus, and it was very wicked of you. I am painfully nervous.'

'I see you are, uncle, and I wonder at it. I had always understood that the righteous man could put his hand unharmed into the adder's nest. And surely you are a righteous man, are you not? Besides, I didn't think I needed to stand on ceremony with you—the only relative I have, as you've often reminded me.'

If this speech was intended to be conciliatory, it failed of its purpose, for the older man remained unmollified. Dislike of an heir because he is the heir is common enough in life; but this initial dislike, in the case of old Decimus, had been fortified by many things.

'That has nothing whatever to do with it,' he retorted sulkily. 'Maskelyn is there, as you know, to answer the door.'

'Ay; but Maskelyn is gone in the legs, worse than you are yourself. It's pitiful to see the old fellow drag his feet. Incipient locomotor ataxy, as I learnt when walking the hospitals; though one would scarcely have thought of him as a gay dog at any time. You will soon be requiring a new factotum, uncle.'

Beneath the dislike looking out from the elder Unthank's eyes, there was present a certain reluctant respect for his nephew's attainments. It might not be pleasant to have symptoms analogous to his own diagnosed in his presence in this way, yet Undecimus's observations had a gruesome fascination for him too. He longed to take Undecimus into his confidence, to describe certain sensations which for some time past had troubled him, and to demand an authoritative (and gratis) opinion on their import. Two considerations, however, withheld him. The first was the fear that he would not be told the only thing he wished to hear: that they meant nothing. The second was the conviction that his revelation would give Undecimus pleasure, all the more so if the symptoms proved serious. For, between these two relations, there was no love lost on either side.

The Unthanks, uncle and nephew, were the sole surviving representatives of a family who had received the charter for their lands from Henry the Eighth, after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Poor to start with, as its name betokens, the estate had been mortgaged by successive holders until its reduced revenue no longer sufficed to maintain it properly. But, though not scrupling to burden it, the Unthanks clung to their patrimony with a perverse and stupid tenacity which had eventually embodied itself in a deed of entail. It is highly unlikely that Decimus Unthank would have entertained, under any circumstances, the idea of parting with the acres upon which the whole of his life had been spent. And be it said in passing that that life was not yet of exorbitant length, for, though he looked older, he was still in the sixties of his age. But, however much he might have wished

to alienate Unthank, it was not in his power to do so lawfully without the consent of the heir of entail. That heir was his nephew, Undecimus, so christened because representing the eleventh generation of the Unthanks of that Ilk. Now, had he ever pressed his nephew to consent to the breaking of the entail, that consent might no doubt have been obtained *for a consideration*. And that consideration would have to be a handsome one, for the property would be worth more to Undecimus than to his uncle, being freer from restrictions. But, if any pressure of the sort had ever been exerted, it had most likely come from the opposite quarter. For, whilst Decimus, with the economy that came easy to him, had enough to serve his turn, Undecimus stood in chronic need of cash. This, indeed, was the rock upon which the amicable relations of uncle and nephew had split and come to grief. At intervals, for years past, Undecimus had been dunning his relative, striving to raise a loan, or, failing that, to borrow what he could. And, for years past, Decimus had been protesting against being squeezed. For, truth to tell, the old fellow was a better hand at protecting himself than his superficial mildness of manner might have led people to suppose. The circumstances of his life had fostered penuriousness in him. From always having had to be careful, he had become more sparing than was needful. And now no generous shame any longer restrained him, when asked for a loan of a few pounds, from tendering a few shillings. Nor, on the other hand, was there generous pride about Undecimus to hinder his taking anything he could get, no matter how small the sum. Mutual dissatisfaction was the inevitable result, the old man hating to be pestered with requests, the young one to be humiliated by refusals—mutual dissatisfaction, exasperated by taunts, by heated scenes and bitter subsequent reflections. For one form of dissension generated others. So that, instead of being each the solace and support of the other, as might have been, each of these two last survivors of their race was the thorn in the other's flesh.

As a matter of fact, the race of Unthank had had its day; what of physical stamina or moral worth it had possessed was ere this effete. Only, as sometimes happens, reproductive energy had survived. Uncle and nephew, Decimus and Undecimus, represented successive stages in the decadence of a family. But these stages were absolutely distinct, which, of course, accentuated the lack of harmony between them. For Uncle Decimus had led upon the whole a blameless life, or, at least, such a life as the average standard pronounces blameless. That is, his faults were purely negative. He owed no man anything. He had removed no neighbour's landmark, abducted no neighbour's wife. Indeed, he had never felt the slightest temptation to commit any one of these sins. His sole self-indulgence was indolence; just as fear was, *au fond*, the ruling impulse of his life—the fear of giving offence, and of its disagreeable consequences; the fear of illness and of death; but, scarcely less, the fear of life in all that truly constitutes it—to wit, experience, effort, enjoyment, suffering. In a word, Uncle Decimus was null. And the circumstances of his long, sequestered, and unmeaning life had fostered his nullity. His one talent, his one activity, led to nothing, or, at most, to the providing of a grotesque ornament for some humble neighbour's chimneypiece. For many of the cottages round about had specimens of his art—such specimens being the only things with which he was liberal. And, indeed, he would often have to press them upon indifferent recipients, by whom they would be accepted mainly to humour him, and quizzed as soon as his back was turned. By virtue of his consummate nullity, Uncle Decimus was considered harmless. Maybe that, beyond the mere fear of offending, and desire of conciliating, there was in him something of positive amiability. In any case, in the small circle in which he moved, he was popular rather than otherwise. A weakly pathetic figure. Yet even such may retain the power to sting.

Very different and immeasurably more formidable was Undecimus, in whom the negative traits of the uncle were supplanted by a principle of evil. Within the limitations of an impoverished individuality, he represented that redoubtable type, the human beast of prey. To him the habitable world had been first his oyster, then his enemy. The problem being to get from it what he could, its niggardliness and resistance of his efforts had roused fierce animosity in him. It had not taken him at his own valuation, had refused him the means of living as he felt he had a right to live. For, just as there was more of native force in nephew than in uncle, so he made larger demands upon life. Compelled to earn his own livelihood, he had experimented with various professions. And, whereas to Uncle Decimus all systematic labour was mere weariness, the interest of his successive studies had not been lost upon the nephew. Indeed, but for his singular faculty of extracting what was bad from every form of activity, he might possibly have done fairly well in some reputable calling. But, so long as he was studying medicine, it had been the materialistic emancipation from moral codes, and the resultant dare-devil recklessness of the worst of his fellow-students, that he had assimilated. Then a brief apprenticeship to journalism had sufficed him for the negation of truth; so that he had come to flaunt the precept, 'It is not fact, but what is put in print, that really matters.' His last adventure—he was not yet five-and-twenty—had been as one of a company of strolling actors, from whom he had picked up all that there remained for him to learn of dissipated habits

and of low Bohemianism. But, though he was by no means destitute of dramatic ingenuity, his degenerate tendencies had proved too much for his associates, easy-going as they were; so that, after twice appearing drunk upon the stage, he had been summarily cashiered. He was now, therefore, as he put it, 'out of a job,' and hence the object of his visit to his uncle might easily be guessed. By cajolery, misrepresentation, or playing on the old man's fears, he wished to raise a loan of a few pounds, of which, in truth, he stood in cruel need. But the source he hoped to draw from had been too often tapped. Besides, he was in the unhappy case of having told so many lies that he was pretty sure to be disbelieved even when he told the truth. So the task ahead of him was hedged with difficulties. But there is this to be said for Mercury, or whoever is the god of borrowers, that he certainly does inspire his elect with indomitable perseverance.

The dialogue of uncle and nephew did not open very auspiciously. Finding that he was not asked to sit, Undecimus dispensed with invitation, and jauntily seated himself *à cheval* on an unupholstered chair. The vulgarity of the attitude served to accentuate what was unpleasing in his appearance, leading his uncle tacitly to marvel over the total elimination of all gentlemanly refinement from the person of the seedy rake confronting him. Yet any unprejudiced bystander must have acknowledged that, due allowance being made for difference of age and character, the two Unthanks were remarkably alike. Old Decimus was bent, bald-browed, and grizzled; whilst the nephew wore his black hair long, in artist fashion, and was fairly well set up. But the fleeing brow, the high cheek-bones, and the emaciated figure were common to both alike. And, as his roving eye fell for a moment on a mirror which reflected them, this impression came home to Undecimus not for the first time in his life.

'You're very darkly dressed, Undecimus,' remarked the uncle, breaking silence. 'Are you in mourning?'

To which the young man answered grimly, 'No, I'm not in mourning at present, uncle; but I may be before long. And, as a suit of clothes has to last me a long time, it is best to be provided.' And he looked fixedly at the old man, who fidgeted uneasily.

But he pulled himself together to retort, with assumed stoutness of heart, 'I've no present intention of dying, if that's what ye mean!' And, disregarding the other's hypocritically deprecating gesture, he added, slightly flushing as he spoke, 'Nor is the sign that my days are accomplished yet apparent.'

From his straddle seat, Undecimus looked at him with a doubtful air, seeming to ask for explanation.

'You must ha' heard, Undecimus,' he continued, 'that we Unthanks see ourselves before we die. It has been so for generations. My old father saw himself, I know; though there were some who swore he had seen nothing but his own reflection in a glass that had been misplaced. At any rate, from that time he drooped, and it wasn't long before he died.' He paused before resuming meditatively: 'Sometimes I believe that when my own time comes I shall see myself; and at other times I ridicule the notion. But of this at least I feel sure, that, if it does happen to me to see myself, I shall not long survive it.'

So he maundered on, his nephew listening not without interest. From infancy Undecimus had known the old family superstition, and its fantastic character had appealed to him. As materialist, however, and son of the latter half of the nineteenth century, he knew that, except as imaginative pabulum, such things had no significance whatever, and, just now, what he was mainly interested in was the pathological aspect of his uncle's case—the senile mind, in which facts had become so shadowy, and dreams so real, that it was often hard to differentiate between them. In other circumstances he might have found cruel pleasure in playing on the old man's crazy fancies. But, for the purpose now in view, his obvious cue was to ingratiate himself. So he assumed a genial air and slapped his knee and cried, 'Tell you what it is, uncle; you're growing morbid! You've lived too long alone with those ugly beasts of yours—clever, of course, but undeniably ugly. Ugh! As I said last time I visited you, it's enough to make any chap who's been on the burst a bit feel that the blue devils have got hold of him. . . . Look at that toad! It might be the very one Milton had in mind when he made the Old Un take that shape. Let me clap him on the fire—he'll blaze.'

He was suiting the action to the word, when the other shriekingly interposed. 'On no account, Undecimus! Put him back where he was at once. When the house is yours, you can do what you like here; not before. I like to see my wooden beasties about me; it helps to keep me cheery.'

So the nephew saw that, like an impulsive chess-player, he had been betrayed into a false move. He replaced the image on the mantelpiece, whence its life-like eyes continued to regard him; and, starting at a disadvantage for which he had himself alone to blame, he broached the subject nearest to his heart: the borrowing of money.

(Continued on page 585.)

AGRICULTURE AS A FINE ART.

By F. E. GREEN, Author of *The Surrey Hills*, *The Awakening of England*, *The Tyranny of the Countryside*, &c.

THE more one works on the land the more one realises the absence of any kind of unskilled labour connected with agriculture. By labouring one gradually becomes conscious that the much-despised Hodge, whom it has taken a world-wide war to appraise rightly, is instinctively an artist.

It is only those who have laboured much in the fields that can savour the technique of those toil-smitten hands which direct their skill towards some well-foreseen end. As it is only the painter who can thoroughly understand the technical skill of another painter, so it is only those who have by practice in the fields acquired knowledge of rural technique that can fully appreciate the skill of the farm-labourer.

Agriculture is the oldest of the crafts; but since factory chimneys have flourished at its expense, it has been the least honoured and the worst paid. To-day, however, we know it to be the most vital of all our industries; and did not a member of the House of Commons recently startle that assembly with the truth steeped in irony that it was more difficult to replace a skilled carter than to replace a Cabinet Minister?

At all seasons of the year the artistry of the labourer is visible to those who have eyes to see, hands to feel, and brains to know. Hodge may be no more conscious that he is an artist than a country bootmaker of my acquaintance, who, though he cannot draw the simplest design on paper, can, with a knife in his hand, aided by his eye only, cut from a goat's skin a most exquisitely shaped shoe.

There is technique displayed even in the simplest of agricultural work. You can see it in the green-ribbed meadows when harrowed and rolled with unerring uniformity in dark and silver-green bands visible at the season of the year when the blackthorn flings its bridal wreath across the hedge to May. It is discernible even through a cloud of dust to the practised eye when the harrow follows the sower and no oases of exposed seed are left to tempt the birds of the air to descend in flocks and give thanks to some prentice hand that cannot draw a straight line with a team of horses.

Even in the simple act of spraying the plum and apple orchard, technique is necessary, in spite of the many distractions at this glorious blossoming time of the year to seduce the mind of the worker. There is the first haunting call of the cuckoo, revealing to the heart the eternal youth of the world; and the ironic chuckle of the green woodpecker echoing from the woods with its 'catch me if you can' note of allure. Canopied by azure glimpsed between a shower of snowy petals decked with virginal green, it is difficult for the sprayer to note if the liquid shower has fallen upon every bloom. Amid the pink-and-white blossom of the apple, into which the bees are delving for the most delectable honey in the world, one is loath to inject poisonous liquids; yet, despite these allurements, more captivating to one's vagrant fancy than any that a wilderness of bricks and mortar can offer, aphis has to be subdued by means of the chemist working in conjunction with the agricultural craftsman.

The pruner of trees has perhaps been acknowledged as an artist and crowned with the laurels of a 'landscape gardener.' He may not be able to draw anything more complicated on paper than a +, yet he will envisage in a moment the inevitable result of the swift cut to be made with his knife. Before he cuts above this fruit-bud, or below that wood-bud (do you know the difference, learned reader?), he has to think of the advent of next spring, when the buds will begin to break and the leaves unfold like butterflies poised for flight. He will conjure up a picture of how the pink-and-white blossoms will blend with the green leaves, and how clusters of red and gold fruit must hang upon the boughs. His Saynor knife will decide whether the exquisite tracery of branches shall spread into a fan, shape into a cup, or taper into a pyramid.

But any one, it may be said, can pick the fruit from the fruit-spurs created by the technique of the pruner. Yes, any one can; and it may be pleasant to witness the daughters of Eve decked in coloured overalls picking the glistening, rosy-cheeked apple; but the fruit-grower will not bless those who hastily grip the pendent fruit with the finger and thumb instead of with the palm, or bruise them in the basket, or break off the fruit-buds of next year's harvest.

Spreading farmyard manure, digging an allotment, or hoeing turnips for Farmer Giles may appear to the novice to be unskilled labour. But there is skill and artistry displayed even in filling a tumbril and dumping down the manure so that the field looks like a chess-board covered with black pawns, so regularly placed are the little pyramids of manure. The unskilled æsthete would not know this effect was produced by spacing out each little heap of manure six yards apart; nor would he know by the texture of the dung if it be long or short, or how to distribute it so that it does not lie in wasteful lumps. The imaginative field-dresser will know by the amount of manure he distributes exactly how the full-grown grass will ripple with wavelets when caressed by the south-west wind in June, or if the crop will be so

meagre that it will scarcely conceal a hare. He will visualise the billowy depth of the windrows where hay lies in the making; will hear the musical rubbing of the wooden axles of the wagon as it moves like a windjammer over the swell of the hay-field. He will see it shaped fore and aft like an old-fashioned three-decker, loaded with such skill that none of the cargo will have to be jettisoned before it arrives at its fragrant wharf.

But it is in judging the actual time for mowing, by noting the dust of the pollen and seed of the bents on his leggings, and the colour of the bronzing clover, that he will show his greatest knowledge of his craft as a haymaker; and when it comes to building the stack, then it is that he displays his supreme gift as a rural architect.

With conscious pride he will cast his eye over the meadow, mentally envisaging the probable weight of hay before he marks out his foundation or steading without having passed the ordeal of the mathematical tripos. And as the hay is unloaded from the wagon, he, with the cunning of his eye and hand, will build his fragrant edifice so that it stands flawlessly symmetrical. As designer and executant, and as one who works without the aid of pencil or paper, he should as a craftsman satisfy the most fastidious of guilds of craftsmen. Finally, as the thatcher, when he crowns his edifice with a roof of golden straw, he will, if he takes pride in his work and is not hurried by his employer, fashion a cock out of wisps of twisted straw, and place it on the apex of the roof as an outward and visible sign of the joy he took in his work.

But it is not every wielder of a thatching-jack who can thatch a rick, any more than it is every wielder of a fiddle-bow who can play the violin. On his declaring he could thatch a rick, I once engaged a thirsty 'gentleman of the road' to perform that job; and when I complained that his thatching was thin and rough, he assured me that if he flung a bucket of water on to the roof, it would run off the eaves with the precipitancy of a mountain cascade. He threw the water on to the thatch, but the rough, loose straw absorbed it like a sponge, and not a trickle was visible! He had much to say then about the heat of the sun and the extraordinary absorbent qualities of straw.

Perhaps it will be granted that the rick-builder and thatcher is a master-craftsman, that he must possess a sense of proportion and symmetry, and be deft with the adze in splitting thatching-rods; but surely *any one* can turn hay in the meadow? Yes, any one can turn hay, but I have noticed that few townsmen can turn it correctly. Skill is particularly required in turning hay which still lies green in the wake of the machine. Instead of turning the 'hacks' completely with a slight jerk, gripping the bloom with the teeth of the rake, and making the rows fall on fresh, sun-warmed ground, new-mown hay is often spoilt by being only half-turned, with the result that strata are left to ferment into must in the stack.

The swinger of the scythe nowadays is indubitably a rare workman. But he is more than that; he is an artist. In the peculiar bend of the sneath or handle, and in the curve of the reaping blade, one can see that it is the user-artist, whose brain and muscle have been working together in perfect harmony, that has shaped this implement to draw as easily through the luscious dew-sprent grass as the fiddle-bow has been fashioned to draw music from the strings of the violin. Think, too, of the delicate touch of this craftsman of the fields as he sharpens the blade and lightly rubs it with that finishing silky touch on the ringing curve of steel!

Many have thought it easy enough to dig an allotment until they tried to do it themselves, and then they have learned that it requires a knowledge of technique to dig it in such a manner that the turned-up earth will gain all the possible benefit from the sun, the wind, and the rain. Some have dug their allotment so that it looks like a churchyard with newly made graves, with deep hollows unwarmed by the sun, and filled with water in wet weather. He who digs with the stroke of an artist will turn over his ground so that it resembles a roughly shaded drawing with the lines all pointing in the same direction. It is he who will get most out of the soil, because he will dig straight and deep; whilst the novice, with his spade aslant, will dig shallowly and unevenly.

Ever since 'the man with the hoe' was immortalised by Millet, he has been the symbol of ill-paid, unskilled labour. But hoeing is not unskilled labour. The man who knows how to use his hoe will never leave plants to wilt in the sun—deprive them of root pasturage by drawing away loose soil from these tender nurslings of Mother Earth. A field of roots can be ruined by unskilled labour, or given a new lease of life at the hand of the craftsman of the fields. The pattern can be easily destroyed by those who are devoid of the artistic touch.

The technique of 'laying' a hedge is not learnt in a day. The curve, the weight, and the balance of the billhook, the 'slasher,' and the faghook have been conceived and fashioned by the artist hands that have used them for generations. Think of the firm yet delicate touch that goes to the splitting of a branch so that it does not break in two and lives to break into leaf and fill a gap in the hedge! To be able to lay a 'hive' hedge which will break into blossom and leaf is to be able to thread a pattern, the artistry of which will delight the eye of any live-stock keeper.

It is to the ploughman, perhaps, above all others, that the nation looks as the supreme creative artist who will redeem it from mis-

fortune. The ploughshare drawn by a team of horses guided by the clear eye of the ploughman, clarified by the illimitable spaces which surround him, is to us more than the ram of a destroyer. Guided by hands gnarled and smitten by years of laborious days, he draws a strong line across the seared stubble. It is the impelling vivid line sought for so eagerly by every artist as he stands before his canvas at the inception of his creation. The ploughman marks out his broad line of perspective with that simple implement which has been the agricultural craftsman's chief tool for so many centuries, and with it he draws line after line until the field of mottled green and pale yellow is transformed into rich, shining, red earth or vandyke brown. When he has graven these fructifying lines of furrows, he holds in the hollow of his hand the destiny of nations. With the seed-lip slung over his shoulder, with a measured tread over the kind, crumbly earth, and with a superb sweep of the arm and easeful swing of the body, he distributes his largesse. His steps are the rhythmic march of our progress towards victory. There is precision and beauty in the sweep of his arm and his measured stride as he casts the seed; his eye and brain work with perfect harmony pregnant with life. He stands before us to-day as the figure of Destiny. In his untiring stride and noble sweep of arm lies the hope of Britain.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By JEFFERY FARNOL.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—THE WOES OF MR BRIMBERLY.

MR BRIMBERLY, having dined well, as was his custom, lay at his ease in a luxurious lounge-chair in the shade of the piazza. The day was hot; wherefore on a table at his elbow were a siphon, a bottle, and a long glass in which ice tinkled alluringly; between his plump fingers was a large cigar; and across his plump knees was an open paper, over which he yawned and puffed and sipped in turn. Nevertheless, Mr Brimberly was bored, and, dropping the paper languidly, he cherished a languorous whisker, staring dull-eyed across stately terraces and wide, neat lawns to where, beyond yew-walks and noble trees, the distant river flowed.

Presently, as he sat, he was aware of a small girl in a white pinafore approaching along one of these walks—a small being who hopped along by means of a little crutch, and sang to herself in a soft, happy voice.

Mr Brimberly blinked.

Heedless of the eyes that watched her, the child turned into the rose-garden, pausing now and then to inhale the scent of some great bloom that filled the air with its sweetness.

Mr Brimberly sat up, for he permitted few to enter the rose-garden.

All at once the child, singing still, reached up and broke off a great scarlet bloom.

Mr Brimberly arose. 'Little girl!' he called, in voice round and sonorous—'little girl, come you 'ere, an' come immediate!'

The child started, turned, and after a moment's hesitation hobbled forward, her little face as white as her pinafore. At the foot of the broad steps leading up to the piazza she paused, looking up at him with great, pleading eyes.

Mr Brimberly beckoned with portentous finger. 'Little girl, come 'ere!' he repeated. 'Come up 'ere, an' come immediate!'

The small crutch tapped laboriously up the steps, and she stood before Mr Brimberly's imposing figure—mute, breathless, and trembling a little.

'Little girl,' he demanded, threatening of whisker, ''oo are you, an'—what?'

'Please, I'm Hazel.'

'Oh, indeed!' nodded Mr Brimberly, pulling at his waistcoat. ''Azel 'oo, 'Azel what? An' say "sir" next time, if *you* please.'

'Hazel Bowker, sir;' and she dropped him a little curtsy, spoiled somewhat by agitation and her crutch.

'Bowker—Bowker!' mused Mr Brimberly. 'I've 'eard the name—I don't like the name, but I've 'eard it.'

'My daddy works here, sir,' said Hazel timidly.

'Bowker—Bowker!' repeated Mr Brimberly. 'Ah, to be sure—one of the hunder-gardeners as I put on three or four weeks ago.'

'Yes, please, sir.'

'Little girl, what are you a-doin' in that garden? Why are you wanderin' in the vicinity of this mansion?'

'Please, I'm looking for Hermy.'

''Ermy?' repeated Mr Brimberly. ''Ermy? Wot kind of creater may that be? Is it a dog? Is it a cat? Wot is it?'

'It's only my Princess Nobody, sir!'

'Oh, a friend of yours—ha! Persons of that class do not pervade these regions! And wot do I be'old grasped in your 'and?'

Hazel looked down at the rose she held, and trembled anew.

'Little girl—wot is it?' demanded the inexorable voice.

'A rose, sir.'

'Was it—your rose?'

'N-no, sir.'

'Don't you know as it's a wicked hact to take what ain't yours? Don't you know as it's

thievin' an' robbery, an' that thievin' an' robbery leads to prison-bars an' shackle-chains?'

'Oh, sir, I—I didn't mean'—— The little voice was choked with sobs.

'Well, let this be a warnin' to you to thieve no more, or next time I shall 'ave to become angry. Now—go 'ence!'

Dropping the rose, the child turned and hobbled away as fast as her crutch would allow, and Mr Brimberly, having watched her out of sight, emptied his glass and took up his cigar, but, finding it had gone out, flung it away. Then he sighed, and, sinking back among his cushions, closed his eyes, and was soon snoring blissfully.

But by-and-by Mr Brimberly began to dream, a very evil dream, wherein it seemed that for many desperate deeds and crimes abominable he was chained and shackled in a dock, and the judge, donning the black cap, sentenced him to be shorn of those adornments, his whiskers. In his dream it seemed that there and then the executioner advanced to his fell work; a bony hand grasped his right whisker, the deadly razor flashed, and Mr Brimberly awoke gurgling—awoke to catch a glimpse of a hand so hastily withdrawn that it seemed to vanish into thin air.

''Eavens an' earth!' he gasped, and clapping hand to cheek, was relieved to find his whisker yet intact; but for a long moment he sat clutching that handful of soft and fleecy hair, staring before him in puzzled wonder, for the hand had seemed so very real that he could almost feel it there yet. Presently, bethinking him to glance over his shoulder, Mr Brimberly gasped and goggled, for leaning over the back of his chair was a little old man, very slender, very upright, and very smart as to attire, who fanned himself with a jaunty straw hat banded in vivid crimson; an old man whose bright, youthful eyes looked out from a face wizened with age, while up from his bald crown rose a few wisps of white and straggling hair.

''Oly 'eavens!' murmured Mr Brimberly faintly.

The visitor, settling his bony elbows more comfortably, fanned himself until his sparse locks waved gently to and fro, and, nodding, spoke these words:

'Oh wake thee, oh wake thee, my bonny bird!
Oh wake and sleep no more!
Thy pretty pipe I 'aven't 'eard,
But, lumme, how you snore!'

Mr Brimberly stared; Mr Brimberly's mouth opened; and eventually Mr Brimberly rose and surveyed the intruder slowly up from glittering shoes to the dome of his head and down again; and Mr Brimberly's ample bosom surged, his eyes kindled, and his whiskers!——

'Cheer-o!' nodded the Old Un.

Mr Brimberly blinked and pulled down his waistcoat. 'Me good man,' said he, 'you 'll find the tradesmen's entrance round the corner. Go away, if you please; an' go immediate—I 'm prehoccupied.'

'No you ain't; you 're the butler; you are, I lay my oath—

Spoons an' forks
An' drawin' corks.

That 's your job, ain't it, chum?'

'Chum!' said Mr Brimberly in tones of horror. 'Chum!' he repeated, grasping a handful of indignant whisker. 'Oh, outrageous! Oh, very hobscene! 'Ow dare you, sir? 'Oo are you, sir—eh, sir? Answer me, an' answer—prompt!'

'Leave them cobwebs alone, an' I 'll tell you, matey.'

'Matey!' groaned Mr Brimberly, turning up his eyes.

'I 'm the guv's familiar friend and personal pal, I am. I 'm 'is adviser—confeedential, matreemonial, circumstantial, an' architect'ral. I 'm 'is trainer, advance-agent, manager, an' sparrin'-partner—that 's who I am. An' now, mate, 'avin' 'elped to marry 'im, I 've jest took a run down 'ere to see as all things is fit an' proper for 'is 'oneymoon!'

'My word, this is a mad feller, this is!' murmured Mr Brimberly; 'or else 'e 's drunk!'

'Drunk!' exclaimed the Old Un, clapping on his hat very much over one eye and glaring. 'Wot—me?'

'I repeat,' said Mr Brimberly, addressing the universe in general—'I repeat as 'e is a narsty, drunken little person!'

'Person!' cried the Old Un, scowling. 'Why, you perishin'——

''Old!' said Mr Brimberly—''old, I beg! Enough 'as been said—go 'ence! 'Oo you are I do not know, wot you are I do not care, but in these regions you do not remain—your langwidge forbids an''——

'Langwidge!' snorted the Old Un. 'Why, I ain't begun yet, you blinkin', fat-faced, owl-eyed piece o' sooet'——

'Your speech, sir,' continued Mr Brimberly with calm austerity, and making the most of whiskers and waistcoat—'your speech is re-dolent of slums and back-halleys. I don't know you. I don't want to know you! You are a feller! Go away, feller!'

'Feller!' snarled the Old Un. 'Why, you'——

'I repeat,' said Mr Brimberly, with dignified deliberation—'I repeat as you are a very low, vulgar little feller!'

The Old Un clenched his fists. 'Right-o!' he nodded cheerily; 'that 's done it! F'r that I 'm a-goin' t' punch ye in the perishin' eye-'ole!' and he advanced upon the points of his toes, shoulders hunched, and head viciously out-thrust.

'My word!' exclaimed Mr Brimberly, retreating rather precipitately, 'this is very discomposing, this is! I shall have to call the perlice.'

'Perlice!' snarled the Old Un, fiercer than ever. 'You won't 'ave nothin' t' call with when

I've done wi' ye. I'm goin' t' jab ye on th' beak t' begin with; then I'll 'ook my left t' your kidneys an' swing my right to your p'int, an' crumple ye up with a jolt on your perishin' solar plexus as 'll stiffen you till th' day o' doom!'

'Oly angels!' murmured Mr Brimberly, glancing hastily about.

'Then, while you lay bathed in 'orrible gore, I'm goin' t' twist them whiskers into a 'angman's knot!'

'This is most distressing!' sighed Mr Brimberly.

'Then,' continued the Old Un, grinding his remaining teeth, 'I'm a-goin' t' tread your face in an' dance on yer blighted stummick. Arter that'——

'Oh, dear me!' exclaimed Mr Brimberly, retreating before the oncoming peril and mopping perspiring brow. But suddenly his wandering eye was arrested by velvet and gold braid, and lifting up his voice, he called, 'William! James! Come 'ere—an' come sharp!'

Two vast and splendid shapes loomed upon the scene, supermen whose silken calves quivered with unaccustomed haste. At a sign from Mr Brimberly they seized upon the Old Un, and, despite ghoulish threats, solemnly bore him off.

Down the broad sweep of drive they went, the Old Un pouring forth fluent curses with every step, until they came to where stood a powerful automobile, from beneath which a pair of neatly gaitered legs protruded.

'Joe!' cried the Old Un, apostrophising these legs—'Joe, stop bein' a crawlin' worm—come out an' bash these perishers for me, like a good lad!'

But even while he spoke the footmen hauled him along, so that when Joe eventually wriggled from under the car the three were close beside the great gates. The Old Un was earnestly explaining to his captors exactly what he thought of them, of their fathers and mothers, their kith and kin, and the supermen were heeding him not the least, when a thunderbolt seemed to smite them asunder, and Joe was glancing, mild-eyed, from one splendid supine form to the other.

'Hallo, Old Un!' said he; 'what's the matter now, you old book o' bad language, you?'

Mr Brimberly, somewhat shaken with his late interview, and feeling the need of a stimulant, had just refilled the long glass, when, hearing a rustle behind him, he turned and beheld a tall woman, elderly and angular, especially as to chin and elbows, which last obtruded themselves quite unpleasantly; at least, as he eyed them there was manifest disapprobation in every hair of his whiskers.

'Now I wonder,' he sighed plaintively—'I wonder what under the blue expandment of 'oly 'eaven you might be, because if you 'appen to be the washing'——

'I—am—not!'

'Or the cannybal missions'——

'No—sech—thing!'

'Oh!' said Mr Brimberly, and his gaze wandered to the elbows. 'Why, then, let me hinform you'——

'Ann Angelina Trapes is me name.'

'Why, then, ma'm, you've took the wrong turning. 'Owbeit an' notwithstanding, 'ooever you are an' nevertheless, you will find the tradespeople's entrance'——

'You're the gentleman as is so obligin' as to be Mr Ravenslee's butler, ain't you?'

'Sich is my perfession,' Mr Brimberly admitted. 'I am in sole charge of these pre-mises, an' so being, will ask you to withdraw 'ence immediate. I will ask'——

'An' I'll ask you, very p'inted, what you reckon you're doin' in that chair?'

'Doin'?'

'I'll ask you, very p'inted, why you're loafin' around wastin' your master's time?'

'Loafing!' cried Mr Brimberly, very red in the face. 'Loaf'——

'I also ask you, very p'inted, wherefore an' why you loaf, guzzlin' an' swillin' your master's good liquor?'

'Guzzling!' gasped Mr Brimberly. 'Oh 'eavens, this is a houtrage, this is! I'll'——

'It sure is! An' so are you, wine-bibber!'

'Wine-bib'—— Mr Brimberly choked, his round face grew purple, and he flourished pudgy fists; while Mrs Trapes folded her cotton-gloved hands and watched him.

'Wine-bibber!' she nodded. 'An' the wine you now bib is your master's; consequently it was stole; an' bein' stole, you're a thief; an' bein' a thief'——

'Thief!' gurgled Mr Brimberly. 'Ha, thief's a hepithet, thief is, and a hepithet's hactionable! I'll have you indented for perjoorious expressions.'

'Wine-bibber!' she sighed. 'Snake an' plunderer!'

'Never,' cried Mr Brimberly—'never in all my days did I ever 'earken to such contoomacious contoomacity! 'Oo are you, an' wot'——

'Hand over that bottle an' what you've left o' them cigars!'

'Woman, begone!' he cried hoarsely. 'Woman, if you don't go 'ence this very moment, I'll have you persecuted with the hutmost vigour o' the law for a incorrigible female!'

'Female!' repeated Mrs Trapes; and clasping herself in her long, bony arms, she shuddered and smiled, though her eyes glared more stonily and her elbows suggested rapier-points, daggers, and other deadly weapons of offence.

'Female it were, I think?' she inquired, with another grim and smiling shudder. 'Now, sir, to you, I sez, debased creecher, I sez; vulgar an' dishonest loafer, I sez; sly an' subtle serpent, I sez—return to the back scullery wherefrom you sprang, lest I seize you by the hair o' your

cheeks an' bounce your silly head against the wall—frequent, I sez!' and very slowly Mrs Trapes moved towards him.

Mr Brimberly hesitated, but before those deadly elbows he blenched, his whiskers wilted all at once, and he retreated backwards. Across the spacious drawing-room, along the hall, and down the stairs he went, his pace ever accelerating, until, in full flight, he reached the sanctuary of his pantry, where, having locked himself securely in, he sank, panting, into a chair to mop his beaded brow. 'My word!' said Mr Brimberly.

(*Continued on page 581.*)

BUFFALO BILL, CIVILISER.

By R. B. Townshend.

ITALIANS certainly do love a good show, and Buffalo Bill's Wild West performances were extremely popular in Italy when he exhibited there. But one of the great Roman dukes who went to see the show sneered at the way in which Bill's cowboys rode their bucking broncos round the arena. 'Circus horses,' he said; 'that 's all they are. Trained to jump about and look wild! It 's mere child's-play. Now the wild stallions that I keep to run with my herds of mares in the Campagna really are wild. No man on earth could get on their backs; or if he did, he would not stay there a single moment.'

The cowboys were highly indignant when this came to their ears. 'Bring out your wild Eyetalian man-eaters,' was their answer. 'You just put them in the arena for us and turn them loose, and you 'll see the sight of your life.'

The duke confidently accepted the challenge, and his herdsmen, who were good enough hands at dealing with horses in their own way, managed to drive in four of his wild stallions on a day agreed upon, and turned them loose in the middle of Buffalo Bill's show before all the people. Within five short minutes those four wild monarchs of the Campagna were all lassoed and thrown; the American cowboy saddles were cinched on to them; the lassos were taken off; and each horse, as he scrambled to his feet, found a western cowboy on his back, and, greatly to his astonishment, found that no bucks or kicks or plunges could dislodge him. An hour later they went out of that arena very different horses. They had found their masters. Buffalo Bill's men had civilised them.

Now Colonel William Cody, or Buffalo Bill, to give him the name men knew him by in the West, was something more than a professional showman; he had a real feeling for romance deep down in him. To him that scornful modern Roman duke seemed somehow to represent the haughty consuls and senators, ay, even the emperors of old Rome, whom in their lifetime men worshipped as gods. What he would have liked to do would have been to handle those man-eaters on the floor of the old Roman Coliseum itself, and have all modern Rome there to see. He would have liked to give his performance in that very same arena where nineteen hundred years ago the gladiators had raised their hands to Cæsar and cried, 'Hail, Cæsar! men going to their death salute thee.'

But the Italian authorities would have none of it. The floor of the Coliseum was not in proper condition. The cowboys might do some injury to the invaluable antiquities there. More than that, it was consecrated ground; for there, in the middle of the arena, the Roman Church holds every year a service to commemorate the Christian martyrs and saints who in that place testified to the faith with their blood. Therefore Buffalo Bill's performance could never take place there. Never. It was absolutely impossible!

But the Napoleonic side of Bill—and he had one—refused to accept that word 'impossible.' And one day a young American diplomat at the Italian Court got a private hint that if he cared to turn up at the Coliseum at midnight he might perhaps see something of interest. 'But mind you keep mum,' was the caution given him; and mum he kept; and also he kept the appointment. That night there was a glorious moon, and the famous spot was guarded only by a couple of drowsy sentries, whom a certain friend who was in the secret had been duly instructed to supply with the strongest of Italian wines till their slumbers were profound.

A small and select audience of people, to whom the secret word had been passed, had taken their seats where once the Roman patricians sat, and as they waited there they thought of all those cruel, blood-stained shows that had been given there nineteen centuries before. Then, once again, from the gates was heard the trampling of horse-hoofs; but instead of the swiftly flying chariots with their gay racing colours or sword-girt, death-doomed gladiators, there came Buffalo Bill at the head of his Wild West escort of cowboys and Indians and Mexicans, all fully arrayed; and out into the arena, where gladiators and martyrs alike had died, they rode .their mustangs, circling proudly round and round that historic floor. They could not, or they would not, go through their regular performances; neither was it possible for them there to tame (though they would have liked it well) the man-eating stallions of the Campagna; but as they circled they doffed their hats in honour of the brave men who in days gone by had circled round that ring before their life-blood soaked into the

sand where now the mustangs trod, and whence the indignant souls of the slain had fled to appear before their Maker.

The young diplomat had brought with him a fellow-countryman but newly arrived from the Far West. 'Look there!' he cried eagerly at the sight. 'Those redskins cavorting round there, as I happen to know, are some of Sitting Bull's Sioux who only a year or two back were killing and scalping and torturing and mutilating every enemy, red or white, that they could catch. And now Bill has 'em so tame that they 'll feed out of his hand. Guess Bill 's a greater civiliser than Julius Cæsar himself or any noble Roman of them all.'

Perhaps he was.

QUAND MÊME.

By B. Paul Neuman.

I.

'NOW, boys,' said M. Rimbout, the French master, 'let us not be so slow. Come, translate. Whose is ze turn? Yours, Green. Take zis leetle piece of unseen. It ees not hard; oh, no. Begin—"*Quand même*"'——

Green was not a genius. The sun was shining, and he, with the rest of the class, was yearning for the cricket-nets. He looked doubtfully and unlovingly at the page. 'Altogether,' he began.

'No, no,' cried the master impatiently. 'Next boy.'

Watts was diffident, but suggested 'Whenever.' Folgate was confident, and rapped out 'Wherefore,' as if there could be no possible doubt.

M. Rimbout's face darkened. He suspected a conspiracy of feigned ignorance. 'I shall ask every boy,' he said, 'and eef I do not have ze right answer, ze class will stay here till tea.'

This was serious. It meant losing a cricket practice, and on such a heavenly afternoon! As anxiety deepened the guesses grew wilder. When only Squab remained the class settled down to sullen despair.

Squab was one of the school butts—a forlorn-looking little shaver, with a bad limp, a stutter, and no physique; slow in his work, and given to mooning about in odd corners with a book or a paper in his hand. From him no help was to be looked for.

Yet, strange to say, it was forthcoming.

'You, Browne,' said M. Rimbout, taking out his watch and laying it on the table, a clear indication that he too thought the issue was decided.

'Sp-sp-spite of everything,' answered Squab with quite unusual signs of interest.

M. Rimbout lifted his watch, and his face relaxed into a smile. 'Zat ees one of eets meanings,' he said. 'Where did you meet wiz eet?'

'I read in the p-p-p-paper, sir, that some great Frenchwoman had taken it as her motto. She m-m-meant to succeed in sp-sp-spite of everything.'

'Well, Browne,' said the master, 'your place in ze class ees not a ver' deestinguished one, but you have on zis occasion, *quand même*, saved ze class.'

From that time 'Squab' fell into disuse. For a week Browne was everywhere hailed as 'Quand Même.' At the end of that time a process of attrition had reduced the name to more manageable proportions. For the rest of his school life he was known as Conk.

II.

The interest excited by the unexpected rescue of the French class soon flickered out, and Conk dropped back into his old position—half butt, half puzzle; 'an awful ass,' qualified by the addition, 'but a rum fellow.'

On the boy himself, however, the experience left a permanent mark. He had already become so accustomed to thinking himself a hopeless dunce that now it seemed to him as if a revolution had suddenly broken out in his humdrum life. The gleam of success, so insignificant in the eyes of his schoolfellows, was to him something wonderful and entrancing. The success coming, as it had done, in connection with that chance phrase, '*quand même*' held for him thenceforth a kind of mystical import. It was a secret password that made him free of a host of new ambitions, an open sesame before which all kinds of impossible doors might, he felt, fly open.

His first efforts were not crowned with any great success. He showed his gratitude to the French language by taking extra pains over M. Rimbout's lessons, but his wretched stutter spoilt his chances. Even apart from this, he was not quick and alert enough to shine in question and answer, and in the examinations his new ambitions were responsible for a bad attack of nerves. In spite of this handicap, however, he rose from the bottom of the list to near the middle, and was greeted in his dormitory with a spirited rendering of 'See the Conquering Hero Comes.' The same night he wrote home asking them to send him regularly a French newspaper and a French magazine. He had three years more at school; but, though he tried hard all the time, and improved his position immensely, he never

succeeded in winning a class prize. But for the Shakespeare prize he was *proxime* to Eves, the school captain, who had won a Balliol scholarship.

'You only won the prize by the skin of your teeth,' the Head told this gorgeous youth. 'The examiner said he had never met with a boy so soaked in Shakespeare (the expression was his) as Browne, but he made the old mistake and left himself no time to touch the last two questions.'

'It's funny,' said Conk slowly when the Head congratulated him on his *proxime*. 'I've always been m-m-mooning about over Shakespeare, and Lamb's Sp-Sp-Specimens, and that sort of st-st-st-stuff, but I n-never thought it would c-c-come in for an exam. The questions might have been m-m-made for me. I c-could have gone on for hours.'

One prize, however, he did win, and, curiously enough, it was on the athletic side, just where his chances seemed most hopeless. With *quand même* always singing in his ears, he had looked round carefully for some opportunity of earning distinction in the field most attractive to the other boys. From football, cricket, and rackets he was barred by his miserable limp. There was just one possibility, and he snatched at it. The sergeant smiled when he presented himself at the shooting-range; but half-an-hour later the smile had changed from amusement to encouragement.

'You've got a rare good eye,' he said to the novice. 'If you stick to it, you'll be in the team one day.'

Six months later he was almost reverential. 'The best shot we've ever had in the school, bar none,' he said when Conk showed him the silver cup which was the shooting prize. 'You'll be shooting in the King's one day; you mark my words.'

'Oh no, I sha'n't,' answered the boy; 'b-b-but I'm glad I p-p-pulled it off this t-t-t-time.'

III.

When Will—to give him his proper name, which he thenceforth resumed—left school, it was to go into his father's business. Mr Browne carried on a big export trade with Australia, chiefly in hardware. The eldest son was in Melbourne, another was manager of one of the London departments, and Will, who was the youngest boy, had to begin at the bottom of the ladder. He had secretly hoped for a university career, but he recognised the fact that his school record had not been brilliant, and he accepted the parental decision with a very good grace. Not that business attracted him, or even the prospect of making a big income. But he must do something, and he felt no impulse towards any other calling. Moreover, business would leave him free to try to realise the one strong ambition that he had brought with him from school. His poor physique, his limp, his stutter, his shy reserve—these things were the handicaps that had burdened him from the start, and threatened to hinder and mar his full development. That should not be, if he could by any means prevent it. How he would use his manhood freed from the handicaps did not trouble him. The great thing was to set it free.

The limp seemed hopeless, but the stutter he determined to tackle at once. His salary was not large at first, but it was supplemented by a very liberal supply of pocket-money, so that there was no pecuniary difficulty. He consulted a physician—not the family doctor, for he had made up his mind to fight his campaign in secrecy. From him he obtained the address of a specialist, whose exercises and instructions were irksome enough to raise a strong presumption of their efficacy. On these the boy set to work with a quiet, dogged resolution that, after a while, met with its due reward. Gradually it began to dawn on the family, first, that Will's stammer was nothing like so assertive as of old, and next—after an interval—that it had practically gone.

'There!' exclaimed Mr Browne triumphantly. 'What did I tell you? It was only a matter of nerves, and business life is the finest tonic in the world.'

Greatly encouraged by this notable success, Will next took in hand his general physique. From a child he had heard himself spoken of as 'very delicate.' At school his limp had kept him out of all the robuster forms of exercise, and had excused his habit of mooning about. His chest was narrow, and his muscles—or, rather, lack of them—one of the dormitory jokes. Now he consulted his doctor again, and, still without a word at home, spent dreary months over breathing practice, and then heaped Ossa upon Pelion—Müller upon Sandow. Perhaps the ardour and perseverance with which he pursued his self-appointed tasks reacted on his business work, for his father, who was chary of praise, spared some for his latest recruit.

'He won't set the Thames on fire,' he remarked to his wife, 'but he's buckled to his job a lot better than I expected. You'll see, my dear, we'll make a good business man of him before we've done.'

'I hope he'll be able to stand the life,' she answered a little anxiously. 'You know, he's always been so delicate.'

'I believe we made a lot too much of his delicacy,' said her husband. 'He looks strong enough to me, except for his poor leg. Anyway, he shall have a real good holiday, though he never seems to care much for the sea. I'll have a talk to him about it. He generally has ideas of his own.'

This view Will justified when his father spoke to him. Three or four of his old school friends

were going to Heidelberg as a reading party, and he would like to go with them.

'Capital!' said Mr Browne. 'Get up your German. Modern languages are an invaluable asset to a man of business. I only wish I'd had the chance when I was your age, my boy.'

From that time, year after year, Will spent his holidays abroad, generally in France or Germany. On one occasion he accompanied the family to Switzerland, and delighted his father by the fluency of his French and German.

'The boy's improved out of all knowledge,' he declared enthusiastically. 'If he does take his own line, it's a thundering good one. It's a thousand pities about that leg of his. Lucky, though, it doesn't trouble him. You never hear him say a word about it.'

'I'm not sure that that's a good sign,' said Mrs Browne doubtfully.

IV.

Mrs Browne's doubt showed her discernment. Will's reticence about his lameness was due not to indifference, but to an intense, an almost morbid, sensitiveness. In other respects he was not at all touchy. At school the outspoken comments and jokes over his stammering had rarely ruffled him, but the least reference to his halting leg stung him to the quick. At home it had long been understood that in his presence no allusion was to be made to the painful subject. Even to his doctor friend he found it difficult to talk of his infirmity. But with his stutter overcome, his general physique improved out of knowledge, and his shyness and reserve replaced by the easy manners and self-reliance that travel so often imparts, he felt that the time had come to deal with the last and the most formidable of his disabilities. '*Quand même*,' he said to himself with a little smile, as he faced once more the neat brass plate in Wimpole Street.

'It's a surgeon's job, of course,' said the physician; 'but if it means an operation, you're as fit to stand one as any man I know; and I wouldn't have said that before you took yourself in hand.'

It was a fortnight before Will could screw up his courage, but at last he forced himself into the surgeon's consulting-room.

'I won't say for certain,' was the great man's verdict, 'but if I were in your place I'd have a shot at it. You look in good condition, and with plenty of massage, and perhaps a sea-voyage after the operation, I think you'd stand a good chance of being as sound on your legs as any man need be. I can't say it's a certainty, but there's a real good chance.'

So far, so good; but when it came to telling his people at home, he found the task quite beyond him.

'I know what it'll be,' he said to himself. 'The mater'll be half-beside herself, the governor will be sure that I'm a *status lymphaticus* case, and the girls will treat me like a pet-lamb. And yet—oh, dash it all! there must be a way out.'

One day, while he was still debating the matter with himself, his father called him into his private room.

'Will,' he said, 'you've been working very steadily for a long time now. You'll be twenty-one this year, and I'd like you to have an extra-good holiday. What do you say to America and the West Indies?'

Will's face lit up with pleasure. 'It would be splendid,' he answered. 'Thanks, awfully. I've always hankered to cross the Atlantic.'

'Very well. You can take a couple of months from the middle of July, and I'll give you a couple of hundreds to pay the bills.'

V.

'It's a queer thing that Will hasn't had a look at the West Indies. He used to rave about them, and now it seems as if he couldn't get away from Toronto, of all places. I don't believe he's even been to California. I can't make it out at all.'

This was Mr Browne's comment on a letter from Will, written apparently in excellent spirits, but containing curiously little information about his movements, and filled with observations on Canadian trade and general characteristics that might almost have come out of a consular report.

'I don't think it's the right time of year for the West Indies,' said Mrs Browne placidly.

'No, that's true; but I should have thought he'd have been all over the States, at any rate, by this time. He's very careless too, and that's not like him. He doesn't give any address except just "Toronto." What's the good of that?'

'The last time he wrote was from some hotel —I've got the letter upstairs. I suppose he's still there.'

'Hullo!' exclaimed Mr Browne. 'Here's another scrap in the envelope. That's careless again. They should have been fastened together.'

'Does it say anything about his movements?' asked his wife when he laid down the offending scrap of paper.

'No. It's all about the war; the news has just got out there, and he's full of it.'

'Ah, poor boy! He'll feel his lameness more than ever now, especially when he hears that Edgar and Henry are both joining up. It *is* hard on him.'

'Yes, it is,' said Mr Browne feelingly. 'I believe he'd have made a fine officer. I'm sure his heart's in the right place.'

The great catastrophe, so long foreseen and dreaded, had come at last, and, at the last,

suddenly, as a thief in the night. Britain, recovering from the first shock, was already springing to arms. The call for volunteers had begun to sound, and everywhere young, eager hearts were taking counsel with themselves. Three weeks before the breaking of the storm Will had gone for his American holiday, and in another fortnight or so he was due to return. Both Edgar and Henry held commissions in the Territorials. Edgar had cabled from Australia that he was coming back by the first liner he could catch, and Henry had already joined up.

Mr Browne, proud of his soldier son, but already racked with anxiety, relieved his feelings in true English fashion by grumbling.

'Doesn't Harry look fine?' asked his mother proudly, hiding her secret fears more successfully than her husband.

'Don't make me blush, mater,' pleaded Harry, who was back on his first leave.

'It's all very well for the young blood,' said his father. 'I should have been agog to be off when I was his age, I know; but what's to become of the business? Rickman told me today that he's joining up next week, and Barton's got the look in his eyes too. I've got Harry's work now to do as well as my own.'

'You'll have Will back in no time,' said Harry. 'He'll fill my place all right as soon as he's got his bearings. He's got a head on his shoulders, has Will.'

'I rather wonder he hasn't turned up before,' said Mr Browne. 'I cabled to him to come back as soon as he could. I suppose it must have missed him. He's so confoundedly careless about his addresses.'

'I shouldn't have thought'—— Harry had begun. Then he suddenly broke off, looked up sharply, and exclaimed in a staccato aside, 'Hullo! Who the dickens is this?'

Through the open French windows of the drawing-room, and over the grass, came a gallant young figure in khaki and a cadet's cap.

Ethel, the tomboy, sprang to her feet. 'It's Will!' she cried. Then in a moment, 'Oh no, of course not.' But she still stood there smiling, frowning, puzzled, hesitant.

For there was no sign of a limp. He carried himself as jauntily as Harry himself, this young khaki sprig. His face was browned, as if sun and wind had been at work upon it, but, for all that, it was just a little too fine-drawn. A year later in the war you would have guessed him wounded, but ready to go back.

As he came nearer he smiled. Every one jumped up.

'But it is!' gasped Mrs Browne.

'Good lord! I don't understand,' blustered Mr Browne.

'I knew it was, but'—— cried Ethel.

The visitor drew himself up, and saluted smartly.

'I see the elder brother,' he said, looking at Harry, 'but where's the fatted c-calf?'

It was only the faintest ghost of a stutter, but it settled the matter. Ethel rushed forward and threw her arms round his neck.

'That's all right, you old dear!' she cried. 'We had veal cutlets for dinner.'

Mrs Browne inconsequently began to weep.

'Good heavens! Sit down, and tell us all about it,' shouted Mr Browne.

'There isn't much to tell,' answered Will, as he lay down on the grass. 'A chap in Harley Street told me that they could carve my leg into the right shape, but I hated talking about it—you know what a fool I am—and I dreaded all the fuss. So, when you'—he looked at his father—'offered me a long holiday in America, I made up my mind that if they said the same out there, I'd have it done, and give you a little surprise. They did say the same, I went into hospital, and you see the result.'

'And what on earth made you join up before you were half-fit?' demanded his father, trying hard to keep the pride out of his voice.

'I suppose I was so bucked at being able to hop about, and I wanted so badly to see whether they'd take me.'

'They'd no business to do it, when you were only just out of the hospital. Of course you didn't tell them.'

'Yes, I did. I knew they'd find out, anyway. There are a few little souvenirs still in evidence on the goodly limb, but they said it'd hold me up quite long enough to stop a bullet.'

'Oh, don't, Will!' And Mrs Browne's tears flowed faster.

'Sorry, mater. It was only a joke. I believe it was my French and German that were the attractions. And when they found that I'd shot at Bisley, that settled the matter.'

'What's going to happen to the business I don't know,' declared Mr Browne, indulging in a final grumble.

'Yes, father,' said Will with sudden seriousness, and a note of tenderness in his voice that was altogether too much for the grumbler, 'it *is* hard on you; but I knew what you'd have done in my place, and I couldn't do any less.'

'God bless you, my boy!' exclaimed Mr Browne, getting up hastily and walking into the house.

'*Quand même—quand même*,' repeated Will softly to himself just before he turned in that night. 'Stutter, limp, rotten chest, no muscle, school dunce; not a very hopeful outfit, but *quand même*'——

And he patted the sleeve of his khaki jacket.

'THE DISCOVERIES OF GENIUS ALONE REMAIN.'

By F. Nicolls.

THE words at the head of this article are from Buckle's *History of Civilisation in England*, a work which was written at the time of the Crimean war, and which the author did not live to complete. The first volume was published in June 1857. He died on 29th May 1862, at Damascus, aged forty years, of fever. On his tombstone an Arab couplet is engraved:

The written word remains long after the writer;
The writer is resting under the earth, but his works endure.

Buckle was a conscientious student, and worked ten hours daily for seventeen years before publishing. Before he was twenty he was known as one of the first-class chess-players in the world. Though he was mistaken in some of his conclusions, there can be no doubt that he was an earnest lover of truth and liberty, and that his style often rises to eloquence in denouncing wrong and in sympathy with the oppressed. A list of nearly a thousand volumes, to assist those wishing to verify his references, is given in the first volume. The notes quoted are voluminous, occasionally occupying the best part of a page. While most of them are from English sources, some are of foreign origin, and these are given, both in the original edition and in the cheap reprint now on the market, in the language in which they were written. It would certainly be helpful to the ordinary reader if in any future edition the quotations from foreign authors were translated.

Whatever view may be taken of the opinions arrived at by the author, the information given and his admirable literary style make him still worth reading. In no respect was Buckle more mistaken than in thinking the spread of knowledge in Europe would have the effect of abolishing or lessening wars. Since the war in the Crimea nearly every European State has been concerned with them, and the present war shows that war-ravages—the desolation of countries and the slaughter of men—are not confined to the most barbarous and uncivilised countries.

Buckle concludes one of the early chapters of his first volume: 'The gigantic crimes of Alexander or Napoleon become after a time void of effect, and the affairs of the world return to their former level. This is the ebb and flow of history, the perpetual flux to which, by the laws of our nature, we are subject. Above all this there is a far higher movement; and as the tide rolls on, now advancing, now receding, there is, amid its endless fluctuations, one thing, and one alone, which endures for ever. The actions of bad men produce only temporary evil, the actions of good men only temporary good; and eventually the good and the evil altogether subside—are neutralised by subsequent generations, absorbed by the incessant movement of future ages. But the discoveries of great men never leave us; they are immortal; they contain those eternal truths which survive the shock of empires, outlive the struggles of rival creeds, and witness the decay of successive religions. All these have their different measures and their different standards—one set of opinions for one age; another set for another. They pass away like a dream; they are as the fabric of a vision, which leaves not a rack behind. The discoveries of genius alone remain; it is to them we owe all that we now have; they are for all ages and all times—never young and never old; they bear the seeds of their own life; they flow on in a perennial and undying stream; they are essentially cumulative, and, giving birth to the additions which they subsequently receive, they thus influence the most distant posterity, and after the lapse of centuries produce more effect than they were able to do even at the moment of their promulgation.'

It will be news to most of our readers, we think, to learn that breech-loaders date back to the times of Napoleon. He afforded every encouragement to the efforts of genius, and recognised the advantages of diminishing the exposure and time required for loading under the old method in the heat of action. A Paris locksmith, in 1809, prepared a breech-loader, which was submitted to the inspection of a committee of officers nominated by the French Emperor. The invention was condemned by the committee as unsuitable to the purposes desired. The Paris locksmith had a journeyman who had been a pupil of Berthollet, one of the most distinguished chemists of the French school, who, born in Savoy, 1748, settled in Paris in 1772. Berthollet rendered great services to the Revolution in preparing and improving saltpetre on French soil, of which there was a great scarcity. He was one of the *savants* who accompanied General Bonaparte to Egypt in 1798, and was a man of great modesty and unostentatious manners. He died in Paris in 1822.

The journeyman, John Nicolas Dreyse by name, betook himself to Prussia in 1827, and settled there as an engineer and ironfounder. Soon afterwards he offered the Prussian Government a *Zündnadelgewehr*, or needle-gun, which was loaded from the muzzle. The peculiarity of his invention was in the absence of gunpowder in the propulsion of the bullet. The needle, propelled by a hammer, struck a bullet to which a fulminate was affixed. In 1828 Dreyse had improved on his invention; his needle was now propelled by a spiral spring. The needle-gun was not immediately adopted; but the subject attracted the attention of the Crown-Prince of

Prussia, afterwards King Frederick William the Fourth. From 1829 to 1836 a variety of experiments were tried at the public expense. At length a gun was invented which was loaded from the breech, and the bullet was propelled through rifled grooves. The two conditions of rapidity and accuracy of flight were thus secured. Trials determined the value of the weapon, and in 1841 sixty thousand of the breech-loading rifles were served out to the Prussian army. The Prussian Government was delighted with the new invention. A royal decree declared it to be the perfection of military arms, 'and a special dispensation of Providence for the strengthening of the national resources;' and a hope was expressed that 'the system might be kept *secret* until the great part which it was destined to play in history might couple it with the glory of Prussian arms and the extension of empire.' It could not be altogether kept 'secret;' but the dullness and stupid conservatism of other nations served Prussia's cause equally as well, and in 1866 achieved for the nation the very glory to which it aspired twenty-five years previously.

Breech-loaders were used by the Prussian troops successfully in putting down an insurrection in Rhineland in 1849. But it was not until much later that the British came to believe in them. Red-tape, routine, circumlocution, and formality were in the ascendant at the Horse Guards. The old Tory 'Iron Duke' was slow to recognise any inventions or improvements made after his own victories had been won. He became impatient and irascible when new inventions were submitted to him, and the War Office authorities were reluctant to credit what the Duke discouraged.

The soldier suffered from the ligatures which bound the knapsack to his back, but any modification of the method of fastening the pack would not be listened to. 'The knapsack question had been exhausted,' were the official terms in which a clever substitute was rejected. So did it fare with the breech-loader when the 'monstrous innovation' was first brought under notice.

A patent had been taken out as far back as 1807 by a clergyman (the Rev. Mr Forsyth) for percussion-caps. It took the authorities at the War Office just thirty-one years to change the flint-muskets used by British infantry to percussion-rifles. To show the sort of men to whom such important matters were entrusted, it need only be mentioned that General Anson of the Ordnance stated that in *his* opinion the Prussians had rather hastily adopted the breech-loader! They had taken a little over twelve years in doing so. This can hardly be called rapid; but it was a good deal less than the thirty-one years we took over percussion-caps. General Anson said he was satisfied British troops with the arms they had would be found superior to any other soldiers in the world, and that 'it was ridiculous to suppose that two armies could fight at a distance of five hundred or six hundred yards.'

It is well for an army to have confidence in its weapons, no doubt; but there is such a thing as over-confidence. Fortunately we were never called upon to contend with muzzle-loaders against an army with breech-loaders. The result could only have ended in disaster, and even British soldiers would have failed to 'muddle through.'

But of all the ridiculous utterances by British officials, perhaps the most absurd one was by the War Secretary, Mr Fox Maule, afterwards Lord Panmure, who said (26th March 1852) that the weapons in the use of our soldiers were '*better than all the inventions that could be discovered.*'

What would these so-called 'statesmen' of sixty-five years ago say to the aeroplanes, Zeppelins, torpedoes, submarines, and inventions used in modern war? Even in those days one would have thought there were a sufficient number of educated men in Parliament to prevent a War Secretary from making such a ludicrous exhibition of himself as Mr Fox Maule did in deciding on the merits of *all* future discoveries and inventions.

The men of genius are no doubt often troublesome to conservative officials. But Buckle was right in declaring that we owe everything we now possess—all the comforts and luxuries of life—to their efforts. Disease, which a century or two ago was often equivalent to a sentence of death, has now been successfully fought, and human life has been prolonged and pain of every kind alleviated by the discoveries of chemists and doctors. The debt of nature has eventually to be paid by every living creature, but something has been gained if it can be arrived at painlessly; and this in the great majority of cases we undoubtedly owe to the discoveries and labours of the men of genius of comparatively modern times.

THE CAMELS.

THE sun runs not before the moon,
Nor night outstrips the day;
Slow, slow o'er many a golden dune
The land-ships take their way.

High, high with waving masts of gold,
Roped in with costly bands,
Their onward course they stately hold
Through seas of surging sands.

O'er lonely desert tracts outspaced
The hot winds burning blow,
While swift beyond the molten waste
The white-winged camels go.

While silver star and moon slow climb
Blue mountains of the night,
The bells of the *cafila* * chime
Across the amber light.

Like phantom ships all white and dim,
O'er waves of sand they sway,
And o'er the gold horizon's rim
Fade mistily away.

MARY M. CURCHOD (MYRA).

* Caravan.

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SEVENTH SERIES

IN THE SALIENT.

By LAUCHLAN MACLEAN WATT, C.F.

I.

WE just the other day got sunshine and warmth. What a joy the advent of spring brought to us in this land, after the dreary winter of cold and mire! I remember a friend of mine being carried into a field-ambulance, in the Ancre district, dripping with mud from head to heel, and doubled up with excruciating rheumatism. A man on an adjacent stretcher asked him what it was like where he came from, and his pithy answer, 'Cold hell!' fully and accurately covered it.

Can you picture what it was like in the dug-outs down there after a forward drive? In one, of the usual kind, a man was sitting dead at the top of the stair, his head reclining against the wall, his eyes closed as though sleeping, and five bayonet-wounds in his breast. At the foot of the stair lay another, who had been flung down headlong. In the bed lay a British sergeant, shot through the abdomen, his pipe fallen aside, after his last smoke, where he had been laid, just before he died. Under the bed lay two German officers, dead, with their boots off.

Not far away, up on the bleak and dismal slope, were two great 'tanks,' which had stuck in the mud; and around them clustered the men, our own and the enemy, who would never fight again.

One of our young officers missed his way in the dark up there, and wandered off, lost. Afraid lest he should stumble into the German lines, the locality of which was meanwhile quite uncertain, he took shelter in a dug-out. But he could not stay there. It was full of German dead, some sprawling on the floor, some sitting up against the wall, or in the corners. He flashed his torch around his fellow-tenants once, and once only. 'Their eyes,' said he, 'were hauntingly blue. They stared at me as if questioning my intrusion.' In the darkness something stirred. 'I felt that they were going to leap at me,' he said, 'and I could quite understand one's reason wavering for a little.' So out he went again to seek his way. Hearing voices near, he hid in a shell-hole, with his revolver ready. The voices approached and passed. And then, tired out, he fell asleep. When he woke, chilled to the bone, he found that his revolver had dropped into the mud and disappeared. He had to get along, and keep moving. And then, suddenly, he heard two English Tommies grumbling loudly, somewhere ahead, about the quality of their bully-beef. 'I could have kissed them!' he exclaimed. 'It was heavenly to hear them cursing.'

The artillery activity down there was practically continuous. It woke you through the dark, like the frantic thunder of some mad tom-tom-player, with the 'Ha-ha-ha!' of the hellish laughter of the machine-guns for chorus.

I have now had two months of the Ypres Salient, where I had formerly been for a little while in 1916 with the Gordons. My new regiment, the Black Watch, I saw landing in France early in 1915. Their broken ranks had been replenished and broken again and again since then, till at last, past patching, the remnants of two battalions were jammed into one. Amongst them there were some Aberdonians, so the link with the Gordons was still unbroken.

It was only now that I got my first acquaintance with Ypres itself. It was on a Saturday afternoon, and at the entrance to the town I overtook a man of the Black Watch, who, recognising the red heckle in the bonnet tucked in at my belt, became very friendly. He said he would lead me to the barracks where my people were. But it soon became quite apparent that he did not know the way, and that he was not of my battalion. First he led me to the square, only to be turned back by the military policeman, for the square is shelled daily, and nobody is allowed to pass through it. Only the policeman, another of the forgotten brave ones, stands there for the protection of others. My guide pointed to the fragments of the famous cathedral, and he said, 'That maun hae been a vera fine Catholic chaipel. I never saw sae monie braw chaipels onywhere. Of coorse, they 're a' chaipel folk hereaboot, but they maun be gey supersteeshous to hae sae monie kirks.' After wandering about for a while, he had to admit that he had led me astray. 'But just you gang doon this close,' said he, pointing along a ruined alley, 'and speir at the first body you meet. They 're bound to ken. Oh ay—the

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barracks is a weel-kent place!' pawkily covering his own ignorance by his assurance of the intelligence of others.

In a cellar, protected with sand-bags, I found the Y.M.C.A., and soon was at my destination.

I never saw, and hope never again to see, such another town. Before the war it was a prosperous place of about twenty thousand inhabitants. Its cathedral, as everybody knows, was one of the notable churches of the Low Countries, and the magnificent Hall of its Cloth Guild one of the glories of the Middle Ages. But one day in April 1915, while citizens and soldiers were walking about in the crowded square, and the streets were full, a torrent of shell poured over the place, and in a few minutes the square was a bloody shambles of dying men, women, and children; while crowds ran, in screaming distraction, trying to escape from the horrible death that pursued them everywhere. Hundreds took refuge in cellars, but the houses toppled in upon them and crushed them. There is not now a living creature there except our people. Desolation, like the desolation of a town over which has swept the tornado of volcanic destruction, is everywhere. The Cloth Hall is a heap of broken stone. The cathedral lies like a shipwreck, with its bare ribs open to the weather. As you walk through the forsaken streets you hear the whistle and groan of a shell go overhead, and the crash falls just a house or two away from you in an adjacent lane. You hear the bones of the place break in an agony. It is like a town blighted by a curse—a place of fear in the sunlight, and a haunt of ghosts and devils in the dark. It is a place that you hold your breath in, often. Your heart quickens as you enter it. And you breathe freely when you leave it.

Next day I had to hold a service at a windmill, where a casualty clearing-station was established. And then I was to go back to Ypres for a service in the barracks there. The old mill had been dismantled. The story was that it had belonged to the *maire* of the village near by; but it had been observed that, even when there was no wind blowing, the sails would move. And it was proved conclusively that those great arms, seen far and wide, were being used for signalling to the enemy. That finished for ever the *maire's* interest in the affairs of this world, and the mill was fitted up for nobler uses.

Immediately after the service I went through the street of shattered houses, on to the cross-roads, past the church, where only a fragment of the tower stands, all a-topple, with the shell-broken gravestones around it. And there, before me, lay the white paved road to Ypres.

Trees are still standing on either side of it, though many of them are split and broken. And the fields through which it runs bear countless traces of bombardment—water-filled shell-holes innumerable telling of the attentions of the enemy. Not a soul was to be seen upon it. And everything was silent as the grave. It was like a road leading into another world. Horsemen and wheeled traffic, except for an occasional emergency wagon or a general's car, are forbidden in daylight beyond those cross-roads.

I had not gone far along it, when my attention was arrested by the quick sound of Lewis guns firing, away up overhead. So I stood, and saw two aeroplanes fighting for life against several others which pursued them, darting after them and swooping upon them like hawks whenever they tried to escape. At length one of the two, disabled, dropped from cloudland, swaying to and fro, till it fell like a stone. The other kept up a plucky fight, but it, too, at a great height, was riddled, and fell also. The pilot fell out of it, a little speck like a fly. He seemed to pause for a moment, and then dropped after his machine. Somehow I thought these were enemy planes, as I could not see their markings, and I cheered where I stood. But shortly afterwards I met a man resting by the wayside, and he told me they were two of ours. I never afterwards cheered again till I was sure.

A little farther on, a couple of shells came screaming over, and fell in the field beside the road, disturbing some men who had apparently been in some poor shelter, for they squattered away like ducks to another security, and I never saw them again. It makes you think very quickly for a little, asking yourself which way lies safety—on this side or the other—till you suddenly remember that the way of duty lies straight on, and you are probably as safe in the middle as anywhere else.

My service was held in a cellar in the barracks, a dim, dull chamber, with an arched roof. The place was packed. Just as the service began a big gun next door shook the place, and the flash lit up the room. I saw the gleam in the eyes of the congregation, and everybody irresistibly ducked, for it was as though a shell had landed beside us. It was a sight not easily forgotten.

Later on, in Ypres, as I came in to have a service on a pleasant Sunday morning, we had a very startling opening voluntary. A German shell struck a corner of the barrack square, killing one and severely wounding five of my congregation. It was a tense moment. But we went over to another corner. I told the men the service was for those who wished it, and a little band followed me. We read together the Ninety-first Psalm, joined in prayer, and then I spoke a few words on the lesson, which is very specially the soldier's psalm, concentrating on the verse, 'Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day.' Fortunately nothing more came over.

I remember, also, a service recently on the

canal-bank at Ypres. The day was full of sweet beauty. I had had a long walk from an early service. But somehow Sunday morning seems the favourite time for shelling. As we passed along, a gun just beside the road sent off a morning greeting to the Germans, and others followed suit. It was very remarkable to hear three or four shells sing their terrible song of death together, in flight through the air, side by side.

On the canal-bank a squad was being drilled in gas-helmet exercise, and they did look most grotesquely fierce creatures, like things that had crept out of some goblin story, through deep waters, into the light of the sun. Away on the right was the end of Ypres, the gray, moulder-ing ruins projecting like a broken bone.

The men sat down on the bank, and we sang the Second Paraphrase, and had a short talk together. Now and again an occasional shell fell near, and in between we could hear the cuckoo's call, and the lark singing as though anything like war were very far away.

I had to go back for another service, and it was most interesting to see how the Germans had been searching for our guns. Everywhere were shell-holes, and the wonder truly was how they had really missed the mark they sought. The day previous the crash of their artillery had been constant. And there was a curious accom-paniment to it. For an English regiment had been bragging a little about its football prowess, they having been invincible in over forty games. Now, in the Black Watch we had some notable footballers, who took up the challenge. I ques-tion if there have been many more hotly con-tested games than this played behind the line. All the while shells were falling at intervals not far off; and it was very funny to hear the onlookers shouting, 'Goal!' or 'Foul!' or 'Play the game!' and then observe them giving a hasty glance over their shoulders to see where the last shell had dropped. The players themselves were too eager to think of anything but the game, and the Black Watch broke the boasted record all to smash. The red heckle led again to victory.

Nothing keeps the men so fit as a tussle on the football field; and it steadies and trains heart and eye for the sterner game that is wait-ing for its turn later on.

II.

Nothing could be more comforting to us than, when the German shells come over, to hear our guns take up the defensive with a loud 'Hands off!' And then a deadly dialogue ensues.

It is wonderful to see how cleverly the sites of our guns are hid from aeroplane observation. You might frequently pass the quiet, lonely, ruined cottage by the wayside, whose shutters seemed to have half-dropped from their hinges; but one day you see a canvas screen pulled slightly apart, and the muzzle of a big gun peers out of the shadows at you. Everything seems forsaken, till suddenly you see, up beside the hatch of a broken granary, an officer busy at a telephone, whispering messages to some far-off station.

I remember a place where we had heavy guns which shook everybody and everything near when they were fired; and one day shell upon shell was spent trying to knock them out. But we had imitation gun-shelters erected out in fields, and through the screen of painted tar-paulin and twigs a beam of wood protruded, for all the world like the muzzle of a gun. The German aircraft men had seen these, and many a pound of powder was burned putting the dummies out of action!

Alongside of such practical joke tactics, how-ever, the bitterly stern reality was always claim-ing its place. One night I noticed a fine, stalwart corporal of the guard walking to and fro. I could not help standing still for a long time and watching him. A finer figure in a kilt I never saw. And I thought what a picture he would make at a camp-fire, with the dark night all around! Two days later, in the trenches, he stood up straight, and a sniper's bullet caught him. It took our men hours to bring his body down the trench to the graveyard at the farm beyond the Lille Gate. I went thither from Ypres to bury him and another of our fellows, out by Shrapnel Corner. It and Hellfire Corner live up to their names. There had been a hot time there the night before. I picked up an orderly at the barracks, at random, and he led me along. We did not linger at Shrapnel Corner, for traces of the recent bombardment were too fresh to recommend delay. Tree-stumps had been split and shattered, and the road torn up into holes. The trolly-track up which we were to have gone on leaving the road had been broken, so we waded through the mud beside it till we reached a sluggish stream that seemed uncertain which way it was going. There we had to creep carefully up on to the trolly-road, and, bolting over, drop instantly to the ground when we had crossed. And now the enemy began to shell the railway, which ran quite near; and the whistle and screech of missiles were a constant reminder of the dangers that are always at hand in the Salient.

I had to wait for some hours at the graveyard till the bodies arrived. And somehow the instinct to get in somewhere under cover of however crazy a shelter prevailed. I have seen us pull our rug over our heads when the early morning anti-aircraft shell-cases were coming down with a 'whoo.' In fact, I believe that if one had an um-brella with him he would be tempted to put it up. The little, broken shed into which I stepped had been only a kind of barn or byre. There was scarcely anything of it left, and it was open to the sky. But in there lay eight or nine dead

men, under their blankets, waiting for the grave. One, I remember, was a beautiful youth, with his eyes closed as if in gentle sleep; and still upon his cheeks was the pink glow, as though death had only a minute since frozen life's warm stream. I drew the blankets up over their faces and left them.

The Ypres Salient is an uncomfortable place. It is considered, with good reason, to be 'unhealthy.' Every wind that blows may be said to blow from the enemy's direction. And the notices seem always to stand at 'dangerous.' The last night I was there we had a gas-alarm. The camp was sleeping, so first of all we roused the men, and then, with our gas-helmets on, stood waiting. The thought of the chance of being smothered by this dreadful invention of modern warfare was most unpleasant. It is the only thing that ever made my knees inclined to shake for a bit. We heard the hooters go, and the gongs rattle, and then the roaring barrage. But the alarm passed, and the horror uplifted, though it is not easily forgotten.

Odd accidents occur in the Salient. One day our canteen corporal was sitting at the counter, when a shell burst near the hut. He had his hand in his pocket, and when he pulled it out as a piece of shrapnel passed through, he left two of his fingers behind. The thing happened in a moment, and he felt first of all astonished, and then very thankful to have got off so cheaply.

Sometimes you find the shelter you seek adding only inconvenience rather than ease to your lot. Near Ypres stands the Asylum. It was a hospice of the Sacred Heart. It is a large place, with beautiful courtyards and the remains of a fine cloistered walk around. The Hun was busy when I went in there one evening. The bombardment had lifted a poor dead soldier out of his grave, and he had to be reinterred. I felt quite relieved when I got away from it.

We were only once during the two months out of the Salient, being sent back for a long-promised rest, which was curtailed to two days; after which we were sent up the line again. When we were coming out we passed through little villages and clachans, some of them just clusters of wooden huts, some mere caravans side by side. From the names above the doors —'New Ypres,' 'Vlamertinge,' and the like— you could see that they were settlements of refugees out of the old terrible days, the broken remnants of a once happy population. One day, as we trudged along, we passed through an English regiment resting by the wayside, and, out of compliment to the Scots, a soldier was upstanding, playing the strathspey called 'Stirling Castle' on a violin. He got a hearty cheer all along the ranks.

It was very delightful to get a real bed for these two days, in an attic above a baker's shop in a little French village, ere we returned to the Belgian mud. The villagers were much interested in the Scotsmen. And it was fine, to them, to be awakened every morning at reveille with, 'Hey, Johnnie Cope, are ye waukin' yet?' to hear the pipes at meal-time playing the old injunction, 'O give my love brose and butter;' and then again at 'Lights out' to hear the piper going through the narrow street with the ancient strains of 'Donald Gorm.'

Our kilts always struck the villagers as being something strange and wild. I remember in one quiet village, on our way down to the Ancre, I was quartered for the night on a very quaint household. Their home was a large house beside the road. It had the appearance of a long-decayed gentility; and it was occupied by two faded old ladies and a shadowy, very ancient man. They seemed to be unable to move from beside the stove, nursing the last remaining dregs of life in its scanty warmth. Two officers, mistaking their billet, came in and tried to set up occupation, but I turned them out, directing them to their own place. The spectres had risen to their feet in fear. And after the intruders had gone, they asked me, tremblingly, whether we were *Franc-tireurs*. They seemed to think we were wild irregulars, with our mountain garb and screaming bagpipes.

Our march back to the Salient was through wind and sleet; but I had found a tin whistle in the camp before we had gone out, and as I tramped with the doctor behind the last company I kept the lagging feet going with 'Bonnie Dundee,' 'Mrs Macleod of Raasay,' and many another old march of our northern people. A chaplain has to forget his clerical collar and his Sam Browne belt, and to be lark and linnet, comforter and chum, if he is to be of any living use to the boys.

One never can forget some of the nights up there. I recall the heavens, full of brilliant stars; the new moon, clear and beautiful, like a shallow skiff of beaten silver, with the shadow of the earth, like a sorrow, enfolded in its clasp. The foreground was dark, except for shining pools in shell-holes, and the gleam of a winding stream that crawled through the camp. Far off, behind a ruined woodland, lingered the dim afterglow. In the distant sky hung an observation balloon, watching for the enemy's gun-flashes. Near us was the solitary grave of a Gordon Highlander, 'Corporal Kindness,' a name that spoke to us of the fishing-villages along the Moray Firth. The constant traffic of the transport on the *pavé* rumbled up through the dark, mingling with the grumble of the guns. And a solitary piper was playing somewhere in the deepening night. Loneliness, sorrow, death, and a touch of home, all combined to make up for us a tone-picture of the war. And as I lay down in my billet in a windowless cellar underneath a stair, in an old farmhouse, I listened unsleepingly to the wind wailing like a weeping woman, out over the

miry fields in Flanders. Is it a wonder that we often thought of home—of the tall gray houses in our northern towns, of the villages by the shores, of the cottages in the glens, and of the waves breaking softly on the crags, in the island that I love; and the hearts, as unsleeping as ourselves, thinking of us there?

The wonderful vitality of Nature in the Land of War gave a most pathetic interest to the shattered environment among which we lived and worked. The blackbirds nested in the ruined orchards, right in the heart of the world of smash. The house-martin made his home under the tiles that still hang together on a broken roof. The church of Le Bizet is crushed into wreckage, but the sparrows twitter in the ruins. And at the great convent, just along the road, where the piety of consecrated womanhood sang hymns and psalms and chanted prayers, the little birds flit in and out as though the voice of praise were not to be altogether silenced by the growl of cannon and the crack of shrapnel. Once, at a nasty corner, when for a moment I hesitated to go forward, I felt as though rebuked by a thrush that sat upon a twig by the wayside, and sang of courage and of hope. I have often thought how the lark must wonder at the burst of shrapnel from the anti-aircraft guns, which occasionally invades his province as he sings at heaven's gate above a war-struck world.

Another form of life which came in contact with us, and was not beloved by us, was the swarming crowd of rats. I remember one night going down a track in the fields, and trying to pick my way with the help of occasional flashes of a pocket torch. At every flash I saw rats scurrying along the ruts. This will be one of the great problems of the future of Belgium after the war.

The cat and the dog were, of course, friends and companions, and were looked upon as being in reality of ourselves.

(*Continued on page 601.*)

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—IN WHICH SOAPY TAKES UPON HIMSELF A NEW RÔLE.

SOAPY was alone, which in itself was no new thing, for Soapy was a solitary soul at all times; but just now he sat close beside the rotting fence which skirted that desolation behind O'Rourke's Saloon. Moreover, it was night, and solitude profound was his. He sat on a battered and disused pail that chanced to be handy; a smouldering cigarette dangled from his thin-lipped mouth, his long hands pendulous between his knees, his pallid eyelids sleepily adroop; but his eyes, quick and watchful, scanned the deeper gloom of fence and dismal outbuilding, and he sat there very patient and very still. At last he stirred slightly; the cigarette quivered and was motionless again; for, amid the shadows, he had seen a dim shape that flitted swiftly towards him. On it came, creeping swiftly and silently beside the fence, nearer and nearer until it resolved itself into a slender form. Then Soapy spoke. 'Hello, kid!'

Ensued a moment of tense silence; then Spike answered, his voice unnaturally thin and high-pitched. 'That—that you, Soapy?'

''S right, kid!'

'What you—doin' around—here?'

'Who—me? Y' see, I 'm kind o' yearnin' for that gun you got there.'

'Gun? I—I ain't got—no gun.'

'Well, kid, I know Heine 's all kinds of a liar, but he tells me he 's loaned you one o' his, an' so'—— Soapy's long arm shot out in the gloom, and seizing Spike's right arm, he drew it near. 'Why, kid,' said he, 'it kind o' looks like Heine told the truth for once by accident, don't it?'

'You leggo my wrist!'

'Right-o, kid; right-o! Don't get peeved.'

'Well, leggo, then!'

'Sure! Only this artillery ain't goin' t' be no good t' you t'-night. Ye see, Bud—ain't here. 'S rough on ye, kid—'s rough, but he ain't!'

'W-what—d' ye mean?' stammered the boy.

'I mean, as you 're comin' here t' plug holes in Bud's carcass it 's kind o' rough on ye, as there ain't goin' t' be no carcass here t' plug. Ye see, Bud 's took his carcass up-town with him t'-night.'

'You 're a liar, Soapy—a liar! Bud 's inside; I know he is. Leggo my arm; you can't con me!'

''S right, kid, I ain't tryin'. Only I 'm tellin' ye Bud 's left me an' Lefty t' run things here t'-night. Bud 's up-town, at his old man's place. I know, because—I sent him. See?'

'You sent him—you? Ah, come off! You couldn't!'

''S right, kid. I got him away by a fake telegram.'

The boy vented a long, quivering sigh, his whole frame relaxed, and in that instant Soapy wrenched the weapon from his loosened hold and rose. Choking with passion, Spike sprang at him, but Soapy fended him off with a long arm.

'Gimme that gun!'

'Behave, kid, behave, else I 'll have t' dot ye one! Be good an' chase off home; this ain't no place for you t'-night—nor no other time.'

'Gimme that gun!'

'No!'

Spike ceased the useless struggle, and leaned against the fence, panting, while Soapy reseated himself upon the battered pail.

'What you got t' come buttin' in for?' demanded the boy. 'This ain't your show, an' I guess you ain't so mighty fond o' Bud either.'

''S right too,' nodded Soapy; 'no, I ain't exactly fond o' him, kid—leastways I don't run t' help him if he falls, nor kiss th' place t' make it well—no, kid! But I kind o' feel that Bud's too good t' snuff it this way, or snuff it—yet!'

'Good?' said the lad bitterly. 'Good—hell! He's ruined me, Soapy; he's done me in! He's come between me an'—an' Hermy. He tried t' make me think dirt of her, an' now—now I—I'm all alone; I ain't got nobody left—oh, my God!' and huddling to the fence, Spike broke out into a fierce and anguished sobbing; while Soapy, spinning the revolver dexterously on his finger, watched him under drooping lids.

'She was mighty good t' ye, Hermy was!' said he thoughtfully.

'Don't—ah, don't!' gasped Spike.

'An' when he spoke dirt of her, you—believed him, kid!'

'I didn't.'

'You did, else you'd have been with her now. She was always good t' you, Hermy was, but you—well, you preferred Bud.'

'I didn't, Soapy—God knows I didn't!—only—I thought Bud would make me a champion.'

'By gettin' ye soused, kid.'

'Oh, I know—I know now he's only been stringin' me all along! I know now it's too late—that's why I'm goin' t' kill him.'

'Kill him!' mused Soapy. 'Kid, there's good killin's an' bad killin's, an' I reckon this 'ud be a good killin', maybe. But this ain't your job.'

'Why—why ain't it?'

'Well, you got a sister, f'r one thing; an' besides, you ain't a killer.'

'You gimme that gun an' see!' cried the lad, reaching out a hand, tremulous and eager.

'When the time came, kid, 'stead o' shootin' you'd drop your gun, like that time in th' wood.'

'Th' wood!' Spike's voice dropped to a strangled whisper, and he shrank back against the fence. 'You—my God!—you—saw'——

''S right, kid, I was there! An' I'm kind o' glad ye couldn't do it—glad for your sister's sake. But what I'm thinkin' is that maybe she thinks it was you—eh, kid?'

Spike writhed and groaned.

'Eh, kid?'

'Yes!'

'Why, then, if I was you I'd skin off right now an' put her wise; it may mean a whole lot t' her. Ye know where she is—go an' tell her, kid.'

'I can't! I can't—she don't want me no more; she's done wi' me. I guess I'm—oh, I'm too low-down an' rotten!'

'Sure!' nodded Soapy. 'But she's good, an' she's a woman, an' good women are only made t' forgive, I reckon.'

'But there's Geoff. I couldn't face Geoff again.'

'That's because you think a heap too much about a low-down rotten guy called Spike. I guess it's about time you began t' think about your sister f'r a change. Well, s' long, kid. I guess I'll be movin'; this pail comes a bit sharp after an hour of it.' So saying, Soapy rose, nodded, and strolled away, still twirling the revolver upon that long and dexterous finger. For a moment Spike stood looking after him, then, chin on breast, turned and went his solitary way across the desolate waste. But now it was Soapy who, pausing, turned to watch him safe out of sight. Scarcely had the sound of Spike's departure died away than a door opened and closed hard by, and heavy steps approached, halted suddenly, and a hoarse voice demanded, 'Who's there?'

'Why, this is me, Bud.'

'What are ye hangin' around out here for?' questioned M'Ginnis suspiciously.

'Countin' th' stars, Bud, an' doin' th' Providence act—"midst of life we are in death" gag.'

'Aw, cut out that slush an' hike along t' Rayner's wi' me. I got a job for you an' Heine.'

Side by side they crossed the gloomy, open lot until they were come beneath a lamp at a certain bleak street corner. Here Soapy paused and held out his hand, open to the light. 'This don't happen t' be your ring, Bud?' he inquired lazily.

M'Ginnis glanced at the ring upon that narrow palm, a ring wrought into the semblance of two hands that clasped each other; looked closer, drew in his breath suddenly, then straightened his shoulders and threw back his head. 'No!' he answered, frowning into Soapy's imperturbable face. 'What th' hell made you think it was?'

'Why, ye see, Bud, it happens t' have your name scratched inside it; that's all. But if it ain't yours, it ain't!' And speaking, Soapy tossed the ring back over his shoulder far out into the open lot.

For a long moment M'Ginnis stood motionless, staring back at that desolate plot of ground. When at last he glanced towards his companion, Soapy was lighting a fresh cigarette.

(Continued on page 598.)

THE LIVERY OF THE SUN.

By F. G. Aflalo.

Is thy servant a dog?'

THOSE of us who have gone forth into the wilderness under many skies can look back with feelings of mingled pleasure and disgust on the picturesque company of coloured folk who have served us well or ill in the capacity of porters, guides, gillies, soldiers, cooks, and valets. For myself, such of them as were the comrades of angling excursions to lonely lakes, little-known streams, and far-off seas, learning, with much patience on their side and some lack of it on mine, to handle a gaff or landing-net as required, are most easily recalled, for the proud, though not always coveted, post of gillie was always conferred on the most robust and intelligent of the dusky staff for the time being, and I can honestly say of a very few of them that they acquired a degree of smartness that would not have disgraced even the picked gillies of Tay or Tweed, and that they went about their duties with a better grace and with less thought of reward.

It is only when camping, living the overpraised tent life that has thrilled the imagination of the men of cities ever since the days of the black but comely tents of Kedar, that the traveller gets properly to know these sons of the wild temporarily enlisted in his employ. Personal or domestic service in eastern cities does not reveal either the servant to the master or the master to the servant. They must, if they are to know each other better, go far from civilisation. If they are to learn mutual regard, they must march together under the sun and camp together under the stars.

Previous to the tour in Equatorial Africa from which most of the following memories are drawn, I had camped in three continents with a variety of coloured servants, including Moors in Morocco, Syrians in Asia Minor, and Indians in Canada. The first-named were excellent personal servants, capable cooks, devoted nurses in time of sickness, watchful guards in disaffected country, going about their duties without fuss, and, unlike the negro, neither asking for praise nor caring a great deal for blame. One of my Moors used regularly to brush the scorpions off the crumbling staircase of an old house in southern Morocco where I lived one summer. Just before I went to bed he would go silently about this gruesome work, but never a word of it did I hear till the end of the trip, as he feared that the presence of scorpions might have made me uneasy—a delicacy of feeling that one might look for in vain in servants of more civilised exterior.

The American Indian is not, if I may judge him by my memories of Chippewas, a servant at all, but a paid guest willing to lend a hand with camp work. So long as there is paddling or portage to be done he is as efficient as one would expect of a child of such environment, but in the lazy days in camp he has little use for work and none for conversation. He also minds his own business to an extent that may be embarrassing. I recollect one evening, when camping with a solitary Indian out on the great lakes, treading on a loose stone while wading after black bass, and falling full length on a slippery rock overhanging very deep water. My Indian was seated close by in our canoe, smoking a long cigar that I had given him, and all he did was to acknowledge my disaster with a sympathetic grunt. It was not until, still prone, I addressed him in 'far-flung words and few' that he helped me to recover my rod, moving with as much despatch as his racial dignity allowed. The natives of East and Central Africa are of very different calibre. They are of the

> New-caught, sullen peoples,
> Half-devil and half-child.

Here is no silence, no apathy, no personal devotion at any rate to the tourist, a bird of passage who, if the truth must be told, does not as a rule go very far out of his way to win their affection, holding apparently that, though reproof may suffice for the wise man, the other sort are the better for half-a-dozen with the hippo-hide *kiboko* that is one of his first purchases when going up-country.

This ancient policy of the rod for the fool's back has the authority of Scripture, and at that I would gladly leave it but for the need of stating a clear case for travellers who may, in some remote district, far from magisterial or other assistance, find themselves suddenly confronted by a column of mutinous porters. Few evils are more infectious than sedition; and, all the wise proclamations of Government against the sjambok notwithstanding, it may be a question of life and death, a choice between going on or being deserted, so that to blame the traveller for occasionally choosing the short cut to harmony is to ignore the rights to which his contract with the porters entitles him. Out of the meagre store of untoward adventure that marked my last trip, I may perhaps be allowed to recall an occasion on which, as I do not hesitate to admit, I used the whip. If any one blames me for this, I should be glad to see how he would have behaved in like circumstances, with the immediate prospect of being abandoned with all his baggage in the middle of Africa, not many hours before midnight, and in a district known to be visited by a dangerous rogue

elephant that was not shot until a week or two after I went through. I had ridden for some hours out of Kisumu, with an escarpment for objective, intending to climb the latter before camping for the night, when the line of porters suddenly came to a halt, and there was enough jabbering and gesticulating to suggest some sort of trouble. The Kavirondo porters are well-built fellows, and two of my small column were veritable giants. Needless to say, these were the disturbing element, and had just thrown down their loads on the track. Here was a pretty outlook! It would not take many moments for the rest to follow suit. Even had I known their language, which I did not, there was no time for parleying. So I just ranged my mule alongside the malcontents and pointed to the loads with my whip. This elicited no response beyond a sardonic grin; so next moment the *kiboko* whistled, after a way it has, and came down across the shoulders of one of them. I had just repeated the dose, when the mule, anxious to join in the fun, all but sent me over her head, a pleasantry that I forgave her, as in so doing she kicked the other recalcitrant in the stomach, sending him backwards into the bush. This little diversion occasioned much enjoyment among his charitable comrades, and I took advantage of the situation to order a forward movement, in which, after a moment's hesitation, the two naughty ones acquiesced. It is pleasant to add that before I parted with them, some days later, we became good friends, and the Anak with sore shoulders constituted himself my *sais*. I am inclined to believe, after comparing notes with African travellers of much wider experience, that such *contretemps* are exceptional. In the ordinary way, therefore, the rough-and-ready use of the whip is rightly discouraged, and is to be condoned only when, in emergency, a touch of it—*μηδὲν ἄγαν*—alone marks the difference between employer and employed.

On a tour such as this the traveller employs all manner of servants, including Swahili, Kikuyu, Kavirondo, Baganda, and Sudanese. Essentially, they are all negroes. The Swahili have somewhat hazy Arab traditions, but their language, the *lingua franca* of Equatorial Africa, bears little resemblance to Arabic, and their features are those of Ham. It is an axiom of African travel that the negro is a kind of sable caricature of Peter Pan. He refuses to grow up. Mentally he remains from the cradle to the grave in a stage of arrested development, and this accounts for the paradox of negroes of mature years with the minds of little children. It is only fair to take into account this truth about negro mentality when dealing with native servants, and in Central Africa it is equally reasonable to remember that the natives of these newly acquired territories labour under the additional handicap of unfamiliarity with the ways and refinements of civilisation. Those who have enjoyed hospitality in the Southern States of America realise that the gentleman's gentleman valets his master, whose father owned his father, with considerable deftness; but no such training has been available for the Kikuyu and Swahili servants employed in British East Africa and Uganda. The Sudanese, thanks no doubt to military discipline, are somewhat more efficient; but even they are far from finished servants. Those, however, who go on *safari* in the protectorates must be prepared for the crudest interpretation of such duties. It is useless to rave at a porter who carries a dressing-case upside-down in a downpour of rain, or at a personal servant who wraps a leaking tin of butter in a favourite shirt, for such solecisms are the result of ignorance and not of ill-will.

The Swahili claim superior intelligence. Of course; they have an Arab strain, and the Arab is the Prussian of Africa, contemptuous of every more peaceable caste. Yet the coast Swahili have at any rate some justification, not because of inherited qualities, but by reason of the greater opportunities which residence at Mombasa affords of contact with Europeans, whose ways they soon learn, and whose speech they even acquire in a fragmentary fashion which, though of little use for practical purposes, enables them to ask 50 per cent. higher wages. The linguistic standard of my own 'English-speaking boy' may be judged from the fact that when, on one occasion, I sent him for a red box which was in my kit-bag, he promptly came back with a green book out of the suit-case.

The Kikuyu porters are sturdy little fellows who recalled to memory half-forgotten Arab servants in the Altas Mountains. They have little intelligence, and are as quick as children to smile when praised or to sulk under reproof; but they get through a deal of hard work on very little food, and their gratitude for a packet of cigarettes or any other trifling luxury is embarrassing.

Physically superior are the Kavirondo, who inhabit the country at the eastern end of Victoria Nyanza, and they acquire an added freedom of movement from their complete contempt for any sort of clothing. Most of the men go stark-naked, and the married women alone wear a tail. An experience with contumacious Kavirondo porters has already been related, and I found most of my small company inclined to sulk, with two honourable exceptions—a cheery little *neapara*, or head-man, much smaller than his fellows and a model of good temper, and a powerful youth who acted as my gillie, and whose zeal in catching butterflies for me was so great that only after much practice did he manage to bring me each insect in less than four pieces.

The Baganda are said, by Europeans with experience of both, to be more progressive than the tribes inhabiting East Africa, to make better

subjects and servants, and to learn the ways of civilisation with almost uncanny readiness. My own experience of them was limited to three or four weeks; but I had during that time to do with a considerable number and variety of riksha 'boys,' and found them willing enough, but, from lack of training, very inferior to those of Ceylon and the Far East.

These natives, from Mombasa to Lake Albert, have somehow earned a bad reputation for lying and thieving, and are regarded as the antipodes of him who, according to the poet, couldn't lie if you paid him, and would starve before he stole. Well, all I can say is that in the three months I spent among them, constantly on the move, and thereby affording them endless opportunities, I was not robbed to the value of a shilling; and if this agreeable memory says much for the fear of the law instilled in the savage mind by the powers that be, it also says something for the honesty of the natives themselves. They are not prepossessing. They are, in fact, an ugly-looking crowd, lacking at once the dignity of the Sudanese and the politeness of the Egyptians. Yet sweetest nut, as the saying goes, hath sourest rind, and many of these humble servants, though churlish to the eye, have their hearts in the right place.

UNDECIMUS UNTHANK: HEIR OF ENTAIL.

CHAPTER II.

IS there any scene, in the whole comedy of life, more calculated to make the cynic chuckle than this of borrower and unwilling lender? It is so sordid, pitiful, and trite; so subversive of man's vaunted dignity! How it repeats itself, developing regularly, in accordance with a stereotyped plan! And how each successive phase of the little drama brings to light its own peculiar vileness! First the calculated amiability and fawning advances of the borrower, smoothing his way with an unctuous compliment, and watching its effect. Then complacency in the holder of the purse-strings turning sour, like milk before a thunderstorm, as suspicion wakes within him. He has not the strength of purpose to blurt out a blunt refusal; he trims and sidles rather. There are reasons (purely fictitious) for his being economical at this moment. Reasons? These are as nothing to the urgency with which his friend needs cash. And true it is that eloquence and emotion are on the side of the attack. The defender's part is poorly written, hesitant, short of words, and self-repeating. Yet the defence stands its ground. He knows all along that there is nothing to keep him from forking out, except dogged dislike of doing so. He has a good balance at his banker's, and would never miss the trifling sum which would make his friend (so he is informed) entirely independent and proof against mischance for the rest of his life. The fairy-tale is no doubt familiar to him, just as are the kindred fables of unquestionable security and unfailing prompt repayment. Sick of the whole business, he will take his stand on 'principle.' The would-be borrower is scarcely less sick, but him fallacious hopes sustain. And so the sorry play unrolls at an interminable length.

And thus, through the successive moves of this miserable game, Undecimus and his uncle strove to check and counter one another. They were both of them experienced players. At first their argument had dealt with the deed of entail. It had served its purpose, and Undecimus would gladly have persuaded his uncle to pay something for the right to break it. But Decimus was not to be drawn. He had no wish to alter the succession. Nor, again, would he hear of charging the estate for the benefit of his heir. So the conversation settled down into the old time-worn rut. Was Mr Unthank more exasperating than usual to-night, or was his nephew more easily exasperated? Between a close-fist and a spend-thrift, grudge or grievance can never be far to seek. Undecimus's present outlook was more desperate than it had ever been; and, besides, his nerves were strained after heavy drinking. And so there arrived a moment when his fingers twitched, and he could have flung himself bodily upon the older man, and then and there made an end of this obstacle to the accomplishment of all his wishes—an obstacle so utterly destitute of the power of physical resistance, and, at the same time, so perversely and obstinately impenetrable to reason.

For a moment, then, it may be that Undecimus came near to crime by violence. It was for a moment only. Then an apparently irrelevant thought sufficed to stem the current of his feelings. It was a recollection that had darted through his brain—the recollection of a bravado speech which he had once addressed to certain roistering companions of the student or stroller class. It was the custom of these fellows to affect great license in their discourse, and it so happened that, on the night in question, one of them had been holding a defensive brief for murder—justifying the use of any means to clear one's path of useless rubbish that encumbered it. Such boldness pleased his hearers, who, regarding the thesis as purely academical, had listened with approving smiles. Only Undecimus had seen his way to go one better.

'Justify murder?' he had cried, as if inspired by righteous ire. 'Why, what rank drivel you are talking! Would you lead a fellow into the

blind-alley that ends in chokey, and for finale hand him over to Berry to get his cravat fastened? For the coppers are not such duffers as you are pleased to make them out. Hardly good enough, say I!'

Here the audience showed disappointment over the anti-climax, whilst at the same time languidly wondering to see Unthank in the rôle of opposition to the devil's advocate. For such was certainly not his way.

He continued: 'No; you chaps may take my word for it that murder—what the world knows as murder, I mean—is generally a blunder, and very often a fatal one. Would I play with knives that tell tales afterwards, or dabble in drugs whose purchase can be traced?' With expressive pantomime, he replied to his own question.

His hearers' disappointment deepened, for, ere this, some few of them had in fancy seen themselves coquetting with murder. And now that pleasing prospect was dashed. This, however, was premature.

Undecimus proceeded: 'But, gentlemen, don't let your spirits sink. There are other ways—ways that accomplish their end and yet entail no liability, no discredit to the operator, and, above all things, do not soil his fingers.'

He had gone on to describe one of these. He had known a man, so he said, who, poor himself, had a rich nephew, whose heir he was, a youth of vicious propensities. This young man drank hard. Now his uncle had observed that when a drunkard develops pneumonia, it generally kills him. The nephew was confoundedly in his way. What did he do? Knock him on the head? You bet he knew a trick worth two of that. He invited the young hopeful to a prize-fight in cold weather, and allowed him as a special privilege to act as bottle-holder. The youth got very damp about the breast, and then got chilled waiting for the car that was to take them back to their hotel. Pneumonia supervened. Throughout the illness his uncle waited on him hand and foot, and, when it was too late, wired to town for the best specialist. He got great credit for his devotion. But of course the nephew didn't recover; he was too far gone in drink. The uncle inherited his fortune. And what is he now? A 'lifer'? No; a churchwarden. Isn't that a cut above your rotten old murder?

As Undecimus faced his uncle in that unchanging old-world gunroom, these words of his own came back to him, evoked by an association of ideas which he scarcely paused to trace. In his case, the relative positions of nephew and uncle were reversed, the former being empty-handed, whilst the latter held the purse. Other difference there was none.

Meantime the scene being played between them had reached its climax; for, having begun by asking for a loan of twenty-five pounds—more than he expected to get—Undecimus had successively lowered his figure to twenty, to fifteen, ten, five pounds, until now he was employing all resources of his eloquence and diplomacy to secure a single sovereign. It was pitiful! But yet more pitiful was his uncle's tender of five shillings. For it is a canon of the confirmed borrower that the ignominy of borrowing is in inverse ratio to the sum borrowed. Thus, whilst to borrow a handsome sum is not lowering at all, to be able to raise but a few shillings is the last depth of shame. The sum is everything, you see; the act nothing. Undecimus Unthank felt this, and, mustering some poor last remains of dignity, he rose. 'Very well!' said he, speaking without bitterness, 'if you cannot meet me, uncle, I have no choice but to wish you good-evening.'

This unexpected change in his demeanour, which but a minute before had been positively abject, produced a corresponding change in Decimus.

'But I understood you were spending the night here,' he murmured, half-relentingly.

'Thank you, no,' was the cold reply.

'Well, at least, take this! Sorry I can't make it more; but it will tide you over the next day or two, and after that something may turn up.' And he held out two half-crowns towards his nephew. For the old man's conciliatory spirit, neutralised for a time by the thing he hated most, was now reasserting itself.

Undecimus put the proffered boon aside. 'I will not trouble you, sir! I will not trouble you either now or at any future time. And I need only add that I regret the cruel necessity which has forced an Unthank to beg—even from a kinsman.' The last word was underlined, and gave the cue for an exit which would have won applause from the gods of a theatre.

Entirely taken by surprise, and scarcely knowing if he felt most relief or regret, the uncle sat speechless for a moment. Then he raised his high-pitched voice and cried, 'Undecimus, Undecimus, come back! I want to speak to you.'

There was no reply, excepting that the house door was heard to close.

'Gone!' soliloquised the ancient. 'Well, it's no fault of mine, though maybe I *was* a leetle hard on him. I wonder if he will come back in spite of what he said.' And, so illogical is human nature, he sighed almost wistfully.

As a matter of fact, however, Undecimus had not left the house. He had merely opened the front-door and closed it with some force. Moving noiselessly, he next selected one of several shepherd's-plaids which hung from pegs in the entrance hall or passage. The plaid was Uncle Decimus's characteristic wrap, and he wore it in a manner of his own, of which his nephew was well aware. Carrying his booty with him, the youngster then passed through a baize-covered door into the back parts of the house. He still moved stealthily, and it was evident that he

wished his presence to remain undiscovered. But the chances of detection were not great. Knowing the habits of the household as he did, he was able to calculate that the woman who came in daily to do the cooking and housemaid's work would by this time have betaken herself home; whilst a glimpse through an open door showed him Maskelyn, fast asleep by the pantry fire. The old factotum's habits were not those of rigid temperance, and if, as seemed likely, he had lately swallowed a dram, he would probably sleep on heavily for some little time to come. Trusting to this, Undecimus presumed to dispense with caution, and went about his business as methodically as if in his own house. First he took a sheet of brown paper, some tin tacks, and a light hammer from a drawer; then he secured a candle and matches; and lastly he took a handful of flour from the flour-box in the still-room. This done, he left the house and entered the adjoining harness-room, where, as he remembered from old times, Maskelyn generally performed his toilet. And there the various purposes for which the articles had been collected became by degrees apparent.

Having lighted his candle and carefully shaded it, he turned to the single small window, which was blindless, and proceeded to blind it by lightly and deftly nailing the sheet of brown paper over it. To ensure against interruption, he had previously locked the door, and having now possessed himself of Maskelyn's razor, soap, and shaving-brush, he made preparations for shaving. But there was this of unusual in his procedure, that, instead of applying the lather to his chin, he spread it thickly over brow and temples. In a moment or two the luxuriant dark tresses had begun to lie thick upon his shaving-paper, whence he was careful that not one of them went astray. In a quarter of an hour or less Undecimus was bald on the top of his head. The groom's small mirror, hanging from a harness-rack, reflected his features, and he saw that his likeness to his uncle was materially increased.

During his travels with the players, Undecimus had enjoyed considerable practice in the art of 'making up,' and had gained some credit for skill displayed in it. And though the sole cosmetics now at his command were baking-flour and burnt cork, he showed no little cleverness in making these perform the work he asked of them. Briefly, his back and side locks became grizzled, the dark shaving-marks disappeared from his lantern jaws, and, when swathed in his uncle's plaid, worn as his uncle always wore it, he presented no bad stage copy of the original. For, as has been said already, the superficial likeness of the kinsmen was pronounced.

Studying himself before the glass, he corrected details here and there, whilst cleverly mimicking the senile poise of his uncle's head and body. Remarkable as the result was, it failed to satisfy his critical sense. 'The eyes betray me,' he murmured presently. 'I had not realised before that it is our eyes by which people identify us.'

He lowered the eyelids. That would be better. Then he neatly and carefully removed all trace of his visit to the harness-room, put out the light, and unlocking the door, passed cautiously out into the darkness. But, caution notwithstanding, in turning the corner of an outhouse he ran almost into the arms of Maskelyn, who, lantern in hand, was returning from his evening rounds. Undecimus stood still, and for a moment his heart stood still too. The light of the lantern was directed full upon him. But the factotum's sight was none of the keenest, and all he said was, 'I 'll take mare to the shoein'-smith the morn, will I, sur?'

For all reply Undecimus growled. Here was one at least upon whom his disguise had imposed, and who had taken him for his uncle. Then the two men went their several ways. And in the ears of one of them rang words which he had heard spoken that evening, 'Of this at least I feel sure, that, if it does happen to me to see myself, I shall not long survive it.' Well, if it should by chance turn out so. . . .

Old Decimus Unthank was too bad a sleeper not to be a late sitter at nights. His animal spirits were at no time high, but he would labour away contentedly enough at his quaint handicraft, occasionally crooning to himself, until the clock struck midnight, by which time he would be both physically and mentally exhausted and quite ready for bed. Though the Hall was not in reality very remote from other dwellings, it stood in a quiet and primitive countryside, where few people stayed up late, so that the old gentleman's vigils were seldom disturbed by any sound, saving those made by the wind and by the owls without, or by the fire or the busy teeth of some chance rodent within. There was a certain eeriness in the solitude of the room, and as the hour grew later nervous tremors were by no means unknown to Decimus, who would start at the cracking of a piece of furniture, whilst his heart bounded if a log fell from the fire. Long usage had, however, inured him to these petty sufferings. No real harm had ever befallen him at Unthank, and with the fear and anticipation of the same he could put up, as was the way of his generally passive and unresisting nature.

The eight-day clock in the lobby outside the gunroom whirred preparatory to striking twelve, and Mr Unthank was about to lay aside his finished work, when, as had already happened once that evening, there came a faint tapping on the window-pane. The window-blind was lowered, and, for some reason best known to himself, the old man had now no doubt of the actuality of the sound. It was external to himself, not self-generated within his head. Acting with the determination which timid men will

sometimes show, he rose from his seat and went over to the window to lift the blind and look out. But before doing this he took from its place against the wall an old-fashioned pistol of the blunderbuss type, which for some time past he had kept loaded beside him, by way of precaution, often fingering but never discharging it. With this in his hand, he pulled up the blind and peered out into the darkness. The tapping had ceased, but, standing a few paces back from the window, he beheld a vaguely luminous figure, which confronted him, whilst seeming to surge or sway forward in his direction. Fascinated, rather than frightened, and half-doubtful of the evidence of those senses which had before now been known to play him false, the old man kept his eyes fixed on the phantom, whose features were becoming momentarily clearer. The high, bald, hatless brow first detached itself from the surrounding gloom, and then the stooping figure swathed in the gray plaid, as, with conviction merging into horror, the gazer recognised *himself*. It was the sign for which he had waited, though there had been times when he had inclined to pooh-pooh it; and it was not so much surprise at the actual apparition which now overcame him as distress at its significance.

Close and closer toward the window it kept pressing, as if urgent that there should be no mistake as to its identity and purport. And slowly the old man's gazing eyes began to turn backward in his head, whilst the fingers of his left hand grasped his throat, from which a gurgling sound proceeded. He was on the actual point of an apoplectic seizure, when something unforeseen occurred, which, in a wholly unexpected manner, served to relieve the strain upon his brain.

It was just this. Hitherto the eyelids of the spectral figure had been lowered so as to veil its eyes. But at the first sound of the rattle in old Decimus's throat the heavy lids were automatically lifted. And thus, for a single moment, the confronting figures looked each other full in the eyes. That was enough. The next moment Decimus raised the blunderbuss, levelled it, and fired. He had always said that he would do so if any one molested him. The report rang out; the window-pane was shattered; the ambiguous figure, which had had just time to turn away, fell on its face upon the ground. The charge, consisting of slugs, had entered its back at terribly short range.

Whether old Unthank's impulse in firing had been vindictive, self-protective, or merely automatic was never ascertained. For he was not able to be present at the inquest held on the strangely travestied corpse of his nephew. The one strong and effective act of his life had proved too much for him; and, though he lived on for many years, it was from that time forward as a confirmed invalid, the victim of senile decay.

After being a nine days' wonder in the neighbourhood, the Unthank homicide became an old wives' tale; and it is in that form that, in my character of local antiquary, I have endeavoured to save it from oblivion. Only, whereas local gossip regarded Undecimus's prank as a practical joke, I am myself inclined to assign to it a much more sinister significance; and I have good grounds for doing so.

THE END.

AUSTRALIAN AND OTHER SHARK STORIES.

SYDNEY HARBOUR is notorious for the number and ferocity of its sharks, and yet it is a matter of fact that seldom are more than one or two persons seized during the course of an entire year. On the eastern coast of Australia the names of several of the species of sharks differ from those given to them in Tasmanian, New Zealand, and Victorian waters. Those that the Sydney fisherman knows best, and that prove such a pest to him when pursuing his calling, and destroy human life, are the tiger shark, the blue pointer, the so-called white shark, and the gray nurse. Then come the six-gilled and the seven-gilled shark, the hammerheads, and the saw shark. There is also the well-known wobbygong, a creature of extraordinary and beautiful colouring, haunting rocky bottoms and feeding largely upon crayfish and other crustaceans. I have never heard of the wobbygong attacking man. It is sluggish in its movements, and during the daytime may frequently be seen lying upon the bottom, its body resembling a gaily coloured and motley patterned strip of carpet. It is a nocturnal feeder, but it is often caught in the daytime if the baited hook is lowered directly in front of its mouth, which, unlike that of the mouth of its brethren, is not undershot. The jaws are filled with a mass of ugly-looking pointed teeth, set together in an irregular fashion, but all inclining inward. This shark has the most extraordinary power of assimilating the colourings and markings of its coat to its surroundings, and it requires a keen observer to determine whether the object at which he is gazing under ten feet or so of water is not a patch of blue, red, or orange-coloured seaweed growing upon stones or coral of equally brilliant hues.

The blue pointer is an exceedingly handsome shark, with a graceful, tapering body, a long, projecting snout, and an undershot mouth provided with razor-sharp, non-serrated teeth. It is exceedingly swift in its movements, and can turn with lightning-like rapidity. The skin on

the back and head is blue, growing lighter on the sides, and the belly is pure white. This shark is more dreaded by the Australian line-fisherman than any other, for when two or three of them make their appearance it is almost impossible to draw a hooked fish to the surface. I have frequently seen one of these monsters seize half-a-dozen hooked fish in quick succession upon as many lines, and then, finding himself hooked, twine the lines round and round his body in his rage and efforts to escape.

It is always best, when not more than two or three of these brutes begin to persecute, at once to bait the shark-tackle hook, and then haul them alongside in turn, and sever the spine at the juncture of the tail with a hatchet; then, if the boat is large enough and will stand the severe shaking, club them on the head, cut the lines, and let the carcasses sink. But this can only be done when the boat is manned by at least three men well used to the danger of having an angry blue pointer alongside, lashing the water into foam and snapping his jaws wildly in the hope of getting something between them on which to vent his fury.

But even after having rid themselves of their enemy, the fishermen must up anchor and move to fresh ground, as other pointers, and perhaps a dreaded gray nurse or two, will be sure to find the ground ere long, and, disdaining for the time being the bodies of their brethren, devote themselves to the fishing-lines.

I know of only three instances in which human beings have been taken by blue pointers on the Australian coast. One occurred long years ago. A man-servant of Mr Benjamin Boyd, seeing several blue pointers cruising about the base of some slippery rocks, foolishly baited a heavy shark-line and lowered it down. It was at once seized, and the unfortunate man actually tried to drag a fourteen-foot-long shark, weighing many hundreds of pounds, up on to the rocks. He slipped, fell in, and was torn to pieces in a few seconds.

In another case almost the same thing happened. A fisherman, furious at losing so many fine schnapper by several of these voracious creatures which were hanging around his boat, made a thrust at one with a lance. He over-reached himself, and was at once devoured.

In the third instance, a poor half-caste lad, in endeavouring to sever the tail of a blue pointer which was fast in a bowline alongside the boat, was knocked overboard by a blow of the tail, and was at once carried off by a second shark.

During the summer, when the so-called sea-salmon swarm into the Australian tidal rivers in countless thousands, the blue pointers and a small kind of tiger shark create fearful havoc among their serried masses, and for days the beaches are strewn with salmon bitten in halves.

The gray nurse, like the white shark, is noted for its daring ferocity. It presents some very distinct characteristics from most other varieties of the family, the principal being the shape and formation of its teeth, which alone would render easy its identification. It is erroneously called the shovel-nose shark, on account of the shape of its nose. The true shovel-nose shark is distinct, favours white sandy bottoms and shallow water, is more frequently seen about ocean beaches than in harbour waters, and is not considered dangerous to bathers or people while swimming. The aborigines of the east coast regard it as the best of all the family for food, and have not the slightest fear of it.

An instance of the daring savagery of the gray nurse was witnessed by a number of horrified people in Sydney a few years ago. In one of the most congested parts of the harbour, at a spot near Pyrmont Bridge, where the water is thick and filthy, a number of street-arabs were bathing among a lot of floating logs of cedar, connected with each other by a chain and staples, and forming a sort of dock. The boys were bathing inside this barrier of timber, some of the logs of which were grounded on the muddy bottom and some well afloat. Suddenly a gray nurse sprang out of the water over the stranded logs, seized a boy, and swam off with him under one of the floating logs.

The gray nurse has a wide habitat. It is met with, to my own personal knowledge, pretty well all over the North and South Pacific, and is everywhere dreaded by both natives and whites. The only creature in its own element that it fears is the 'killer,' that savage little minor-toothed whale, Orca Gladiator, the bulldog of the ocean, and the friend of the whaleman.

I may mention that there have been hundreds of instances where, when the whale-boats have been stove in, or smashed by being fluked by a sperm whale, and the crews were swimming for their lives, or clinging to bits of the broken boat, the attendant 'killers' have actually swum up to the men and smelt them, or, as the whalemen say, 'nosed' them, and swum off again in pursuit of the wounded whale.

But of all the sharks the Orca is a deadly enemy, and attacks them fiercely as they attempt to strip off mouthfuls of blubber from a dead whale. And it is also a strange fact that the whalemen, when their boat has been capsized or stove in, have been surrounded by hundreds of blue pointers, and very rarely has one of them lost his life or even been bitten. In the deep ocean the blue pointers (the 'blue shark' of the deep-sea sailor) may be met with in droves, the gray nurse only in twos and threes.

Of the white shark not so many examples are seen or captured along the Australian seaboard. The word 'white,' as I have before indicated, is a misnomer. It is probably, with the exception of the tiger shark of the Indian Ocean and the

'bone shark,' the largest of all the shark family known to whalemen.

The Indian ocean tiger shark I have never seen, but I can quite believe that it attains the length of forty feet, or even fifty feet, for I have seen a so-called white shark that measured twenty-four feet. At the shoulders it had the circumference of a fat bullock, and the largest teeth were two inches long and one and a half inches wide at the base. This monster, which was of a pale-bluish colour on the back, and a dirty yellowish-white on the belly, was killed by a bomb-lance from a whale-boat close to the reef of Pingelap (M'Askills Island), North Pacific. It sank in ten fathoms, and the carcass was not recovered until the next day. In the stomach was a large green turtle, partly digested, weighing one hundred and thirty pounds, together with two small hawkbill turtles.

The Challenger Deep Sea Sounding Expeditions brought up in the dredge in the mid-Pacific teeth of the white shark five to six inches long and four inches wide at the base, and it was reasonably conjectured that the monster to which these fearful teeth belonged must have been from eighty to ninety feet in length! The teeth were of no great age, and it is not unlikely that at the present time there are similar monsters in existence, ranging the ocean, as yet unseen by man.

Of the existence of the mighty 'bone shark' there is no doubt. These creatures have been harpooned by the whalemen on several occasions, but have 'sounded' to such a vast depth that the lines had to be cut to prevent the boats from being dragged under. Whether it is really a 'bone shark,' an enormous toothless shark with baleen plates like the right whale, or an unknown variety of the great 'sulphur bottom' whale, may some day be known.

In Australian waters there are at least three or four varieties of the voracious six and seven gilled shark. The teeth in the upper jaw are double-pointed and fanglike; those of the lower jaw are flat, thick, and serrated with either five or seven points. The mouth is not undershot, being at the end of the head, like the wobby-gong's, and the seven or six gills, as the case may be, are placed vertically. On the back there is but one fin, situated far down on the 'small,' as the whalemen say; and the flukeless tail appears to be of an almost rudimentary character, like that of an eel, with thin 'flanges' of skin extending on the under-side from the tip to the ventral fin.

This ranger of the sea has the most repellent odour of all the shark family that I am familiar with, and on dark nights a continuous stream of phosphorescent fluid exudes from the gill-slits as it swims along.

The experience of my friend Ernest Williamson may be added to my own, giving it in his own words: 'My brother and I were in charge of a project to photograph under water a reproduction of Jules Verne's *Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea*. We were called upon to get close-up pictures of sharks. The particular feat required quiet observation, but I think it is safe to say we were given opportunities to study the habits of "man-eating" sharks that have not been enjoyed by any other human beings.

'Let me begin my record with the statement that sharks are not necessarily scavengers of the sea. We were told to use fetid carcasses of animals as bait. We did so, and had little success. Finally we decided to use freshly slaughtered calves as a lure for the big fish, and this bait gave us our pictures and a chance to study sharks at close range.

'About half-an-hour after our bait was placed and we had taken positions behind the glass window the first shark appeared. It was a big specimen, between twenty and thirty feet in length. It swam close to our hiding-place, and gave us every opportunity to study its appearance in its native element. Like all other sharks I have seen under water, its big, cold, gray eyes rolled in their sockets like those of a human being. There was a wicked gleam back of the icy stare with which these sharks studied the bait that gave us an odd sensation.

'The first shark swam around the calf repeatedly, but made no effort to attack it. Instead, it retired after ten or fifteen minutes, and we thought our day's work would be wasted. After a short time, however, the first shark returned with a companion, and both fish swam in a leisurely but very timid manner around and around the bait. Then both sharks disappeared. They came back in less than half-an-hour with six other sharks. These tactics were repeated until a school of more than thirty sharks was inspecting the bait and our submarine tube. It was more than six hours after the first shark appeared on the scene before one of the school, swimming slowly past the calf, suddenly made a snap at it.

'In a moment there was enacted the wildest scene of ferocity I have ever witnessed. Simultaneously, the big fish seemed to go mad.

'There is no reason to doubt that the sharks which have taken lives on the Atlantic coast of North America are West Indian sharks. These big man-eaters travel much faster than the swiftest steamer. On repeated trips to and from the Bahamas I have seen big sharks easily outdistance the vessel on which I was travelling. The big sharks might easily have been swimming in West Indian waters only a day or two before they were sighted off the New Jersey coast.

'I am strongly inclined to believe that all the killings may be attributed to one big school. I am confident that sharks, attacked by the dementia I have described, remain ferocious for several days, and possibly for several weeks.

Under ordinary circumstances the so-called man-eating shark has a pronounced streak of yellow in its make-up, and will fly in deadly fear from man.

'In a steamship it is more difficult to catch a shark with a hook baited with a piece of pork and thrown over the stern than in a sailing-ship, as she moves faster through the water. Sharks will follow a sailing-ship for days, and the sailors always have a superstitious fear that they are waiting for one of their number to die. In cases of epidemics like yellow-fever breaking out on board, sharks have been known to follow in the wake until the last victim has been committed to the deep.

'I think the number of sharks reported off the American coast a few years ago was exaggerated, because it takes the eye of a deep-sea fisherman or a sailor to detect the swift-moving fins above the surface of the water. There was a shark known as Port Royal Jack, twenty-eight feet long and three feet beam, which inhabited the water at the entrance to the harbour of Kingston, Jamaica, where the warships anchor, for twenty-five years. During that period he was reported to have killed over sixty seamen who had fallen overboard at various times.

'His last exploit was to attack, with three other sharks, two boats' crews from the British gunboat *Thrush*, which capsized in a squall off Port Royal. Out of twenty men only six managed to reach the gangway in safety. The crew of the *Thrush* swore to be revenged, and they pursued Port Royal Jack for two weeks until they caught him with a hook and hauled him on board, where he was cut to pieces and his backbone divided among all hands as a trophy in remembrance of the death of their shipmates.

'Another famous shark in the West Indies was Shanghai Bill, who haunted the waters outside the harbour at Bridgetown, Barbados, for fifteen years. He was a few feet shorter than Port Royal Jack, but he was very active in pursuing any living thing he saw in the sea.

'He met his fate in a strange way through biting a big brown sheep-dog which fell overboard from a yacht lying in the harbour. Shanghai Bill got his mouth full of the thick woolly coat of the unfortunate dog, and could not get it loose from his strong teeth. It finally choked him, and the shark was sighted two days later floating dead on the surface of the sea, with the body of his canine victim crunched in his capacious maw.'

EARTH-WINE.

By Bart Kennedy.

WINE of the grape is good, but wine of the earth is better.

That is, it is better if upon you is the real parched choke of thirst. If you have been going along over a desert of sand and under a scorching sun for hour after hour, drink-longings of a certain order will assail you.

Not for you will visions arise of iced champagne or copious draughts of the beer that is strong and brown. You will dream not of claret or of hock. And especially will you not dream of port or whisky or brandy.

What you will dream of will be earth-wine. Pure, cold, delicious earth-wine. How you will think of it! How you will long for it! And your memory will summon up the delightful sound of it as you heard it running between and over stones—that delightful sound that you heard in a time that now seems so long, long ago. Around you is the sand. It stretches on all sides as far as the eye can see. And above is the hard, white, glaring sun. And you dream. You dream of pure, cold, delicious earth-wine.

To those who have travelled not, and who have never known the parched choke of real thirst, it may seem that all earth-wine is much of a muchness. To them it may seem that the taste and the flavour of this clear, wonderful wine is about the same here as it is in a place off in the beyond.

But such is very far indeed from being the case. The earth-wine that you get here is not as the earth-wine you get over there. It is not the same in this country as it is in that country, or in this continent as it is in that continent. Here in these mountains it tastes altogether different from what it tastes down below in the far-off plains. In this dark, cool place, where it rises up out of the earth, it is not as it is in another place, dark and cool, that you know of.

Why, the taste and the flavour of earth-wine is as varied as the taste and the flavour of the wine of the grape. It partakes of the nature of the soil from whence it comes just as surely.

And here let it not be thought that I am one who asserts that there is no such thing as bad earth-wine. I have heard men say that of beer. I have heard them put it in this way: that all beer was good, but that some brews were better than others.

No, I do not claim that all earth-wine is good. For it is not. Sometimes it is luridly and awfully bad. I have been forced to quaff earth-wine that was of so fearsome a character that I

have strongly begrudged it hospitality. The earth-wine that rises up in a cloud and then comes back again is always most woeful stuff. I have had some, and I want it not again. Once, for my sins, I lived in a country where they had tanks on the roofs of their houses to catch the wine as it fell from above. Though it came from heavenwards its taste was distinctly unheavenly. Forgive the joke. It is bad, but not so bad as the wine.

Yes, it was fearsome stuff, with a taste as acrid as the sinister whisky that puts you out of action when you have gone forty rods after unwisely surrounding it.

How I used to long in those days for a draught of the delicious, cold earth-wine that I had quaffed in days when I wandered through certain wild mountains! But to long for it was of little use. The only thing to do was to wander back to those wild mountains. Which I did, naturally.

Speaking of mountains puts me in mind of a certain mountain beloved of the Scots. I speak of Ben Nevis. I remember once climbing that noble Scottish mountain. And hereon I encountered earth-wine of the best.

But the most delicious earth-wine I have ever tasted was in the Alhambra, Granada. I have gone around a fair amount, but never have I met the equal of it.

Finer was it than the finest wine of the grape that I have ever tasted. If I remember aright, it was got from a depth of twenty feet below the surface of the earth. Ah, that was indeed the wine! Cold, clear, pure, sparkling, invigorating. The finest wine of Spain. Nay, I will venture to say the finest wine of the whole wide world. To quaff it was to quaff a drink fit for the gods.

We used to go to the Alhambra to drink it when the day was nearing its close. It was an Italian count who first put me on to it. His English was of the sparse and peculiar brand. But sparse and peculiar though it was, it was nevertheless sufficient to convince me that he was talking of something good.

So I went along and had a quaff, and a deep one, with my friend the count.

There are a few people who scoff at earth-wine; who say that they know not the taste of it; who assert that its only real use is for outer application to man. But these people do not know. Their palates are spoiled by too free an indulgence in wines of the grape and the barley. They know not the wonder and the potency of earth-wine. They know not that if they quaffed two or three pints of it a day they would adorn this charming earth of ours with their presence at least ten years longer. They know not of this.

Or, rather, they know not of it till it is too late. When death comes near, and upon them is the last thirst, they call not for the wine of the grape. Neither do they call for the wine of the barley.

They cry out for the wine of the earth.

Were earth-wine charged for at so much a bottle, people would drink it who scorn it now. Indeed, it would be well for the health of men if this were so. But, usually, one is in a place where earth-wine is millions, perhaps billions, of times more plentiful than any other wine. And therefore it has not the appreciation due to it.

Men care not for the thing that can be got for nothing.

The people who appreciate it at its full value are the people of the deserts. And travellers who have known what real thirst means also appreciate it.

A time will come to pass when the wine of the earth will have gone. And when it has gone, gone will be man and his works. Gone will be the trees and the grasses and the flowers. Gone will be the beings who lived with man. The earth will be but a vast desert rolling through space. Silence, a stupendous silence, will reign over all. It will even be as if nothing had ever lived. Man and his works and his heroes and his gods will be as nothing that has gone nowhere. And the earth will roll, a thing of desolation.

When gone is the earth-wine.

SHIELDHILL.

(IN THE VALE OF QUOTHQUAN.)

Sweet violets blue as yonder summer sky,
And deep as sunset gold,
In fragrant life upon the soft sward lie,
Beside this mansion old.
In blue and gold they gem the winding way,
And greet the dawning of each happy day,
With glories manifold.

A river takes its passage to the sea.
A lark bounds from the shore.
I see it, far above the spreading lea,
Homeward and heavenward soar.
It flies, a sweet inhabitant of grace,
With outspread wings above this hallowed place
That holds me evermore.

Great beech-trees stretch their arms in brooding prayer,
And, with a murmuring low,
There come, when summer winds stir gently there
The branches to and fro,
Calm litanies of joy that speed the hours,
While psalms at eventide from leafy bowers
To yonder heaven-lands go.

A sudden glory gilds the Temple Hill,*
And in the valley broad
There gleams the splendour of a moss-bound rill
Athwart the hillward road.
And o'er the restful fields on which I stand
Soft fall the shields of this love-folded land—
The light, and peace of God.

Gilbert Rae.

Biggar, 1917.

* A hill above the mansion-house.

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SEVENTH SERIES

MACKELLAR LEAVES THE MESS.

By 'ÆSCULAPIUS.'

I.

EVEN though a man is only twenty-six, it is somewhat of a shift from accounting in Glasgow to assistant-paymaster, Royal Naval Reserve.

At least Francis Mackellar thought so. The night he joined H.M.S. *Alcibiades* they had to get under way to avoid a gale piling them up on the rocky shore. In the midst of it all came a sarcastic signal from the admiral of their squadron: 'Since you like steaming about, you will proceed at once to the Cape Pharaoh patrol.'

As a result the commander got no sleep, and he was feeling like nothing on earth next morning when he observed Mackellar violating an Admiralty order. 'What the devil do you mean by smoking on the quarter-deck?' he roared.

'I'm sorry, sir,' answered Mackellar, throwing his cigarette over the ship's side. Unfortunately it was the weather side, and the wind caught the 'gaspar' and whisked some of its hot ashes into the commander's eyes.

'Side-boy,' the commander called, stamping his foot on the deck with pain, 'tell the staff-surgeon to look me up in my cabin immediately.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' said the side-boy, scampering away.

What the commander might have said next to Mackellar is uncertain, because a colossal wave struck the ship, drenching them both in spray and broken green seas.

II.

At the time Mackellar joined the *Alcibiades* spring was drawing nigh, after a winter spent in the most disagreeable waters in the world. Officers and men were in the grip of that mouldiness which shore-going people find it so difficult to understand. 'How can you be mouldy,' they ask, 'and yet breathe the fresh air of the sea?'

There is precious little fresh air between-decks in a cruiser carrying a complement of several hundred men. Most of the air is 'potted.' A fighting-ship vacillates between 'action stations' during the day and 'defence preparedness' at night, when everything is closed down as tight as a drum. Therefore, unless one's watch is kept on the bridge, there is scarcely enough exposure in a modern man-o'-war to blow the cobwebs out of one's brain. In addition to 'fugging it' below while off duty, there is the awful monotony of a routine life spent amidst cramped surroundings. No wonder, then, naval officers acquire the habit of pacing up and down like animals in the Zoo!

Mackellar, coming 'straight from the beach,' did not understand the peculiarly touchy and liverish atmosphere into which war conditions had thrust him. He ought to have been more cautious in speaking his mind in a community swayed by tradition. Saluting the quarter-deck is a case in point. When asked by the officer of the watch why he did not comply with this usage, Mackellar said he 'didn't see any particular reason for saluting a teak deck.'

'All the same, my brave fellow,' the officer of the watch reproved him, 'you ought to respect a custom which the mighty Nelson was pleased to follow.'

III.

There was no question about it from the start. Mackellar jarred the mess. Their ruffled feelings found a ready protagonist in Lieutenant Fitz-Boodle. This officer was the very antithesis of the lean, æsthetic-looking Mackellar. Burly and strong, Fitz-Boodle was so full-blooded that he used up many a handkerchief in stanching his frequent nose-bleeds. Mackellar clashed with him quite early in the game on a subject that was very dear to Fitz-Boodle's heart, or, rather, his stomach. He was excessively fond of swine's flesh, and as mess caterer his word was law when it came to what the ward-room should eat. Mackellar, on the other hand, heartily disliked pig in all its posthumous forms, and strenuously objected to Fitz-Boodle's fancy occupying such a large part of the menu. Some wag suggested an 'anti-swine club,' and a few dietetic rebels joined up. They went delirious with joy when Mackellar condemned a lot of obviously bad pork. This he had a perfect right to do as officer in charge of the victualling department during the paymaster's absence, and it meant that a fresh supply could not be obtained for another couple of weeks. The band played the 'Roast Beef of Old England' before dinner, and Fitz-Boodle was much annoyed at the

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vociferous applause of the 'anti-swiners.' To make matters worse, the fish course was particularly high that night, and Mackellar suggested that in future they be permitted to wear their new respirators during this dangerous interval. Fitz-Boodle was incensed, and, in his capacity of president on that occasion, imposed the time-honoured penalty for such a breach of dinner etiquette. He fined Mackellar a glass of No. 1 port all round.

IV.

Not long afterwards the *Alcibiades* fired a practice torpedo. When it made its hissing exit from the submerged tube, however, the sliding-door in the ship's side jammed, and the torpedo flat was flooded. Luckily the bulkheads held tight, the tube was eventually plugged, and soon the sea-water was pumped out, and matters put to rights again.

When the alarm was at its height, and Mackellar felt the stern end of the ship drop several feet beneath him from the weight of the inrushing sea, he dashed down to his cabin for his swimming-waistcoat. Unfortunately, Fitz-Boodle saw him in this excited frame of mind. He said Mackellar was in a funk. In the eyes of men who have been accustomed to the perils of the sea from boyhood there can be no more awful stigma.

'You'd have more "guts" if you played "footer,"' Fitz-Boodle said at tea-time.

'Nevertheless, I don't propose to cultivate courage at such a cost,' declared Mackellar, who hated the tyranny of thought which games created in a mind like Fitz-Boodle's.

'We'll see to that soon enough,' said Fitz-Boodle, firing a salvo of rock-cakes at him.

Immediately after dinner, therefore, Fitz-Boodle got a 'pukka' ward-room scrimmage going, and soon there was a pyramidal mass of struggling naval officers in the centre of the room. Fitz-Boodle's strategy was to get Mackellar entangled in this dangerous, wriggling heap. His onslaught was so sudden and vigorous, however, that Mackellar was whirled against the captain, who was sitting on one of the couches enjoying the sport. That was not all. The impact striking the wretched Mackellar in the pit of the stomach, he developed all the symptoms of *mal de mer*. The captain's dignity suffered accordingly, and he was obliged to make a hasty exit.

'This all comes of the naval mess being no longer the select club it used to be,' remarked Lieutenant-Commander Barnwell. He was a splendid navigator, but mad on the subject of *Who's Who*, much to the amusement of his messmates, who were constantly pulling his leg on the subject.

'Don't talk rot,' said Staff-Surgeon O'Brien, calling for a split whisky-and-soda. 'After all, what are we but glorified policemen, armed with big guns instead of revolvers? And some of us haven't even the manners of an ordinary "bobby,"' the staff-surgeon concluded, looking hard at Fitz-Boodle.

V.

One day, when the *Alcibiades* was in harbour, the picket-boat landed officers on the dreary coast near their mooring. Mackellar found himself the odd man in so far as a walking companion was concerned, so he went off on his own. Rain coming on, a crofter invited him to take refuge in his cottage. A peat-fire crackled cheerfully in the old-fashioned fireplace, lighting up the eyes of a dark-haired lass who was working her spinning-wheel. Somehow or other their liquid depths suggested the Spanish Armada to Mackellar, and he was weaving all sorts of romantic incidents into her imaginary genealogical tree, when, much to his disgust, a couple of engine-room artificers came in and spoiled the scene. Gulping down the tea which the mother had brewed for him, and swallowing an oatcake, he pressed half-a-crown on one of the children, and departed in an abstracted sort of way. When he arrived at the naval pier he fancied a number of officers were looking at him curiously. Fitz-Boodle said he was 'tight.'

The captain of the *Alcibiades* regarded him sternly. 'What on earth do you mean by masquerading in that cap, Mackellar?' he demanded. 'Take it off at once.'

Mackellar uncapped, and, much to his amazement, found he was wearing an engine-room artificer's cap. In the uncertain light of the crofter's cottage he had mistaken it for his own.

VI.

'The captain wishes to see you in his cabin, sir,' the sentry said to Mackellar a short time after he had returned on board.

The captain was in a peevish mood. Bad news had just come from his Southsea home, which he had not seen for many weary months. He stood in front of a long table in his fore-cabin, looking gaunt and worn. The commander was standing on his right.

'Will you explain, Mackellar,' the captain commanded, 'your disgraceful conduct of this afternoon?'

Mackellar briefly narrated what had happened.

'I can't believe such a preposterous yarn,' the captain said incredulously.

'You have no sound reason for doubting my word,' Mackellar retorted passionately. 'What's all the row about, anyway?' he asked. 'My only offence consisted in wearing a cap that had an inferior badge on it.'

'Commander,' the captain ordered, 'stop his leave.'

'Very good, sir,' answered the commander, rubbing his hands together briskly.

'Thank you, sir,' Mackellar said hotly, as he was leaving the cabin.

'Commander,' the captain roared in a voice choking with rage, 'send him to his cabin!'

VII.

The staff-surgeon came below a few minutes later. 'The captain has asked me to inform him, Mackellar,' he said, 'whether or not you were in an intoxicated condition this afternoon.'

'Perhaps it's being exposed to the fumes of rum,' Mackellar answered somewhat hysterically. The historic custom of serving out this potent spirit took place every morning outside the ship's office.

O'Brien laughed heartily. 'Alcoholism has, as a rule, a more material basis than that, Mackellar,' he said. 'However, we shall see in a moment.'

The staff-surgeon thereupon proceeded to examine him. His diagnostic nostrils sniffed Mackellar's breath, and he placed a tiny instrument called an alcoholometer on his tongue. He asked him to say, 'Around the rugged rock the ragged rascal ran.'

Mackellar repeated this peculiar sentence in a clear, unfaltering voice, in which there was not the slightest thickness of speech.

'How about your wine bill?' the staff-surgeon asked.

'I've touched nothing but grape-juice since coming on board,' answered Mackellar.

'Good!' O'Brien exclaimed. 'You'll be pleased to hear I'll give you a certificate of sobriety any time you wish.'

'I'm very much obliged to you, sir,' said Mackellar, heaving a sigh of relief.

'Now, my lad,' the staff-surgeon said kindly, lighting a cigarette, 'you may have your grievances; so have your messmates theirs. You haven't bent sufficiently to the spirit of the navy. You must bear in mind that, with the exception of the medical officer, all your other messmates came into the service as boys. It's the only thing they have ever known, and what you may regard lightly is a serious matter to them,' O'Brien concluded.

'What am I to do, then, in the present instance?' Mackellar asked.

'You'll go to the captain in the morning, and tell him how sorry you are for the whole occurrence. In the meantime I'll smooth the way for you by impressing upon the skipper the fact that you haven't been long in the service,' said O'Brien.

'I suppose I'll have to humble myself,' Mackellar said dolefully.

'It's the only way,' said O'Brien. 'The man with a stiff-neck will have it broken every time in the navy.'

Mackellar accordingly obeyed his mentor. The captain of the *Alcibiades* accepted the proffered olive-branch, and the incident was closed.

VIII.

Somewhat chastened in spirit, Mackellar was beginning to absorb something of the discipline of the service, when he was called upon to decode the wireless messages which are received in cipher. He had had no training in this intricate work. A diploma in accountancy does not carry with it a knowledge of how to unravel the mysterious language of the fleet. Mackellar made a mistake which concerned ritual rather than fact. Unfortunately Fitz-Boodle was on watch on the bridge at the time, and the signal was taken to him. The error was discovered, and made the subject of caustic comment on the part of Fitz-Boodle.

'It's too bad, sir,' the sallow-faced wine-steward said to Mackellar, 'how Lieutenant Fitz-Boodle does talk about you. And what's that "watch" you keep?'

'Decoding?' said Mackellar.

'That's right, sir. It's shocking. I say give a bloke a chance. Now, supposing I were to complain of his discrepancies,' the wine-steward said. 'The ward-room, for instance, ought to close at 11 P.M., and yet he often keeps me and the master-at-arms up till after midnight. It's a bit 'ard, sir,' concluded the little wine-steward, whose job was all the more distasteful to him because he was a Good Templar, 'considering we're turned out of our hammocks between 5 and 6 A.M.'

IX.

While at sea Fitz-Boodle 'ran in' the wine-room steward. In other words, he had him reported to the corporal of the watch. The latter called the master-at-arms, who took the wine-steward before the officer on the bridge, and explained his misdemeanour to him. The officer ordered the master-at-arms to put his name in the commander's report.

Such cases are usually heard by the commander at eleven o'clock in the morning. On that occasion the commander deals out rough justice from behind a small table, which is usually placed near the ward-room door. The master-at-arms calls out the names of delinquents, who appear before the commander cap in hand.

'What's the charge?' the commander inquired in the case of Martin, the wine-room steward, referring to his clean record before him.

Fitz-Boodle fell in before the commander, and saluted.

'Shortly after midnight last night, sir,' said Fitz-Boodle, 'I had occasion to pass near where this man slings his hammock. I called out "Gangway," in order that he might make way. Instead of doing so, he was insolent, and swore at me.'

'What have you got to say in answer to this serious charge, Martin?' the commander asked the wine-room steward.

'It isn't true, sir. I gave way immediately without saying a single word. Indeed, sir, I was too tired for anything. Mr Mackellar will confirm what I say,' the wine-room steward declared.

Mackellar was called.

'I was on my way for'ard to the decoding-office about the time mentioned,' Mackellar began, 'and as I approached the vicinity of Martin's hammock I struck my head against a stanchion. I swore in a rather loud voice. It was not Martin who swore, sir; it was I,' Mackellar said, 'and I had every reason for doing so,' he concluded, rubbing the side of his head ruefully.

'I'm quite sure it was Martin,' Fitz-Boodle persisted.

'Inasmuch as there is some doubt about the matter, I'll let you off with a caution this time, Martin,' said the commander, marking his decision opposite the wine-steward's name in the 'doomsday book.' 'As for you, Mr Mackellar,' he concluded, 'you 'll please practise self-restraint in future.'

(*Continued on page 616.*)

THE EFFECT OF WAR ON THE NATION'S GOLD.

By W. V. Roberts.

EVERYBODY knows that when the war broke out one of the first acts of the British Government was to call in as far as possible, through the banks, the gold then in circulation, and to issue in lieu thereof the now familiar one-pound and ten-shilling Treasury notes. The change was tremendous, because it meant that the greatest gold-standard nation in the world suddenly made paper instead of gold its principal medium of domestic commercial exchange; and it was obvious not only that social, commercial, and international relations would be affected, but that the influence of the new order of things would extend also to arts, industries, and manufactures. Yet how many, in the light of experience, can say exactly what the real effect has been or is?

In the first place, it should be noted that although there is less gold in circulation, the world's output of the metal has increased. The value of that output rose in 1915 to no less than ninety-seven million seven hundred and nine thousand pounds, a sum which exceeded all previous annual records. There was a slight falling off in 1916, but none the less the value of the aggregate production in these two war years was in excess of that for any two preceding years. But, curiously enough, with an increase of output there was a decrease of profit. That at least was the experience in the Transvaal, the principal goldfield of the world, as shown in the annual return of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines, the fact being attributed to a rise in other commodities and in cost of working, while the price of gold is, of course, a fixed quantity. As the demand for gold is so great, it is of interest to note that with the output from the Transvaal, West Africa, Australia, Canada, and India, the gold mined in the British Empire amounts to something over sixty millions sterling a year, or more than three-fifths of the entire production of the whole world.

But it does not, of course, follow that the whole of that production, or even the greater part of it, is retained within the Empire. Every country needs gold, and when the war broke out there was a rush on the part of all the great Powers to secure more of it. The United Kingdom did not lag behind. When hostilities began coin and bullion in the Bank of England stood at about forty millions; at the end of May this year that had been increased to something over fifty-five millions. During the same period the reserve was raised from twenty-nine millions to nearly thirty-five millions. At the same time the Bank of France increased its stock of gold, though not quite in the same proportion. Germany also has made most strenuous efforts to gather together a larger supply of gold as some reserve against the huge issue of paper it has now to face. But, in spite of its gigantic efforts, the proportion of its gold to note liability was recently, according to so high an authority as Sir Edward Holden, only 15·7 per cent., as compared with a British ratio of about 22 per cent.

Such facts as these serve to show in some degree how great has been the efforts of the banks to secure more gold, and were it the only influence at work the results would doubtless have been greater. But there has been a contrary movement compelling belligerents, especially Britain, to part with gold. Enormous supplies of munitions, for instance, have been bought from the United States. These, of course, have not been paid for directly by hard gold—a huge loan has been raised chiefly for that purpose—but, all the same, gold has come very largely into play, and has very considerably affected Great Britain. Thus in 1913, the last complete year of peace, we imported about thirteen and a half millions more gold than we exported; while in 1915, the first complete year of war, we exported nearly twenty-eight millions more than we imported, so that there was a complete reversal of the position.

As most readers will suspect at once, the United States of America, on balance, gained most of the gold we had to send abroad. The official figures, which we may take first, are indeed almost startling. In 1913 our direct

export of the metal to the United States did not in value much exceed seven hundred thousand pounds sterling; and in the following year, before the monetary effect of the war had begun to be seriously felt, it dropped to a mere three thousand pounds; but in 1915 our export of gold to America rose at a bound to over twenty millions, perhaps the largest amount we ever sent directly to that country in a single year. To find anything like that figure we must go back to the year 1907, when America was passing through its greatest financial crisis since the Civil War. To ease the strain we then sent her eighteen millions in gold, and the crisis passed. Next we may consider the fact that gold has probably been sent to the United States from other parts of the British Empire, and that it has certainly been sent from other countries of Europe. The amount sent by all the Allies during the war, down to the beginning of this year, is computed at something like two hundred and fifty millions. Recently it was announced that a hundred millions of gold had been accumulated in the New York Sub-Treasury alone, and that the banks held six hundred millions. President Wilson probably had all these circumstances in mind when he declared that the resources of the United States banks exceeded by a huge sum 'the aggregate resources of the Bank of England, the Bank of France, the Bank of Russia, the Reichsbank in Berlin, the Bank of the Netherlands, the Bank of Switzerland, and the Bank of Japan.' No wonder America has been able to talk confidently in thousands of millions, and to raise so easily a first loan to the Allies of six hundred millions. Seldom can there have been so tremendous a turnover in a country's financial position within a decade, and the movement of gold during the war has had much to do with the transition. Of course, some of the smaller neutral states have likewise profited. In 1913 we sent to Spain the ridiculously small sum of thirty-four pounds in gold; in 1915 we sent over seven and a half millions' worth. To Holland we sent about one hundred and sixty thousand pounds' worth of gold in 1913, and an amount valued at over two and three-quarter millions in 1915.

If we leave the international and turn to the domestic aspect of the question, other interesting facts emerge. Some readers, for instance, might suppose that with the withdrawal of gold from circulation there would be almost a stoppage in the mintage of the metal. But that has not been precisely the case. In 1913 the value of gold coined at the British Mint was over twenty-seven millions; in 1914, a year partly of peace and partly of war, the amount dropped to fifteen millions; but in 1915, a full year of war, it rose again to twenty-one millions. The figures for 1916 are not yet available. At the same time, the Government have taken drastic steps to prevent the improper use of coin during the war —that is, use other than currency—and have prosecuted a number of persons for attempting to obtain coin for alloy or other purposes. On other grounds, however, there is reason to think that the commercial use of gold has diminished from quite curious causes. Just before the war the arts and industries of the world consumed nearly forty million pounds' worth of gold per annum. That use has been largely stopped in belligerent countries, and how closely the application of gold is scrutinised may be inferred from the fact that last January the Board of Trade authorised the use of a certain quantity of gold for the decoration of pottery intended for export, but forbade its use for pottery for Great Britain.

But apart altogether from official action, the war has caused increases or decreases in the use of gold in ways probably not generally suspected. Take dentists' gold. Before the war it was said that a dentist in good practice used a hundred pounds' worth of gold a year for stopping teeth, and as there are several thousand dentists, it was humorously suggested that our graveyards might become the British goldfields of the future. But many dentists have entered upon war service in the army or the navy, and the chairman of the London Appeal Tribunal found that out of a thousand dentists in the army only five hundred and sixty were employed as dental surgeons, so that the use of gold by dental surgeons has probably diminished greatly.

Then again, to take an illustration of the increased use of gold, everybody has remarked upon the larger number of marriages that have taken place as one result of the war. The Registrar-General now confirms popular impression by officially announcing that in 1915 there were three hundred and sixty thousand eight hundred and eighty-five marriages in England and Wales. In the census year of 1911 the number was two hundred and seventy-four thousand five hundred and seventy-seven, so that there was an increase over that year of eighty-six thousand three hundred and eight. That means a corresponding increase in the demand for wedding-rings, and probably in other gifts of gold usually associated with weddings. In confirmation, the circumstance may be recalled that at the West Ham Tribunal this year a wedding-ring maker pleaded for exemption from service on the ground that his work was of national importance, and that wedding-rings were so much in demand that his firm was doing an enormous trade. Incidentally it may also be mentioned that at the City of London Tribunal a gold-leaf manufacturer stated that gold-leaf manufacturing had before the war been almost entirely a German industry, but was now becoming a British one. The far-reaching effect of the war upon gold is therefore apparent.

Possibly it was the withdrawal of gold from circulation that strengthened the disposition among the poor but thrifty class to hoard gold.

That much gold is hoarded was shown by the way in which payments were made for amounts in the recent War Loan. At Enfield, a busy munitions centre, seven thousand pounds was paid in gold for war stock. At Newcastle one man produced no less than three thousand pounds in gold to pay for his investment; and at New Malden another paid two thousand pounds in gold. A Wigan miner and his wife carried into the local post-office a carpet-bag containing six hundred and ninety-three pounds ten shillings in gold, their life-savings, and put it all in the loan; while a Kingston man, who had bought a cottage for three hundred pounds, paid for it with golden sovereigns, which he proceeded to dig up in his back-garden. The back-garden seems, indeed, to be a favourite place for hiding gold in France as well as in England, for it is semi-officially reported that on a party of countrymen being allowed to return to a recaptured village on the Somme, gold was dug up from ground that had been turned by shells into a mass of shapeless clay; and that at another village a farmer's wife pointed to a spot among the débris where a safe containing thirty thousand francs was uncovered. It is estimated that gold is now hoarded by private individuals in France to the value of a hundred and sixty millions sterling.

In striking contrast to the way in which some have hoarded coin is the readiness with which others have desired to contribute gold valuables to aid the common cause. When speaking of the result of the War Loan in February last, Mr Bonar Law, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, told the House of Commons that he had received such gifts, but, feeling that he ought not to take them, he had sent them all back except two that had reached him anonymously, and that he had not, therefore, been able to return. But the spirit which prompted the gifts was touching. One donor had written: 'It is heart-rending to read every day requests for money for the War Loan when we have not any to give. As I have no money, I am hoping you can turn this bracelet into money.' That, indeed, is a true indication of the sacrifice which so many in this country are willing to make. The same may be said of the people of France, for the Bank of France, in response to suggestions that it should collect gold in jewellery and art wares, has issued a statement expressing its thanks, but declaring that it would be regrettable to ruin private collections in that way, especially as France's credit has no need for such a sacrifice. Is it not significant of the difference in the national position that the semi-official *Norddeutsche Allegemeine Zeitung* has printed prominently on its front page in heavy type an appeal by the president of the German Imperial Bank urging all German men and women to sell their gold valuables to the bank, and declaring that all gold ornaments are required, except those of special historical, artistic, or ethnical interest? The German Empress appears to have led the way by stripping the imperial households of gold plate, dishes, and ornaments, in order to add to the gold-supply of the empire.

Much might be added as to the great fall in the purchasing power of gold since the outbreak of war, but that would take us far into the region of political economy. Everybody knows that the sovereign goes only about half as far as it did before the war. Is it too much to hope that after the war it will recover something at least of its old value in the market?

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—THE OLD UN ADVISES, AND RAVENSLEE ACTS.

IN the rose-garden was an arbour smothered in riotous bloom, and in the arbour was a divan, wide and low and voluptuously soft, meet for the repose of an invalid on a languorous afternoon, or indeed any other time. But just now the invalid reposed not at all, but sat, elbow on knee and square chin on fist, very lonely, and therefore very grim.

All about him roses bloomed, filling the air with their sweetness, but he had no eyes for their beauty; upon the table within reach of his hand were books and magazines, but he was in no mood for reading; clasped between strong white teeth he held his favourite pipe, unlighted and cold, for tobacco had for him no savour. So he sat and scowled at the universe in general, and in particular at a robin that had boldly ventured near and was regarding him with a very round, bright eye.

'She's avoiding me!' said Ravenslee bitterly, teeth clenched upon his pipe-stem; 'there's no doubt about it—damn it, she s avoiding me! And she's not happy here either!'

The robin turned his head to regard the speaker with his other eye, then fluttered his wings and flew away as the lazy quiet of the afternoon was broken by the squeak of shoe-leather, and glancing up, Ravenslee beheld the Old Un.

'What cheer, guv?' said he. 'Greetin's doo; and how's the invalid?'

'Invalid!' repeated Ravenslee, scowling again. 'I'm no invalid.'

'Spoke like a true-bred game-cock, s' help me!'

'I'm as right as rain, physically, Old Un; but'——

'Talkin' o' physic, guv,' said the old man, seating himself and nodding brightly—'talkin' o' physic, the physic as set you on your pins again was love, guv—love!'

'But it so happens'——

'Wait a bit; I ain't done, guv! 'Ere 's me, a old cove as 'as lived 'ears an' 'ears an' 'ears an' 'ears longer 'n you; so nacherally I 'm a powerful lot fuller o' th' wisdom o' life than you, specially in matters o' th' 'eart, guv. Now me, 'avin' 'elped you into th' matrimonial ring, as you might say, 'ave took your 'appiness under my wing, an', guv, I don't like the way you 're shapin' '——

'But, you see'——

''Old 'ard, guv; let a pore old cove get a word in for a change. Now there 's you an' 'er, your fair young spouse, both up to each other's weight, sound in wind an' limb an' meant for j'y—what I want is t' see you come to a clinch! This ain't no time for sparrin' an' out-fightin'—yet 'ere you are a-feintin' at each other from opposite corners'——

'But'——

''Arf a mo', guv; 'arf a mo'—gimme a chance for a occasional word! An' don't frown, guv; don't frown at a pore old cove. Ye see, there 's jest three blokes in this 'ard world as my old 'eart warms to, an' one on 'em 's Joe, an' t' other un 's you, an' t' other un 's 'er—which ain't a bloke. Lord, guv, what a soft armful o' beauty! 'Ow warm an' cuddlesome! Oh, guv, what a waist! What lips! What'——

'Old Un, for Heaven's sake shut up! D' you think I 'm blind? D' you think'——

'Guv, I dunno wot t' think! 'Ere 's you with your 'ead in your 'ands, an' there 's 'er sighin' an' sighin' '——

'Sighing? Where? When? Why'——

'Sighin' an' sighin', guv, so soft an' pretty—I 'eard 'er! Also she wep'—I seen 'er'——

'Where?'

'An' 'er tears, guv, them pearly tears, went t' my 'eart; an' nobody t' put an arm round that waist, nor kiss them sweet lips, nor soothe them tears away:

Oh, alone she sat sighin' by a green willer-tree,
With 'er 'and on 'er bosom, 'er 'ead on 'er knee,
Weepin' willer, willer, willer, my garlan' shall be.

So, guv, I ax you, man to man, why, oh, why, are ye neglectin' your fair young spouse? An', guv, I only ax because your 'appiness an' 'ers is mine—s' help me!'

'How if it 's the other way about, Old Un? Suppose she avoids me?'

'Why, lumme, guv! 'tis a sure sign she needs persoot. Remember this:

'Im as would lovely woman woo,
'E lovely woman must persoo;
For if 'e don't, 'tis plain as plain
That feller 'e will woo in vain.

An', guv, I've only took th' liberty o' sayin' this because my pore old bowels yearns to ye—both on ye. Persoot 's the word, guv—per-soot!'

The Old Un nodded, rose, and creaked away; and Ravenslee, looking after him, scowled no longer, but rising, sauntered across the trim garden to where there was a lily-pool, and leaning over the marble rim, stared down into the placid water.

Now, as the Old Un went his way, there met him a little girl, very neat and tidy, who sang to herself in a small, happy voice, and tapped along on a crutch; but, beholding the Old Un, his dazzling shoes, his rakish hat, she stood silent all at once, glancing up wistfully into that fierce, battered old face.

'Lumme—crutches!' he exclaimed.

'No, please—only one, sir!' she answered, dropping him a little, old-fashioned curtsy.

'Crikey!' said he, staring; 'so young, so tender, an'—a game-leg! A little angel wi' a broke wing—lumme!'

So Age and Youth stared at each other, and she, being a child, was quick to heed that the eyes so bright beneath their hoary brows were kindly eyes, and the smile upon the grim old mouth was very reassuring; wherefore she smiled also.

'Only one crutch, sir,' she repeated. 'An' the doctor says as I won't want it much longer, sir.' Here, dropping another curtsy, she held up for his acceptance a bunch of wild flowers.

'What!—f'r me, little maid?' he inquired.

'Yes, please, sir.'

'Why, bless—bless your lovin' little 'eart!' quavered the old man, and stooped to touch her rosy cheek with a hand gnarled and scarred with much hard punching, yet a very gentle hand indeed. 'God bless that little game-leg; but pretty flowers 'ud be wasted on a old bloke like me. You take 'em to th' guv, see—over there—that tall chap leanin' over th' pool. But first gimme a—a kiss instead, will ye, little lass?'

'I 'd like to, sir?'

And when the Old Un had kissed and been kissed right heartily, he pointed to Ravenslee's distant, lounging figure, winked, nodded, and squeaked away.

Thus it was that Ravenslee, absorbed in thought, was presently roused by the quick, light tapping of the little crutch, and glanced up.

'Oh!' she cried softly. The flowers fell and lay neglected as, clasping her hands, she stared up at him in radiant-eyed wonder.

'Welcome, Highness!' said he, and bowed.

'Oh, it 's the Prince—my dear Prince! Oh, goody!' and she hastened towards him, then stopped all at once, puzzled and abashed because of his elegant attire. Perceiving which, he reached out and drew her down by him on the marble seat beside the pool.

'Why this sudden change of demeanour, Princess?' he inquired. 'What 's the matter?'

'You 're—you 're so different, sir—so different an' grand in all them cute clo'es, sir.'

'Am I, dear? But I 'm just the same inside, you know. And, for Heaven's sake, Princess, do not call me "sir"!'

'But the big gentleman that belongs here, an' has all these lovely flowers an' everything—he says as I must always say "sir."'

'Big gentleman?'

'Yes, the big, soft gentleman with the cute little curls on his cheeks.'

'Oh—him!' said Ravenslee, laughing suddenly. 'Indeed a very just description, Princess. But you don't have to worry about him any more; he's gone.'

'Gone? For good?'

'For very good indeed!'

'Doesn't all this beautiful, beautiful place belong t' him any more?'

'Never any more.'

'Have you come here 'stead of him? Come t' stay?'

'Yes.'

'An' can I pick a rose t' kiss sometimes?'

'As many as you like.'

'Oh,' sighed the child rapturously, nestling within his arm, 'isn't that just—fine? I guess this sure is the Beautiful City of Perhaps, after all!'

'I wonder!'

'Oh, but I'm sure it is—now th' gentleman's gone I just know it is!'

'What makes you so sure?'

'Everything! 'Cause, you see, Prince, my daddy don't have t' be away all day any more. An' mumsey don't have t' sew late, nights, any more. An' when we came into the cute little house where we live—there was the doll that says "Mamma" just waitin' f' me. An' there was a big box o' candies, an' a doll-carriage with real rubber on th' wheels—just like we used to talk about. So, you see, this must be Perhaps at last, an' I'm so—so happy—only '—— Hazel sighed.

'Only what?'

'I do wish Hermy could find her way here too; she used t' be so tired sometimes.'

'You mean that you would like to find Princess Nobody, I guess.'

'Oh, but I can't! I used to look an' look for her every day till th' gentleman said she wasn't here, an' told me never t' come near th' big house any more.'

'But he's gone, and you never had me to help you.'

'Oh, will you—will you help me right now?' she pleaded.

'Surest thing you know!' he nodded. 'Your hand, Princess.'

So, hand-in-hand, he led her, suiting his long legs to hers, along shady walks, up terrace-steps, across smooth lawns, and so to the great house. Here Hazel paused to question him further concerning 'the gentleman,' but Ravenslee laughed, and seating her upon his shoulder, bore her into the house.

And here, in her housekeeper's room, surrounded by many dusty bill-files and stacks of account-books, they presently found Mrs Trapes, whose hawk-eye viewed bills and tradesmen's books while she frowned and muttered such comments as 'Rogues!' 'Thieves!' 'Scand'lous!' 'Wicked!' until, glancing up, her sharp features softened, and she smiled up into the child's happy face.

'So Hazel's found ye, has she, Mr Geoffrey? An' talkin' o' her, you've sure made the Bowkers a happy fam'ly. But, my land, Mr Ravenslee, the scand'lous prices as th' tradespeople has been allowed t' charge you these last six months! Here's th' butcher—listen t' this'——

'Heaven forbid, Mrs Trapes! Rather let that butcher listen to you—miserable wretch!'

'An' there's the milkman—that milkman's cows ought t' blush at th' sound o' your name! Here's his accounts for the last six months, an' I've found'——

'Have you, Mrs Trapes? We're trying to find Hermione. Where is she?'

'Oh, she's in her room—layin' down, I guess.'

'Not,' inquired Ravenslee—'not—er—in bed, is she?'

'Mr Geoffrey, I don't know; I'm busy. Go an' see for yourself. She's your wife, ain't she?'

'Why, since you ask, I—er—hardly know,' he answered a little ruefully. 'Anyway, found she shall be.'

With the child perched upon his shoulder, he strode upstairs and along wide corridors, whose deep carpets gave forth no sound, and so reached a certain door. Here he hesitated a moment, then knocked with imperious hand.

'Come in!' called that voice whose soft inflection had always thrilled him, but never as it did now, as, turning the handle, he entered his wife's chamber.

Hermione was standing before a long mirror, and she neither turned nor looked from the radiant vision it reflected; her eyes, her attention, all the feminine soul of her being just then fixed and centred upon the tea-gown she was trying on. Such a garment as she had gloated over in the store windows, yearned for, but never thought to possess.

'Ann,' she sighed—'oh Ann, isn't it exquisite? Isn't it a perfect dream? Of course, it needs a wee bit of alteration here and there, but I can do that. Isn't it good of him to have bought it without saying a word? And there are heaps of dresses and robes and—and everything! A complete trousseau, Ann dear—think of it! I wonder how he knew my size'——

'Oh, I just guessed it, my dear,' answered Ravenslee in the voice of a much-experienced husband.

Hermione gasped, and turning, stared at him wide-eyed, seeing only him, conscious only of him; and he, lifting Hazel to the floor, seated himself upon her bed, and, crossing his legs, eyed her flushed loveliness with a matter-of-fact air. 'Really,' he continued, 'I don't see that it

needs any alteration; perhaps the sleeves might be a trifle shorter—show a little more arm. But those flounces and things are perfect! I hope all the other things fit as well?'

Hermione flushed deeper still and caught her breath.

'Oh Hermy,' said a soft, pleading little voice, 'won't you see me, please?'

Hermione started, her long lashes drooped suddenly, and then—then, forgetful of costly lace, of dainty ruffles and ribbons, she was on her knees and had the child close in her arms. And beholding the clasp of those round, white arms, the lovely, down-bent head, and all the tender, craving, inborn motherhood of her, Ravenslee held his breath, and into his eyes came a light of reverent adoration.

Presently he rose and left them together, but as he went the light was in his eyes still.

(Continued on page 612.)

IN THE SALIENT.

III.

THE work among the wounded is frequently trying almost beyond human endurance. Many a time I have felt how thankful I should have been for the relief of tears. I remember especially a day when an orderly said to me, 'Oh padre! this is a sad day in this tent.' That meant far more than the mere words conveyed; there were so many young brave lives there, in anguish, maimed, and stricken, swept in, as though upon a tide of sorrow, from the valley of the shadow. And so little could be done. Words were futile. 'Hold my hand, padre,' begged one fine fellow, 'and I'll try to bear it till the doctor comes round.' And it was a hand like flame that he put into mine.

Their patience is perhaps more heart-breaking to look upon than their pain. One, with his leg torn off, said, 'I must not complain. You see, there are so many really worse off than myself.' Once, in a hospital train, where a crowd of helpless men were being loaded up at a siding, I saw one man, groaning in agony from rheumatism, carried in. 'Where are you wounded, old chap?' asked the orderly. 'Hoots!' he replied, 'I'm no wounded at a'. Fling me onywhere. Look after the rest.'

Sorrow and suffering are verily big angels of God. We are learning, in a mystery. And we shall yet have worse—great sorrow for the nation, and empty firesides for thousands, in this crucifixion hour of the Empire. And for us, trying to help and uphold, the greater need for the grace of God.

Every day you saw the tragedy of it. I recall a tent in which I was sitting beside a dying-bed. And there was a screen up around the next one. The man there had a very severe head wound, and was incessantly talking as though giving quick orders to fellows near him. Now and again he would lift his clasped hands to his parched lips, and drink feverishly from an invisible water-bottle, resuming thereafter the exhausting trench drama in his dying delirium.

In another tent were two chums from the same town and the same regiment, both dying. Jack's subconsciousness was busy, going again through the fight which had cost him his life; and as he would fall back, worn out, he would cry for his chum. 'Bill! Come on, Bill. Help! They're in!' But poor Bill was passing away at the other end of the tent, utterly unconscious, the tide of life ebbing far out, in silence, towards the main ocean, with no returning flood for these shores.

I remember also, at this time, another, who suddenly slipped hold on life, and went over the watershed. And he insisted on sitting up in bed, talking to invisibilities, whom he was showing out somewhere. 'Good-bye—thank you!' he kept saying, with a wan smile. He looked at you with eyes that seemed to see you, while yet looking through you at the unseen. And his 'Good-bye—thank you!' almost broke your heart.

The wounded were always keen on souvenirs, and these were of great variety. The New Testament, that had stopped a bullet just above the heart, was a frequent one, and perfectly genuine. A South African had been carrying in his Testament a photograph of his sweetheart, and the bullet stopped just in front of her face. It had made a bruise there, as though she had stepped in between him and death. He had been severely wounded as it was already; and the New Testament was wrapped up in a bloody rag. He will not let that souvenir lightly go. It is, of course, true that any book would prove as efficient as a life-protector; but it is this book that the soldier prefers to carry there, and, more frequently than people think, he reads it, and carries much of it in his heart also.

The passion for souvenirs sometimes seemed to mean more than the mere craze for collecting. I remember one grim fellow who insisted on having beside him a blood-encrusted German bayonet. I imagine it had a story of its own, with some import to himself. Others would sit, dreamily caressing German helmets, which they had brought with them from the field.

Sometimes this passion led to curious adventure. A Gordon Highlander had crept back to No Man's Land for souvenirs, and was coming back with a German helmet slung on his shoulder-strap. But he lost his bearings, and

encountered two men of the Devons who had been out on some scouting duty. He very naturally crouched down as they approached; and they, crouching also, saw, in the dark, outlined against the sky, the German helmet. At that moment he asked, in his own dialect, tentatively, 'D'ye ken faur the Gordons is?' Immediately they jumped to the conclusion that he was a Hun. One of them hit out at him with a rifle, and then both fled, but not before the Scot got in on them with his fists, thereafter he also making speedy tracks for his very life, as it seemed to him. In the morning he reported to the doctor, at the Ambulance, that he thought his arm must have been broken in the night by 'twa German deevils.' And the Devons also had an interview with the same functionary, with a tale of a fierce onslaught made upon them by a terrible enemy, who had cursed them very volubly in a strange tongue. None of the three discovered the truth, though to an outsider it was perfectly clear; another proof that it is the bystander and not the actor himself who sees history in its true light.

There are countless streaks of humour and gleams of laughter even amid the sorrow-clouds of war. The mysterious diseases from which the soldier thinks he suffers sometimes puzzle you. He will proudly, and with a majestic solemnity, tell you that his illness has developed into 'gasteria'—perhaps a more accurately descriptive name than science recognises. More than one is sorry for his wife, who is distracted and harrowed by the 'insinuendoes' of her neighbours, a word almost worthy of a place in the dictionary. And many will tell you of chums who have broken down, and who were not really fit to serve, having been always of a 'historical' tendency. One almost feels a plea for heredity there.

How grateful we were when we found occasions like these! For, though we were not down-hearted, we were often war-weary. And frequently the good cheer of those whom we were there to comfort and strengthen really strengthened and comforted us.

I remember an Irishman, quite of the type of Micky Free in Lever's novel, a rollicking, jolly child of the Emerald Isle, pretty badly battered, but with a sparkle in his eye at which you could have lit a candle. He was from Dublin. I thought I should speak cheerfully to him, so I said, 'Well, now, aren't you lucky to be here, instead of home yonder, getting your head broken in a riot?' 'Troth, I am, sir,' said he. 'Lucky to be here, anyway. And lucky is anny man if he'll only get a grave to lie in, let alone a comfortable bed like this. Glory be! it's myself that's been the lucky one all the time.' Near him lay another. 'Don't spake to him, your honour,' said the first man with a laugh. 'Sure, he's a Sinn Feiner.' But both of them were of opinion that the loyalty of the rebels might be awakened by contact with German shells. 'Bring them out here, sir,' said they, 'and they won't be Irishmen if they don't get their dander riz with a whiz-bang flung at them. That would settle their German philandering. Sure, isn't it too bad what we've been enduring to enable the spalpeens to stay at home, upsetting the State, flinging Home Rule back maybe a generation, with their foolishness, and we as good Irishmen as themselves can be?'

The infinite variety of classes that make up our present army is astonishing. I told once of a Gordon Highlander landing in Havre with a copy of the Hebrew Psalms in the pocket of his khaki apron to read in the trenches. I saw, among our own Gordons, an Aberdeen divinity student, as a private, reading in the mud the Greek Testament and the Sixth Book of Homer's *Iliad*. Anything, from that to the *Daily Mail*, represents the reading of our men. This variety is also very noticeable among our officers. We had the lumber-man from the vast forests of the West beside the accountant from San Francisco; the tea-planter from Bengal; the lawyer from the quiet Fife town beside the Forth; the artist; the architect; and the journalist. And it was this mixture that made possible episodes of irresistible comicality.

For instance, to prevent waste of petrol in 'joy-riding,' a French barrier at one place near us had guards set upon it under a British officer. One day a young northern subaltern, entirely fresh to military work, was in charge; and the tale goes that he stopped Sir Douglas Haig's car, asking him to show his permit and declare his business. When the general did tell who he was, the boy was so taken aback that he is said to have stammered, 'So pleased to meet you!'

Again, a young officer told me that he was leading a well-known general around some trenches in the dark. They came to a traverse. 'We'll go round here,' said the general, and the young fellow led the way. But a watchful Gordon leapt up suddenly with fixed bayonet, and, 'Who goes there?' The youth replied, 'General Blank.' 'Ay, lad,' whimsically replied the Scot, 'ye'd better try again. That cock'll no fecht wi' the Cock o' the North.'

Another, a verdantly green soldier of the King, almost freshly off the ploughed haughs of home, met an officer of high rank. He was carrying his rifle, but he huddled it under his arm, and awkwardly saluted with the open hand as though he had it not. The officer said, very kindly, 'Here, my man, is the way to salute your superior with your rifle;' and he went through the proper regulation field-officer's salute. But Jock, after coolly watching him, as coolly replied, 'Ay, ay; maybe that's your way o't; but I hae my ain way, and I'm no jist sure yet whilk's the richt gait o't.'

It would be worth while seeing this man after a few months' training has brought him into the

'richt gait o't.' In fact, the way in which the men have fallen into the habit of discipline is as wonderful as the way they leapt into the line of service for their country's sake when they were not forced to go. I recall one, who was only a type of many. Up in the mouth of a West Highland glen is a little cottage on a croft. And the man there was the last of his race. When others passed out to the world-wide conflict, his mother, who was very old, opposed his going. But she died. And then he drew his door to, locked it, and went to share the battle for liberty which to-day is shaking the earth. There are far more men of peace than men of quarrel fighting for the soul-compelling things that are of value beyond this dying world, and these are made of the true victory-stuff.

None are less given to talk of what they have done than the very men whose deeds thrill others. They just saw the thing that was needed; they seized the flying moment, and did the deed that makes men's hearts stand still. They came out of it with something akin to the elation of the sportsman who has scored a goal. They saved their side in the game. That was what they aimed at, and they were satisfied.

In my last battalion were two men who, working together, did breathless things without themselves being breathless. They enjoyed them. After one 'stunt' our people in the trench observed a man hanging on the enemy's wire. His hand was slowly moving to and fro. They watched carefully, and saw clearly that he was signalling to them. A little group of officers gathered and considered the matter. But it was entirely impossible, they thought, to dream of attempting a rescue before darkness. So they resolved to get together a rescue-party in the night and save him. Meanwhile, however, these two worthies slipped away, crawled over No Man's Land, and brought the poor fellow in. Rebuked for their temerity, their reply was, 'We couldna thole the sicht o' a chum oot yonder like that.' Another time, after a bitter struggle in a patch of woodland between our line and the enemy's, they came and reported that a man in khaki was to be seen moving from tree-stump to tree-stump, evidently in distress. 'I think he's daft,' said one. And in the gloaming over they went, found him, and brought him in to safety. He had been wounded in the head and side, and left behind. The first day he had kept himself alive by drinking from the water-bottles of the dead; but he had lost his reason and his bearings, and was in despair when our brave fellows got him. And these men were killed later on by a slight accident down behind the lines.

It was difficult to get away from the touch of one's environment. One morning we had a weird reminder. When we opened the door of our hut, there, on the threshold, lay an unexploded 'dud' shell which had fallen in the night. Had it done what had been intended, we should have been very suddenly off somewhere among the stars. It made one think a little of solemn and strange things, and feel more than a little thankful to behold again the light of the sun.

IV.

People speak a good deal about the lust for blood and the fever-passion of battle. But our boys are not blood-thirsty.

A friend of mine, after a 'scrap,' saw a proof of this which almost cost him his life, as he had to resist the tendency to laugh, for he had been shot through the lungs. A big Scotsman, in a muddy kilt, and with fixed bayonet, had in his charge a German prisoner, who was very unwilling to get a move on. And Sandy shouted out to a companion on ahead, 'Hey, Jock, he winna steer. What'll I dae wi' him?' But Jock, busy driving his own man forward, just answered over his shoulder, 'Bring him wi' ye.' Both of these men had the sweat of conflict not dry upon them. But they never for a moment thought of driving the bayonet into that reluctant foe, as the German would have done most readily. Of course, one does occasionally find the old grim warrior still, quite contented under hard circumstances, finding indeed the conditions a kind of real relief after the rust of peaceful days. This same friend, going one night along the trenches, almost thigh-deep in mud, came upon a grizzled Irishman, O'Hara, cowering in the rain. 'Isn't this a damnable war, O'Hara?' said he. 'Thrue for you, sir,' was the unexpected reply. 'But, sure, isn't it better than having no war at all?'

A campaign like this brings one into touch with strange bedfellows. A man I know told me, 'In one place, during the early terrible days, we crept into a cellar, and I lay down to try to sleep. But I soon found this to be impossible, for I became aware of somebody that kept running to and fro in the dark, driving all rest away. I went out, and spoke to the doctor, whom I met. "Oh," he replied, "that's only our lunatic." It was, indeed, a poor fellow who had gone mad in the retreat; and they could meanwhile do nothing but carry him along with them.' Perhaps the weirdest of all the strange mixtures whom I met out at the front was a young fellow at a mechanical transport camp. His father was a Russian Jew, his mother was English, his grandfather Dutch, and he himself was born in London and brought up in Glasgow. In a world of such widely international disturbance you almost expected him to go off into effervescence, like a seidlitz powder.

Amid the sorrows and the weariness of the times out there it was remarkable how closely laughter followed at the heels of tears. We had great fun over a colonel—not in our division—who was very unpopular. He did not know the depths of his unpopularity, but, deeming

himself the best-beloved among his contemporaries, he was perfectly happy. One day, while he was sitting in front of his dug-out reading an old newspaper, a sniper's bullet passed quite close, and went 'pip' into the parados. He paid no attention, of course, for that was only a bit of the day's work. But when another came, he thought it was an attention which carried civility a little too far. So he called a Scotsman to him, and said, 'Go out, Jock, and nail that beggar.' Jock crawled out, glad of the diversion, stalked the enemy, 'winged' him, and was running up to 'feenish' him, when the German held up his hands and cried, 'Mercy, Englishman!' But Jock replied, 'Mercy? Ye dinna deserve nae mercy. Ye've missed oor colonel twice!' I often wonder if Jock told the colonel how he had put it! Or is he still as happy as ever?

It is told of Jock that, on another occasion, when a German held up his hands, after a good deal of dirty work with them, and said, 'Mercy, Englishman. I'll go to England with you!' Jock replied, grimly and coolly, 'Ay, maybe. But, ye see, that's no exactly whaur I was gaun to send ye.'

I was always much impressed by the Wesleyans, whom I often met in painful circumstances. I had never had anything to do with them till I came in contact with them wounded and suffering, but always most brave, patient, and truly religious. They bore their distresses without a murmur, and they died without fear. For they knew what they believed in. They had the gift of religion and the secret of a faith stronger than death. They were true mystics. I remember one day standing beside one of them who had been very dangerously stricken. His eyes were closed, and he was whispering continuously. I stooped down and listened. He was saying, over and over again, 'Oh God, remember me, and help me to get well, for the sake of those I love at home.'

I was turning to slip away quietly, when he opened his eyes and said, 'Whoever you are, don't go, sir. I was only speaking to God.' His religion was so intimate a possession that he did not need to apologise for knocking at the door of love with his prayer.

Nothing could be more touching, and often at the same time funnier, than meeting men past military age who, sometimes for the sake of their boys serving, had slipped into the ranks, mentally folding down a corner of their birth-certificate over the date, and salving their consciences, as did one, who said to me, 'I told them I was thirty-four—but I did not say on what birthday!' I remember one old Scot, who could scarcely move, telling me, 'I doot I'll hae to get oot o' this, an' awa' hame. Thae rheumatics is no good in the trenches; and they're girnin' at me again.' Of course, he had 'a laddie lyin' up yonder,' and a nephew, and 'a guid-sister's brither,' and so on, like the rest. And, of course, if it were not for these pains he would be as good as ever he was! Some time later I met him in the rain, and asked how he felt now. 'Oh,' said he, 'I'm just fine the day. I seen my youngest laddie gaun up, and I'd a word or twa wi' him. I'll be writin' his mither the nicht aboot it. He was lookin' grand. It was fine to get a roar frae him in the by-gaun.'

I called on one old woman at home, and she told me that her husband had only the previous day, which was his birthday, gone off to France. 'Eh,' said she with unction, 'he's a good man, my man. I often think I was a lucky woman to have sic a man. D'ye ken—he never told a lie!' 'And yesterday was his birthday?' I inquired. 'And how old was he?' 'He was fifty-eight,' was her answer. But when I asked how this modern rival of George Washington had got into the army with such an age, she innocently replied, 'Ye see, he said he was thirty-twa.'

How these elderly men endured for any length of time all the discomforts at the front was beyond understanding. They were, of course, frequently caught, when youth was more able to skip nimbly out of the way of death. The little, shell-swept graveyards at the front got many of them very soon.

I spoke elsewhere, some time since, of some of the forgotten and overlooked departments of our army. There are plenty such, of course. But one cannot help recalling amongst them the battalion runners, who carry messages over No Man's Land, or anywhere, from post to post, when air and earth are filled with hissing death, and who also act as guides up to the trenches. They are absolutely fearless. This type varies from the gaunt, silent figure, that stalks before you like an Indian through the dark, to the garrulous youth who talks all the time over his shoulder as he goes. One of the latter was leading up our men, and the colonel said to him, 'I hear that these dug-outs are wretched waterlogged holes.' ''Deed, they are that,' replied the guide. And then, gently, as if on a tender afterthought, 'D'ye ken, sir, I'm often vexed for you; for I'm perfectly sure that you're accustomed to something better than yon at home!'

Another is the military policeman, who controls and guides the traffic at the cross-roads, and where there is danger of shells falling, in such places as the square at Ypres. There, amongst evidences of steady peril, stands this quiet man with the red band on his arm; and he steps forward to warn you that it is not safe to be there! I cannot forget one road, when we were moving up to the front. The stream of life flowing on towards the fighting area was like the Strand in London at its busiest. The policeman with uplifted hand was as powerful there as at home. In a moment, at the signal, limbers, guns, motor-lorries, ambulances, mounted men,

and marching infantry stood motionless till permitted to go on again.

The directions we got one day from an Irish policeman were unforgettable. He said, 'It's quite easy, your honour. You see, when you go into Albert, you don't go into it at all. But you turn to the right, keeping well to the left all the way.' We thanked him, and trusted to Providence, as we are apt to do where there is nothing else that can be done; and, following our directions in a general way, we reached our place in safety!

Again, you will find, right up behind the front, the roadman busy, coolly filling up holes that shells have made, and behaving just as though he were working on a stretch of the Trossachs, or patching up the rut-worn tracks that the rain has damaged along by Loch Hourn.

It is in the air branch of the service that chivalry remains most markedly. Of course, in our navy you still get it, when you find our men risking their lives and their ships to save drowning enemies. But in the air service there is a mysterious spirit of generosity between foes that is almost as striking as the superlative courage of the combatants.

I saw, the other day, a very keen battle far up in the blue. Two German aeroplanes were being pursued by ours. I never hoped to see such skill in flying. They looped the loop; they dived; they rallied—they seemed to outdo the swallows in their art. Then one, winged, fell a great height, recovering quite near the earth, and crawling off, limpingly, managed to escape. Somehow, we felt relieved, although he was a foe. The other, however, was driven down, like a blind thing. Every avenue of escape which he tried was closed, as if by the wings of eagles, by our airmen. But we were quite sorry on hearing that when he reached the earth he was dead, shot through the heart in the last stage of his flight.

These men are among the most wonderful we have. I saw two who had been six miles beyond the German lines. At about ten thousand feet in the air they had been attacked by enemy planes and their machine set on fire. Yet they came back, burned but undaunted, landing within our lines as though they had been at a picnic! And a young friend of mine, shot through the foot, probably lamed for life, told me how, at a great height, he had been attacked. He swooned from his hurt and fell, but recovered consciousness in time to get his machine again in hand, and landed safely two hundred yards across our lines.

There can be no braver hearts than those. Many a time we looked up at them, sailing overhead, and wondered; and the roughest Tommy sends something like a prayer with them as they go.

GERMAN DOINGS ON THE WEST COAST OF SOUTH AMERICA.

By W. Scott Lorrie.

WHEN the commander of the German cruiser *Dresden*, at anchor in Cumberland Bay, Juan Fernandez Islands, descried British warships bearing down on him, he thought that the last hour had struck for himself and his crew. The Kaiser's men at sea have been cynically indifferent to the loss of life. This has been seen time and again, and in no more convincing way than in the fight that took place off Santa Maria Island, as a result of which more than one thousand five hundred British officers and men were left to perish miserably, while Admiral von Spee's men are said to have looked on in seeming indifference.

When the British warships surprised the *Dresden*, her crew expected to have their own measure meted out to them, which might easily have been the case had the British so desired. Nevertheless, when the Germans took to their boats, they were allowed to make for the shore; ay! but with the sting of guilt in their souls. They landed safely, and then witnessed the destruction of their ship, while their killed and wounded were being taken care of by an ambulance-party sent from a British transport, which took them to Valparaiso. This is the sort of deed the little imaginative Germans will never give the British credit for. Immediately the news of the sinking of the *Dresden* was received, the Chilian Government ordered a warship to proceed to Juan Fernandez to pick up the crew of the sunken vessel, who were interned at Quiriquina Island.

A short time ago the commander of the *Dresden* requested leave to abandon for a few days his place of internment. While he was walking about the streets of Santiago his friend the German Minister handed to the Chilian Government a document containing the German Chancellor's reply to certain claims formulated some time before by the Chilian Minister of Foreign Affairs, on account of the violation of the principles of neutrality by the armed transport *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*, the cruiser *Dresden*, and several other German vessels. It is unnecessary to enter into details as to the words in which the German reply was couched; suffice it to say that it was indited in a similar manner to that which characterises most documents of the same character. It was a hollow refutation of the charges that justified the Chilian claims, apparently devoid of fundamental justice, and seemingly based on the policy that 'might is right.' However, it was the prelude of the sequence; for, while the German Chancellor

professed to disavow the Chilian statements, he expressed a desire to hear further from the commander of the *Dresden* before making a definite pronouncement on the subject. Was he trying to hoodwink the Chilian Government? His verdict was distinctly forecasted in the document alluded to, and nobody was so foolish as to believe that, whatever further evidence might be given by the German naval officer, it would induce Herr Bethmann-Hollweg to alter his mind about the policy he had already adopted. It was this desire of his that in all likelihood accounted for the trip of his subordinate to Santiago. At his request he was called by the German resident Minister to furnish evidence with which to strengthen the refutation of the claim that the neutrality of Chile had on more than one occasion been violated by the Teuton profligates.

But the Chilian Government would not allow themselves to be browbeaten by Teuton obduracy and audacity. Therefore, the German note gave rise to a very unpleasant time for the German Minister, who faced the situation with the fierce strength of Ajax defying the lightning. Referring to the stay of the transport *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* in Papudo Bay, where the commander refused to recognise the authority of the Government representative, Herr Bethmann-Hollweg stated that from investigations it appeared that the call at Papudo was made in order to land the wife and family of the captain of the British steamer *Charcas*, and that the German commander was not aware that there was a Chilian official at the place. Still, there was a wide gap between the wheedling allegations arising from German diplomacy and public opinion in Chile. While the latter was incensed by the conviction that the reports of German encroachments were true, and the thought of their injustice acted upon public opinion with exasperating effect, the former, with priggish sang-froid, contended that there had been no violation of neutrality, and, with remarkable churlishness, accused the Chilian authorities almost directly of being blockheads and duffers at a game which, it was doubtless meant, 'they knew nothing about.' What logic could convince such law-breakers? What has been said about German piracy in those waters is only one-tenth of the truth. They played their game, and partially won. Thanks to their secret wireless installations, they got coal and victuals when and where they pleased, and their steamers entered and departed from Chilian ports without their papers and despatches. In one instance, when a Chilian authority personally ordered the detention of a German steamer, the commander grossly insulted him, and said, 'The only man I am under duty to in these days is the Kaiser.'

The recent disappearance of the Chilian barque *Tinto* is another proof of German conspiracy. She left port several months ago, and has not been seen or heard of since. Only a short time before she had tried to deceive the local authorities in a similar way. A rumour went round that the barque had been chartered by German agents, and that she carried wireless installations, coal, and provisions destined probably for some submarine station in the Atlantic. A Government inspector was at once despatched to the spot, and the vessel was not cleared. After the usual comment to which such matters are wont to give rise, the affair drifted into oblivion, until the news suddenly came that she had got away. It is said that she was manned by some of the *Dresden's* crew who were interned on Quiriquina. The Chilian Government took severe measures against the owner of the vessel—a German by birth—and sent out several vessels to search the Strait of Magellan. But what was done in this respect proved of no avail, for the whereabouts of the vessel could not be discovered. What has become of this mysterious vessel? Has she fallen into the hands of some British cruiser? Time will some day, perhaps, throw light on this dark deed.

But the most recent and daring act of any German agent in South America was the stupendous enterprise undertaken not long ago by O. Krause. This man, formerly a captain in the merchant marine, had been acting for many years as agent at Callao, Peru, of the German Kosmos Steamship Line. At about the time when the United States severed diplomatic relations with Germany, this man Krause was engaged in laying the strings with which later he would set his plans in motion. He managed to sow the seed of discord in the Peruvian navy, which resulted in the resignation of several well-known naval officers, including the commanders of the two Peruvian submarines. He put up several secret wireless installations along the coast of Peru, and got a gang of German agents and spies to work the scheme he had devised when the signal to do so should come.

The commanders of the Peruvian submarines out of the way, Krause's next step was to get the two vessels to a certain island, where a German crew would be ready to take them over. But before putting such knavish machinations into practice he must quit the country and go to Mexico. Feeling assured that the arrangements he had made in Peru would be carried out without a hitch, he left Callao in the Panamá-bound steamer *Maipo*. But if Krause and his lot had been smart, the British agents had, indeed, not been lagging behind; for, when the *Maipo* was well out at sea, she was stopped by an auxiliary cruiser flying the Union-Jack abaft, and half-way up her foremast some such signal as this: 'We request that you hand over to us German prisoner of war.' The order was complied with without the least ado, and Krause was transferred to the war-vessel, which must have given him into safe keeping long ago. It

was a fortunate capture, for, had he been allowed to reach Mexico, his plans might have been carried out in such a way as would have meant a serious set-back to British shipping interests on the west coast of South America. With the two submarines mentioned, and an abundantly supplied station somewhere in Mexico, for instance, Mr Krause could have challenged British shipping during all the time it might take to capture or sink the stolen submarines.

For one who has lived in the very place where all these things have happened, and has heard the bitter words to which such acts have given rise, the German reply to the claims, especially of the Chilian Government, has no justification. We are convinced that the Germans will never realise that justice may sometimes be on the side other than their own. Their belief is that the one way of thinking that must needs predominate is the German way. The only truth is that which bears the seal of German sanction; and, what is more, no people in the world are competent to judge things in a light equal to that professed by the Germans to be the true light—their own. So what is the use of arguing the point with such hard-heads? A German fleet, comprising the *Scharnhorst*, the *Gneisenau*, the *Dresden*, the *Leipzig*, the *Nurnberg*, and several transports, lay at anchor at Easter Island for twelve days, and transhipped four thousand tons of coal. The German liner *Sedlitz*, after taking in five thousand tons of coal at Valparaiso, obtained her despatches for Bremen; the steamer *Santa Isabel* shipped a large quantity of coal at Valparaiso, and transhipped it in the Atlantic to German warships, and returned to Valparaiso for more, when she was interned.

Here is another example of German crookedness. When Von Spee's fleet was marauding in Chilian waters it was met by a large Hamburg-American cargo steamer, whose original name had been exchanged for the less compromising one of *Sacramento*. This steamer was despatched from San Francisco by a group of German agents, who had the nerve to constitute themselves into a company for the purpose of this one voyage. The plan was worked in this way. The steamer was loaded with coal and provisions. As the company to which she belonged was domiciled in the United States, she naturally flew the American flag. From San Francisco she was despatched to Valparaiso, where she was consigned to the Electric Traction Company, a German concern. At Easter Island or Juan Fernandez the precious cargo was transhipped to the German warships. Having successfully fulfilled her mission, the *Sacramento* put into Valparaiso to coal and victual. The Chilian naval authorities became suspicious of the good faith of the commander, who furnished somewhat contradictory information as to his voyage. Recognising the steamer to be the one they had received and despatched on previous occasions under another name, they decided that she should be interned, despite the German claim that the vessel was American, since she belonged to a company legally organised according to the constitution of the United States.

There are many other incidents connected with the German movements in the Pacific, some of which have acquired a similarity to legendary tales. An official narrates the story that while on duty at three o'clock one morning he witnessed a small vessel enter the bay of Valparaiso, and then disappear almost immediately. A steam-launch was sent to make a reconnaissance, but the mysterious vessel managed to get out of the way. What could such a vessel be doing at such an hour? The truth will never leak out; but it is probable that she was met by German agents, who delivered messages from the German Government for the commander of the German fleet in the Pacific.

For the Germans, every determination of the German Government is without appeal and infallible. A case in point. When the *Dresden* put into Cumberland Bay, her commander requested the Chilian authority there to allow him to stay eight days, which was the time he estimated would be required to do some repairs to the engines. The Chilian authority visited the vessel, and finding that no such repairs were necessary, requested that, in accordance with international law, the *Dresden* leave within the twenty-four hours prescribed. This the commander outrageously refused to do. Was he aware that British warships were close on his heels? Did he realise that to escape just then was as impossible as a journey to Mars, and that his only salvation lay in the Chilian authority, whom he thought he could browbeat?

Cumberland Bay, where the population barely exceeds two hundred natives, is an unusual place for a warship to call at for repairs. It would have been better and easier to go to Valparaiso. If it was the German commander's intention to act in good faith he would undoubtedly have done so. What was there to prevent him? But here is good proof of German cunning and artfulness. The *Dresden* went to Cumberland Bay with the excuse that the engines were disabled. Whether or not the necessary time to repair them was granted, it would make no difference. The commander was shrewd enough to know that the Chilian authority would in any event be obliged to communicate with the Government, and that to do this it would require from six to seven days, time enough to elude the British vigilance and pursuit. On the other hand, the German Chancellor's point of view, as emphasised in his note to the Chilian Government, was that the commander of the *Dresden* could stay at Cumberland Bay the time required for the repairs, which time could not be determined beforehand. To strengthen his argument in this respect, he re-

ferred to Article 14 of the thirteenth Convention of The Hague, 18th October 1907, in reference to the rights and duties of the neutral Powers in the event of maritime war. According to his inference, the Chilian authority's notification of internment within twenty-four hours was, therefore, not justified; on the contrary, he stated that the very question of knowing whether the vessel should be interned according to Article 24 of The Hague Convention was not sufficiently clear, even to the mind of the Chilian authority, who was obliged to consult his Government. This is but a natural result of Germany's late accession to power, the conceit that arises from the consciousness of great prosperity, and the claim to be the chosen people of God.

A MILLION A YEAR DOWN LONDON DRAINS.

By C. F. Townsend, F.C.S.

EVEN before the war there was a rapidly growing shortage of fats and oils. This may have been due to the people in civilised countries using more fats for edible purposes, although this seems hardly likely; or to a decrease in the supply, although this seems difficult to believe, with the opening up to trade of the hitherto unexplored regions of the world; or to the great increase in the demand for soap caused by the growth of personal cleanliness. The last seems the most probable explanation. Even in Pepys's days soap was almost more than a luxury; it was a rarity, and there is a record in his diary of a present he made to a lady of title of a small keg of soap, which was only just coming into use amongst 'the rich and the great.' Nowadays even the poorest use soap—more or less. As you cannot 'eat your cake and have it,' so likewise you cannot eat your fat and make it into soap, and it seems probable that in the future we shall have to choose between going without our nut-margarine for breakfast or without the soap required for our personal ablutions, not to mention the soap required for cleansing our undergarments in the laundry, or to find some new way of making soap which does not necessitate the employment for the purpose of the fat we want for breakfast. Fortunately for the enjoyment of our future breakfasts, the progress of science has led to the discovery of an entirely new way of making soap without having recourse to our precious fats at all—namely, from cereals, such as maize; and Dr Shorter of Leeds University, who has been carrying out a number of experiments on the action of soap, has found that this new soap made from cereals is much better than the old soap made from fats. Consequently we can still look forward to the enjoyment of our bread and nut-margarine, whilst yet being able to wash ourselves.

This, however, is only one aspect of the question, for, on account of the hardness of the water-supply in the greater part of the British Isles, we use only a very small part of our present fat soaps, the remainder being absolutely wasted. Where a hard water is employed, the whole of the lime in the water must be neutralised by the soap before any cleansing of linen or of the person can take place. Every one is familiar with the nasty curds produced by the combination of the lime in hard water with the fatty matter in the soap, and until this process is complete it is impossible to obtain any lather from the soap. Worse still, the lime-soap combination forms a yellow coating on linen that is washed in hard water, so that it is not only a waste of soap, but a serious nuisance into the bargain. With an average hard water somewhere about thirty pounds of soap are destroyed by the lime, and ultimately go down the drains as lime-soap curds, for every thousand gallons of water used. About 60 per cent. of this soap consists of fat; so that every thousand gallons of London water wastes about eighteen pounds of fat that we might have had for breakfast. Something like seven million gallons of water are used daily in London for personal washing purposes, without taking into account the large quantity used by the laundries for washing our clothes. Fat or oil used in making soap is now worth fivepence farthing per pound. Therefore, over one million pounds' worth of valuable fats go down the drains in London every year without having been of the least service to any one. The soap made from cereals, mentioned above, possesses the additional advantage that, besides saving fats, it is unaffected by the lime in hard water, and for that reason is already being used in the navy, for it can be employed perfectly well for washing in sea-water.

AT THE MOUNTAIN'S BASE.

As if at the world's edge, one sees no more
Time's landscapes heave; so here, in rest, and awe—
An awe most vast—the terraced peaks withdraw
Eyes from all level vision. Waters roar,
And cream, adown a crevice; while the hoar,
Gray rocks stand sentinel. The rook's deep caw
Through rough, serrated passes, like a saw
Most sage, breaks 'mid the silence. Mortal man, adore,
And bare the head! For downward dip, and drift,
All lesser souls; but thou the clear, cold beam
Scannest upon the golden, towering gleam
Of the swirled summit! 'Tis a kingly gift—
A foretaste of the heaven that waits the bold:
Rest on the height, amid the sun's spilt gold!

William J. Gallagher.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

HERE in Britain diplomatic messages, great national appeals, proclamations, fine in their idea, mighty in their import, sentences which, lighted with a reader's imagination, blaze in the being, are often stodgy, complicated stuff of words. They smell of clerks and silken gowns, of old chambers and ancient precedents. They are hardly complete in themselves; the beauty of their intention is only revealed when imagination is applied. In such cases there seems a certain insincerity when indeed there is none. However, one comes to the understanding that this is a necessary governmental way; that in the highest places it is unusual and, maybe, impolitic to speak one's mind in simple terms; and that somehow constitutions and history demand a certain dullness and obscurity. If we reproach our enemies, praise the good Allies, encourage the little peoples who lean upon us, exhort our citizens to effort still higher, there are complications of terms, reservations, restraint, some coldness. The Americans come nearly new to such a business; it has been a rare affair with them, and they have no regard for precedents and forms. Truly, Lincoln was an influence, but the national messages of Lincoln had simplicity and frankness for their chief feature. They were not the European kind of thing. President Wilson's are the same in circumstances of even greater difficulty and greater moment. In their simplicity, their honesty, their idealism, and, above all, in the human sympathy they exhibit for the Old World in its agony, for poor suffering humanity, the appreciation of the sorrow and the pathos of it all, the pity of man for his poor brother, the wish to help, such messages are like draughts of cold water from a mountain spring to parched lips. By them we feel a new force; we feel the youth and earnestness behind them. Even more than by the multiplied millions of dollars, the making of American arms, the coming of American ships, do we sometimes feel in these new and simple thoughts, so plainly expressed, setting forth the nobler principles of national and international life, the grand, the startling, effect of American idealism. Mr Wilson has been well inspired in the simplicity of his messages. The full spirit of Lincoln's frankness has come upon him, and his appeals to Congress, to his countrymen, to the peoples of other lands, make a series which is matchless in plain impressiveness. We see the new hope, the new idealism, shining in them; we hear the call to man to be brave and strong that the end may be good for all. They are the words of man to man in the supreme crisis of the world. No conventions here! The proclamations of the President of the United States to his fellow-citizens and their foreign friends are not drafted by lawyers, considered by committees, altered and amended and given a Tudoresque finish. Instead of such a process, one likes to think of the President pacing in his garden, writing down, as is his habit, a note or two in shorthand, and then in the watches of the night, with the inspiration aflame in him, seating himself—as he does—before his little typewriter and with his own fingers keying the thoughts and words to their existence on paper almost as rapidly as they are shaped in his mind. That new tone in his messages, that simple frankness, that magnetic touch of hope and comfort and idealism, impress each reader at the first glance. Here is something that is not of the old way, not of Europe. It is of the new land, the golden West stretching from the 'Liberty' borne by New York like a charm upon her bosom to the Pacific on the farther shore.

* * *

There was a good example in those few timely, kindly words spoken to faltering Russia, so much harassed, so much tempted by an illusory prospect of peace that had been suggested to her. In the first moments of America's entry into the war her thoughts were of Russia. That was very noticeable. Britain was pleased with the Russian Revolution, but that tremendous event seemed to strike the American imagination more forcibly than ours. At the first moment America flew to Russian assistance with kind, encouraging words and offers of vast supplies. She strove earnestly to make Russia feel that all the body and all the free spirit of the United States were with her. When Russia hesitated, when the way before her began to seem too hard, the President sent a special message to the Provisional Government. It was to give the Russians hope, to stimulate them, and to direct aright their philosophy on the subject of an-

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nexations and territorial adjustments, which seemed, amid revulsions of feeling, to be falling into some state of confusion. There was a glow in the words that is not to be found in proclamations from Old-World cabinets. A new conception of America's President suddenly rose in the minds of Europeans when they read, and read a second time, the close of the mighty address to Congress in which he first declared for war. In time so distant that even the history of this ghastly and fateful world convulsion will be condensed by the historians to a page or two, the peroration of Woodrow Wilson's address to Congress will be given in full. 'Civilisation itself,' those men of a new age will read, 'seems to be in the balance; but right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things which we have always carried nearest our hearts—for democracy, for the right of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own government, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for the universal dominion of right by such a concert of free peoples as will bring peace and safety to all nations, and make the world itself at last free. To such a task we can dedicate our lives, our fortunes, everything we are, everything we have, with the pride of those who know the day has come when America is privileged to spend her blood and might for the principles that gave her birth, and the happiness and peace which she has treasured. God helping her, she can do no other.' Unforgettable words. But in many minds the strongest impression will remain of the address, so wonderful in its intimacy, in its earnestness and simplicity, that the President made in the form of a personal appeal to his fellow-citizens, soon after the American entry, to join together to unite the nation for the preservation of its ideals and for the triumph of democracy in the world war. In no other country since the war began has an appeal so direct and intimate been made to the people; perhaps in no other country would it have been possible. And yet it seems a simple, an obvious, measure. 'Fellow-countrymen,' said he in this printed address, 'I hope you will permit me to address to you a few words of earnest counsel and appeal.' And then, one by one, he spoke to all classes in that great and diverse community. Thus: 'To the men who run the railways of the country, whether they be managers or operative employees, let me say that railways are the arteries of the nation's life, and upon them rests the immense responsibility of seeing to it that these arteries suffer no obstruction of any kind, no inefficiency or slackened power. To the merchant let me suggest the motto, "Small profits and quick service;" and to the shipbuilder the thought that life and the war depend upon him. Food and war supplies must be carried across the seas no matter how many ships are sent to the bottom. The places of those that go down must be supplied, and supplied at once. To the miner let me say that he stands where the farmer does. The work of a world waits on him, and if he slackens or fails armies and statesmen are helpless. He also is enlisted in the great service of the army. . . . Let me suggest that every one who creates and cultivates a garden helps greatly to solve the problem of feeding the nations, and every housewife who practises strict economy puts herself in the ranks of those who serve the nation. This is the time for America to correct her unpardonable fault of wastefulness and extravagance. Let every man and every woman assume a duty of careful and provident use of expenditure, as a public duty and as the dictate of patriotism, which none can now expect ever to be excused or forgiven for ignoring. . . . The supreme test of the nation has come, and we must all speak, act, and serve together.' With time the impressiveness of such appeals increases. Lincoln's words ring through America and the world now as ever they did—nay, more than ever; words of freedom and liberty and great sincerity. Mr Wilson's have even a greater task to perform, and they have a loftiness fitted to the endeavour. We now see the President as the practical man and the idealist at once, a marvellous statesman who achieved the masterpiece of bringing round his hundred millions of fellow-countrymen to the one way of thinking at the right moment. He did it not by hard instruction and stern exhortation from the beginning—thus he would have failed—but by gentleness and extreme sympathy always. At the supreme moment of the crisis he had his hundred millions of Americans ready.

* * *

It happened that I was in different parts of the United States, east and west, when Mr Wilson was in the full flood of his first campaign for the presidency in 1912, and circumstances inevitably led a wanderer to take a new and acute interest in this once university professor, who at first glance and thought seemed to be of even drier stuff than one of his opponents, Taft, and to lack all the colour and impulsiveness that made the other, Roosevelt, such an attractive figure. But the first examination of the man and his career forced a revelation. Here was a new creation in statesmanship, something not regarded before, in the Old World at all events, as being among the possibilities or practicabilities. This man with a straight American mouth, and one of the deepest, strongest chins to be seen on any man of consequence, was a soaring idealist who sternly bent his ideas to the practical cases of the time, but in doing so discarded old conventions and broke old moulds, making new ones for his purpose. Hitherto in his career he had been springing surprises continually, causing commotions in his communities, a disturbing element frequently; but invariably, by common acceptance in the end, working with a mighty

energy and determination for the public good, loving democracy and struggling always for the good of the people against those who would oppress them, reforming without ceasing. Here, it seemed, was a paladin for a new liberty. I followed his progress for a time, and one Sunday in a great New York political club sat from morning to night among the books he had written, in which some of his principles were expounded. They showed a new way of thinking; they gave a hint about a new possibility for the future. One could not doubt that this man was meant to lead America, and, with the Old World showing signs of a new emancipation, of leading perhaps something more than America. Only a few others had noticed in the past what a remarkable personality and mind was here, and what its prospects might be. First to do so was Colonel George Harvey, editor of the *North American Review*, who nominated him for a future presidency in 1906, and five years later described him as 'Woodrow Wilson, the highly Americanised Scotch-Irishman, descended from Ohio, born in Virginia, developed in Maryland, married in Georgia, and now delivering from bondage that faithful old democratic commonwealth, the state of New Jersey.' This bright summary by the American editor indicates an origin and early career of peculiar interest; but there was none of that special romance that it is the delight of a certain class of sentimentalists to associate with the youth of those who were afterwards great. Young Wilson was not a dreamer; no past President gave him a dollar and told him that one day he would be President too; the boy himself did not devote all his leisure hours to the study of the lives of such as Washington, and he made no dramatic declarations to his parents. And yet in the consideration of the origin of Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States, there is romance enough. What an odd mixture he is!—Scots, Irish, American, and so forth, as Colonel Harvey said. His grandfather on the paternal side lived in County Down, Ireland, and a hundred and ten years ago went to Philadelphia to better things for himself. His other grandfather was the Rev. Thomas Woodrow, a Scottish Presbyterian minister, who held an appointment for a long time at Carlisle, and then moved first to Canada, and afterwards to Ohio, where he held a pastorate. The youngest of the seven sons of the Irishman turned towards the ministry for a career, and was licensed to a post at Steubenville Male Academy. There he, Joseph Ruggles Wilson, came to acquaintance with Parson Thomas Woodrow's daughter Janet, who was a pupil at the companion academy for girls. They became friends, lovers, and married. The President was their third child, two daughters having come before, and he was born at Staunton, Virginia, in the last week of 1856. The little family had moved to Georgia at the time the Civil War broke out, Mr Wilson having accepted a pastorate at Augusta. The boy Woodrow was only four years old at that stirring time, and retains but few impressions of it; but the earliest recollection of his whole life is that of some men shouting in the street outside his father's house that Lincoln had been elected and there would be war. One day, as he remembers, he saw a number of Confederates riding through the town on their way to join the army, and he recalls Jefferson Davis passing through in 1865 on his way to imprisonment. His father was a staunch Southerner, but the family came little into contact with the great struggle. It made no impression at the time on this boy; but yet the Civil War inevitably had a tremendous effect on his mind, his temperament, his thoughts and ideals. It wound up every spring in him, and set him alive and burning for zealous action when the time came for him to go out into the world a man. That was because by the time he was grown up America was passing through that magnificent inspiring period of building and reconstruction under the new unity. The great fabric of mighty and industrious America was being prepared with amazing vigour. Young Wilson saw it at work, and any man with a germ of the statesman in him was bound to be enormously impressed and stimulated. He was. And at the same time he began to feel that destiny might have something for him; he thought of the presidency, and he determined to direct himself towards law and politics. His education was slow in starting. His father did not believe in forcing in these matters, and he was past nine years of age before he could read; but the pastor, in his careful companionship with his boy, had been affording him training of no small value. They had long walks together; they visited workshops and factories where great object lessons were presented, and at other times in the evenings the father read aloud to the members of his family chapters from Scott and Dickens. Then, after four years at an academy at Atlanta, South Carolina, he was sent to Davidson College, North Carolina, but left after a year through ill-health. In 1875 he proceeded to Princeton University, and there a passion for the study of history and politics took hold of him. He read deeply into Chatham and Burke, and in his fourth year he was regarded as the best speaker and debater at the College. This led to a strange and, as some might say, a significant incident. There was an annual debate at Princeton between two rival debating societies, and that there should be no preparation and that the full capacity of the participants might be tested, both the subject and the debating part in it to be taken by each side were chosen by lot. The rival societies each put forth a champion, and then the subject and the side were determined by hazard. Wilson was selected by his society, and when the slips of paper were drawn it was ordained that the

question should be that of Protection against Free Trade, and, further, that Wilson should urge the case of Protection against the other. He would not do so much violence to his convictions, even though it were but an academic exercise; he tore up his commission and abandoned the debate.

* * *

When his university career was completed he tried to settle to the practice of the law, with a partner, but this arrangement was soon abandoned. He determined to teach law instead, took a post-graduate course, and was then appointed lecturer in history and political economy at a women's college near Philadelphia. Some time later he was appointed to the chair of jurisprudence and politics at Princeton, and in 1902 he became president of the university, a position of the utmost control and authority. Now he entered upon his career as a reformer. He set about changing the system of instruction, overthrowing traditions, and abolishing abuses. Princeton at that time was a university greatly controlled by the rich, where their sons, living at the clubs they established, devoted themselves far less to educational matters than was desirable. The new president set a higher standard of efficiency, he made rules by which the students found it necessary to study more than they had done, and he established a system of groups, whereby numbers of students were brought into close personal contact for purposes of discussion and tuition with professors, and not left to their own devices after merely attending lectures, as had been the custom. His was a period of great reforming changes such as had never been known before; but he found strong interests set against him, especially when he attacked the system of the residential clubs and essayed to substitute another that would have made for more efficiency and less luxury. He had defeats to bear; but in 1910 he ascended to a greater reforming task, for then he was nominated, and elected with a plurality of fifty thousand votes, to the governorship of New Jersey. 'Absolute good faith in dealing with the people and unhesitating fidelity to every principle avowed is the highest law of political morality in a constitutional government,' he said at that time. He purified and strengthened municipal government in his state; he amazed the people by his boldness, his independence, and his daring. The rest of the world was a little surprised when it heard that one Woodrow Wilson was to be a candidate for the presidency, but those knowing him and about him were not surprised. At the great Democratic convention he was selected as the candidate for the party after a sharp contest with others, and, according to the custom at these remarkable gatherings, he was cheered for an hour and a quarter. At the later trial, when the Republican vote was split between Mr Roosevelt and Mr Taft, with consequences fatal to them, he was an easy winner. He had 435 electoral votes, the plumping votes, from each state in the electoral college, against the 88 that were given to Roosevelt and the 8 to Taft. The election is not counted this way, but it was reckoned that he had 6,286,987 popular votes against Roosevelt's 4,125,804, and Taft's 3,475,813. The electoral figures take no account of minorities, but the others do. The rest is familiar to most of us. Without doubt Mr Wilson's re-election last year, near thing as it was, meant much for the great cause of the best of the world.

* * *

He is not a man to be judged by physiognomy. He looks cold, hard, unemotional, far from humour, but he is not so. No man is more devoted to home life; he has fine warmth of feeling and rare powers of humour. He can tell a little story as well as any American, and they say he commonly opens his meetings of the Cabinet with an anecdote. He has none of the primary 'bad habits,' as we call them. There was a flutter in Washington when he first went to the White House, and the rumour spread that only grape-juice would be set upon the table. But all were happy afterwards. He lives a clean life. He is fond of sports and games; he is devoted to cycling, rowing, and golf. At times of great stress of mind during the war he has consistently sought relaxation on the golf-course. But when grappling with a problem he paces his study or the gardens of the White House in solitude for hours. The war has aged the President somewhat, but yet his vitality is enormous. It needs to be. On him, perhaps as much as on any one now alive, does the fate of the world depend. He is handling and controlling the most marvellous, most efficient, and most gigantic force that mankind has ever known.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XL.—CONCERNING A HANDFUL OF PEBBLES.

'AND so,' said Hermione as she waved good-bye to Hazel, who stood in the cottage doorway with Mrs Bowker—a Mrs Bowker no longer faded—'you didn't forget even the doll that says "Mamma"?'

'It was such a little thing!' he answered.

'What a—man you are!' she said softly.

'Just that, Hermione,' he answered, 'and—frightfully human!' She was silent. 'Do you

know what I mean?' he demanded, glancing at her averted face.

'Yes!' she answered without looking round. So they walked for a while in silence.

Suddenly he seized her hand and drew it through his arm. 'Hermione,' he said gently, 'I want my wife.'

She still kept her head averted, but he could feel how she was trembling.

'And you think'—— she began softly.

'That I have been patient long enough. I have waited and hoped because'——

'Because you are so generous, so kind—such a man!' she said softly and with head still averted.

'And yet since I have been well again you have kept me at arm's length. Dear, you—love me still, don't you?'

'Love you?' she repeated. 'Love you?' For a moment she turned and looked up at him, then drew her arm from his and walked on with head averted once more.

So they entered the rose-garden, and coming to the lily-pool, leaned there side by side.

'Hermione,' said he, staring down into the water, 'if you really love me, why do you hate to kiss me? Why do you hardly suffer me to touch you? And you've never even called me by my name that I remember!'

'Geoffrey!' she breathed, 'and I—love you to touch me! And I don't hate to kiss you, Geoffrey dear.'

'Then why do you keep me at arm's length?'

'Do I?' she questioned softly, gazing down at the lily-pads.

'You know you do. Why?'

'Well—because.'

'Because what?'

'Oh, well, just—because.'

'Hermione—tell me.'

'Well, everything is so strange—so unreal! This great house, the servants, all the beautiful clothes you bought me! To have so much of everything after having to do with so very little—it's all so wonderful and—dreadful!'

'Dreadful?'

'You are so—dreadfully rich!'

'Is that the reason you keep me at such a distance? Is that why you avoid me'——

'Avoid you?'

'Yes, dear. You've done it very sweetly and delicately, but you have avoided me lately. Why?'

Hermione didn't answer.

'And you haven't touched any of the monthly allowance I make you,' he went on, frowning a little; 'not one cent. Why, Hermione?'

Hermione was silent.

'Tell me!'

Still she was silent; only, she bent lower above the pool, and drew farther from him; whereat his pale cheek flushed and his frown grew blacker.

And presently, as he scowled down into the water, she stole a look at him, and when she spoke, though the words were light, the quiver in her voice belied them. 'Invalid, dear, if you want to be angry with me, wait—till you're a little stronger.'

Ravenslee stooped and picked up a handful of small pebbles that chanced to lie loose. 'Wife dear,' said he, 'I'm as well and strong as ever I was. But I've asked you several questions which I mean you to answer, so I am going to give you until I have pitched all these pebbles into the water, and then'——

Hermione glanced up swiftly. 'Then?' she questioned.

'Why, then, if you haven't answered, I shall—take matters into my own hands. One!' and a pebble splashed into the pool.

'What do you want to know?'

'Two! Why haven't you condescended to take your allowance?'

'Dear, I—I didn't need it; and even if I had, I—oh, I couldn't take it—yet!'

'Three! Why not?'

'Because you have given me so much already, and I—have given you—nothing.'

'Four! Why—haven't you?'

'Oh—well—because!'

'Five! What does "because" mean this time?'

'It means—just—because!'

'Six! Seven! Eight! Why have you avoided me lately?'

Hermione was silent, watching him with troubled eyes while he slowly pitched the pebbles into the pool, counting as they fell.

'Nine! Ten! Eleven! Twelve! Why do you keep me at arm's length?'

'I don't—I—I—you won't let me'—— she said, a little breathlessly; while one by one he let the pebbles fall into the pool, counting inexorably as they fell.

'Thirteen! Fourteen! Fifteen—and that's the last!' As he spoke he turned towards her, and she, reading something of his purpose in his eyes, turned to flee, felt his long arms about her, felt herself swung up and up, and so lay crushed and submissive in his fierce embrace as he turned and began to bear her across the garden.

Then, being helpless, she began to plead with him. 'Ah, don't, don't—dear! Geoffrey! Put me down! Where are you taking me? If any one sees us'——

'Let them!' he muttered grimly; 'you're my wife!'

So he bore her across the garden into the arbour, and laying her upon the divan, sank beside it on his knees, panting a little.

'A little weak—still,' said he, 'but not so bad—you're no scraggy sylph, thank Heaven! Hermione—look at me!' But she turned and hid her face against him, for his clasp was close about her still. So he stooped and kissed her

hair, her glowing cheek, her soft white neck, and, in that instant—wonder of wonders—her arms were round him, strong, passionate arms that clung and drew him close—then strove wildly to hold him away.

'Loose me!' she cried; 'let me go! Geoffrey—husband, be generous and let me go!'

But he lifted her head—back and back across his arm, until beneath her long lashes her eyes looked into his.

'Hermione, when will you—be my wife?'

Against him he could feel the sweet hurry of her breathing, and stooping, he spoke again, lip to lip. 'Hermione, when will you be my wife?'

But, even while he kissed her, between those quivering, parted lips came a murmur of passionate prayer and pleading, 'Oh my love, wait—wait! Let me tell you—ah, loose me and let me tell you.' Slowly his hold relaxed, and, twisting in his arms, she slipped upon her knees beside him, and, crouching close, hid her face against him.

'Beloved,' she whispered quickly, breathlessly, 'oh, dear man that I love so—there is something between us, a shadow of shame and horror that is with me day and night, and always must be. While you lay sick it was there, torturing me with every moan and sigh you uttered. It is with me wherever I go—it is between us now—yes, now, even while I strain you in my arms like this. I have watched you grow strong and well again; I've seen the love in your eyes, and I've yearned to be to you—all you would have me, but because of this shadow I—dare not. Ah, God, how can I be wife to you when —— Let this answer for me.' And she placed in Ravenslee's hand a coat-button whereto a piece of cloth had adhered. 'Dear love, I saw you throw it away,' she explained, 'and I searched and searched until I found it.'

'Why?'

'Because I knew you would soon ask me—this question, and I have kept it for my answer. Ah, God! how can I be wife to you when my brother would have killed you—murdered you?'

Ravenslee hurled the button far away, then lifting Hermione's bowed head, spoke very tenderly. 'How does all this affect our love, Hermione, except to show me you are even sweeter and nobler than I had thought? And as for the shadow, it is—only a shadow, after all.'

'But it is my shame!' she answered. 'You might have had for wife the sister of a thief, but not—oh God!—not the sister of a would-be murderer. If—if I came to you now I should come in shame. Ah, Geoffrey, don't—shame me!'

'God forbid!' he muttered.

Close, close she clasped him, hiding her face against him, kissing and kissing the rough cloth of his coat.

'Oh Geoffrey,' she murmured, 'how we do love each other!'

'So much, Hermione, that I will never—claim you until you are ready to come to me of your own will. But, dear, I am only a man—how long must I wait?'

'Give me time,' she pleaded. 'With time the horror may grow less. Let me go away for a while—a little while. Let me find Arthur'——

'No,' he answered, frowning, 'you sha'n't do that; there will be no need—to-morrow I go to fetch him.'

'To bring him—here?'

'Why, of course. You see, I intend him to go to college'——

Hermione rose, and, coming to the entrance of the arbour, leaned there.

'Why, Hermione—dear love—you're crying! What is it?'

'Nothing,' she answered, bowing her face upon her arm; 'only—I think—if you ask me again—I can't—keep you—waiting—very long!'

(*Continued on page 630.*)

TWO DARTMOOR BOOKS.

By 'TAFFRAIL,' Author of *Pincher Martin, O.D.; Carry On! Stand By!* &c.

LAST night I spent the period between dark and dawn on the bridge of a destroyer, and I have spent a good many hours on that bridge since 1914. The night was cold and cheerless, with no moon, and we patrolled up and down, up and down, on our beat, following the dull, blurred shape of our next ahead. There was no vestige of light in the sky, no welcome gleam on the water; nothing but an occasional ruby shimmer flickering in and out on the undersides of the low, dark clouds to the eastward, the dull glow of our carefully inverted pipe-bowls, and the feeble glimmer of the light in the compass-bowl shining dimly on the face of the quartermaster at the wheel.

The night was still, but from far away, from the eastward, came the deep, thudding rumble of heavy guns, the guns which caused those ruby flashes. Nearer at hand were the liquid hiss, gurgle, and plop of our bow-wave as we drove through the water; the spasmodic humming of a high-powered turbine, and the whirring clatter of a stokehold fan; the clang of the revolution-telegraph reply gong as we adjusted the speed to maintain our correct distance, and an occasional order to the quartermaster.

We were waiting; waiting with the men standing by the guns and torpedo-tubes—waiting for something which never came. I spent the time in my usual manner. I tried to probe

the impalpable darkness with my glasses, until little specks and blurs of light danced in and out of my eyes. I smoked more tobacco than was good for me. I drank bovril from a vacuum-flask and munched ship's biscuit. Even then it was apt to be monotonous, for it was not the first time we had been on this job, nor yet the twenty-first.

The night wore on, and long before the rising of the sun the lightening of the eastern sky told us of the dawn. The deep sapphire of the upper sky paled gradually to faintest turquoise. Lower down came a broad, undefined band of smoky amethyst. It melted into topaz, then to the faintest ruby on the horizon itself. The colouring was veiled in the wreathing eddies of a sea-mist overhanging the calm sea. Close on our starboard-hand a little, black-and-white, parrot-beaked puffin and his wife, alarmed at our approach, paddled hastily through the glassy water. We could see their heads moving as they considered us agitatedly. Evidently they did not like the look of us, for down went their heads, up their little pointed sterns, and they disappeared beneath the surface. The rumble of the guns had ceased. War seemed very far away.

And then, quite suddenly, a gigantic ray of golden light sprang perpendicularly into space from the still invisible sun. It hung there for a moment, faint and nebulous; but, as I watched, it assumed more definite proportions, until its narrow beam looked for all the world like the ray of a huge celestial search-light shining from the heavens, or a golden sword-blade directed at the sky.

The day had come, and, unutterably weary, I left the ship in other hands, retired to the chart-house beneath the bridge, and flung myself on the cushioned settee. It was in my mind to sleep, for I was sick of watching, and my eyes and my body were tired. But then I saw the book I had been reading overnight. It was just a book on Dartmoor, a book by a lady who knows and loves her moor, and used to veil her identity under the pseudonym of 'Beatrice Chase.' The name of the book was *The Heart of the Moor*, and it was published by Mr Herbert Jenkins in 1914. But it was new to me, and the calm, peaceful atmosphere of the first few chapters had attracted me vastly. So it occurred to me to read a little more before composing myself to slumber.

Alas for my good resolutions! I read till half-past seven. I read it right through to the end. My poor words can never do that book full justice, but to my sea-weary mind its fascinating and lovable account of life on Dartmoor came as a blessed relief. It breathes freshness and atmosphere. It made me long to bury my face in the dew-soaked heather, to climb to the top of its highest tor, and to be alone with the sunrise, to drink in its vastness, and to have the sweet smell of it in my nostrils. And even then I could not fathom wherein lies the subtlety and fascination of the author's work. I was trying hard to analyse my impressions, indeed, when a tousled head appeared round the corner of the door to inquire tenderly what time I wanted breakfast, and whether or not I would care for 'a nice lil' bit of 'addick' with my 'biled hegg.'

Haddock and Dartmoor! Ye gods and little fishes! My train of thought fled.

We arrived in harbour late that morning, and my first care was to present our bluejacket steward, who was going ashore to do our marketing, with the sum of four-and-sixpence and a slip of paper whereon was written, '*Through a Dartmoor Window*, by Beatrice Chase (Longmans, Green, & Co.).' And the sailor, trusty fellow that he is, returned towards lunch-time with a volume bound in grass-green cloth.

I spent the afternoon with it, and I liked it even more than *The Heart of the Moor*. It is a beautiful book. Its atmosphere of peace and eternal rest, its reality, its homeliness, and the author's delightful sense of humour all appealed to my jaded mind and tickled my wearied fancy. It acted as a tonic and made me happy.

The author has such a wonderful power of forcing one to take an interest in her and her surroundings. I want to meet 'The Rainbow-maker' and the 'Tweed Dog,' 'Mr Blue-jacket' and his kitten—or cat, as he should be now—'Tiger-r.' I should like to see the author herself, the house in which she wrote the book, and the table where mere words were fashioned into one of the most charming books I have read. I am an unemotional person, according to the best authorities.

Moreover, I am a very heterogeneous reader, and both *The Heart of the Moor* and *Through a Dartmoor Window* are treasures to keep. They now repose on my bookshelf with some of my other favourites—Joseph Conrad's *Mirror of the Sea*, E. V. Lucas's *The Open Road*, Hilaire Belloc's *Hills and the Sea*, F. T. Bullen's *Idylls of the Sea*, and, by way of contrast, Marryat's *Peter Simple* and *Mr Midshipman Easy*, W. H. Fitchett's *Deeds that Won the Empire* and *Fights for the Flag;* all of which, among others, I read and re-read.

And if 'Miss Chase' has had this effect upon me, there must be many thousands of my war-weary fellow-creatures whom she would also influence, many soldiers and sailors who would revel in her work.

I take off my hat to her. She is a true and sympathetic artist, not a mere writer.

MACKELLAR LEAVES THE MESS.

X.

AFTER lunch that day Fitz-Boodle called Mackellar a liar. Mackellar asked him to recant. Fitz-Boodle refused. Mackellar 'saw red,' and knocked him down. He then went on deck.

Now, Fitz-Boodle's messmates were secretly pleased with this *débâcle*. Every leader has his day, and they had been growing restive of late under Fitz-Boodle's domineering ways. In fact, the first-lieutenant said, 'The mess would be a jolly sight pleasanter without that fellow,' alluding to Fitz-Boodle.

Unhappily, the navigator, Lieutenant-Commander Barnwell, coming into the ward-room at that moment, took the matter up the wrong way. The tortuous working of his mind was always leading him to false conclusions when it came to social matters. He regarded Mackellar as an interloper. Moreover, he had never forgiven him for stepping on his dog in the dark, and breaking its forepaw. On this occasion, therefore, he considered he held a brief for expressing the feelings of the mess on the subject of Mackellar. He followed that overwrought young gentleman on deck. 'Your presence in the mess is far from agreeable to us, Mackellar,' he said harshly. 'It is immaterial how you arrange to leave the ship, but do something within a week. That 's all,' the navigator said, walking off.

Then the buglers sounded the call to quarters. It was the afternoon of 31st May 1916.

XI.

The hour for the Jutland battle had struck. The warning came about three o'clock. Deadlights were noisily dropped over port-holes, watertight doors were shut, and officers and men went to their stations.

Staff-Surgeon O'Brien and his stretcher-bearers were already down in the modern cockpit, when Mackellar appeared, looking pale and haggard. Mackellar had been trained in St John's ambulance work, and O'Brien had secured his services as a first-aid number during action.

'What 's wrong, Mackellar?' the staff-surgeon asked, seeing him pace up and down the armoured compartment in an agitated manner.

'They 've told me to leave the mess,' Mackellar moaned, wringing his hands.

'We may all have that opportunity, my lad,' the staff-surgeon said gloomily, as a messenger came up and handed him a signal.

'"From the commander,"' O'Brien read aloud; '"non-combatants are to seek shelter on the port-side."'

XII.

Steaming twenty-two knots, zigzagging, and firing her guns and torpedoes, the *Alcibiades* went into action.

Below the water-line, and wedged in between the working-chamber of a turret and the ship's side, the medical party waited in strained expectancy. The *Alcibiades* being in the advance line of ships, it was not long before detonating shocks indicated to those below that salvos were hitting the ship. The telephone began to buzz furiously.

'Medical assistance is urgently needed in "Q" turret,' said the officer in charge of the conning-tower.

'Come along with me, Mackellar,' the staff-surgeon said. 'As for you, Endewick,' he instructed the sick-berth steward, 'I 'll let you know when it 's possible for your party to move the wounded.'

'Very good, sir,' Endewick replied, handing them their dressing-bags.

XIII.

The staff-surgeon and Mackellar ascended the narrow gangway to the mess-deck, where all tables, benches, and other fixtures were unshipped. Thence their route was a roundabout one by way of the stokehold. The 'potted' air, laden as it was with fumes from the guns and bursting shells, made breathing almost intolerable, and most of the men they encountered were wearing respirators. After unclipping many watertight doors, they finally came to a heavily armoured one in the main-battery. This was opened by means of a ponderous wheel-trainer, and access gained to the open deck in that part of the ship called the waist. While traversing the short space of deck which intervened between the battery and 'Q' turret, the staff-surgeon and Mackellar had a fleeting glimpse of the battle.

The sea was smooth, and the sun bright enough, but there was a heavy pall hanging over the region of the starboard horizon. Whether this was a smoke-screen of the enemy's creation, or whether it was the usual North Sea mist, it was impossible to determine. Frequent flashes of fire visualised the low-lying hulls of many enemy battleships. The *Alcibiades* was steaming in the eastern extremity of the arc of British ships which was endeavouring to close in on the enemy without crossing his mine-field.

XIV.

The staff-surgeon and Mackellar entered the turret from below. The officer in charge, Lieutentant Fitz-Boodle, stood in the spotting-hood, while the gun's crew worked like demons at their stations. Above the din caused by the rattle of the chain-rammers as they drove the projectiles home, the closing of the breech, and the noise of the machinery, they heard 'Left gun ready!' 'Right gun ready!' and the clang of the 'stand-by'

gong. The order to fire was followed by a low rumbling sound, and the guns recoiled with a crash.

One of the gun's crew spoke to the staff-surgeon. 'It's not a case of enemy fire this time, sir; the young officer got jammed in the rammer,' he said, pointing to a fair-haired midshipman, named Carey, who lay on the platform with a crushed leg.

'To think I may not be able to play "rugger" again!' he moaned as O'Brien applied a tourniquet.

'Never mind, my lad; you'll be as good as ever in a very short time,' the staff-surgeon said sympathetically, searching his bag for the proper dressings, while Mackellar prepared a splint.

'Still!' the gunlayer shouted; 'miss-fire! carry on!' The guns had been loaded again, and one of them missed fire owing to a defective cartridge. At the moment Lieutenant Fitz-Boodle had the range of an enemy cruiser; his only thought was that he must sink it, and that as soon as possible. In the excitement of battle he did not allow a sufficiently long interval to elapse in case there was a delayed 'fire.' He gave the order to insert a fresh cartridge. This meant opening the breech, and the inrushing air fanned the smouldering cordite charge already in the gun into an instantaneous explosion. This, of course, took the line of least resistance, and the breech was blown to pieces, killing Lieutenant Fitz-Boodle, who had come down out of his hood, and Carey No. 2; while the rest of the gun's crew were put out of action. O'Brien was hurled toward the fore-end of the turret, and the consequent concussion rendered him unconscious. Mackellar received a mortal wound in the abdomen, which bled profusely.

XV.

Like all persons suffering from acute hæmorrhage, Mackellar's mind was vividly conscious. He viewed with consternation the breaking out of fires, and the possibility of further explosions in a turret which was situated in such a vital part of the ship. They must be warned to send a fire-party and take all necessary precautions. With the blood welling up on every exertion, Mackellar pulled himself over the impediments which lay in his path until he reached the navy-phone. In order to get at it he was forced to lift himself up several steel steps.

Pressing the handle, Mackellar called out, '"Q" turret—fore t.s.,' and it seemed as if, in uttering the words, he was squeezing every drop of blood out of his body. Somehow or other, when the voice of the operator in the fore transmitting station answered, he managed to respond to the supreme effort entailed in telling him of the danger the ship ran from being blown up. He heard the man say, 'Ay, ay, sir,' and report to the conning-tower that fire had broken out in 'Q' turret as the result of a miss-fire.

Mackellar then fell limply on the steel floor of the turret.

XVI.

'Oh, my head!' moaned O'Brien, as he recovered consciousness. 'And what an intolerable heat!' he murmured, raising himself as quickly as he could, with all the naval man's apprehension of fire on board a ship full of explosives.

There were no flames to be seen, however, for the fire-party had extinguished them, and gone to get stretchers.

'I wonder what's happened to Mackellar,' O'Brien muttered, not seeing him about. Still suffering from the effects of his concussion, he staggered over to the other end of the turret, with the intention of attempting to communicate with Endewick. He found Mackellar lying in a pool of blood, and fast losing consciousness.

'My poor lad!' the staff-surgeon exclaimed, bending over him.

Mackellar smiled weakly at O'Brien. 'They 'll have their way, doc.,' he whispered faintly. 'I 'm leaving the mess.'

Sobbing at one moment, the next anathematising the frailties of human nature, the staff-surgeon stanched Mackellar's wounds.

XVII.

Sick-Berth Steward Endewick soon answered the call for stretcher-bearers. Under the direction of the staff-surgeon, the dead and wounded were strapped in flexible stretchers, so that they could be lowered to the deck through the manhole in the floor of the turret. They were then tenderly moved to a suitable part of the port battery.

In the meantime Lieutenant Lingate, R.M.L.I., had been ordered to take charge of 'Q' turret as soon as the evacuation of wounded was complete, and a reserve gun's crew quickly manned its remaining sound gun. During the interval the guns of the other turrets had been 'straddling' the German cruiser in question, which appeared to be the *Frauenlob*. Lingate was just in time to get in a few good hits with his reorganised turret before the *Frauenlob* turned slowly over and sank by the stern, finally disappearing in a cloud of white smoke and a column of spray.

A lull occurring in the action, the *Alcibiades* gave a sudden lurch, as she turned several points to port. She was falling out of line temporarily in order to signal one of the hospital ships to come up and meet her at a safe distance from the firing-line. Staff-Surgeon O'Brien had his patients ready for transference to that blessed ship before the engagement with the enemy was renewed.

XVIII.

When the King visited the fleet after the Jutland battle he went on board the *Alcibiades*. The officers were presented to him, and he saw the men at divisions, and briefly congratulated

them on the gallant part they had played in the recent engagement. Three rousing cheers were then given by the ship's company, and in the silence that followed the footsteps of the King and his staff sounded impressively on the quarter-deck. The King, who was in naval uniform, paused at the starboard gangway.

'And where is Mackellar?' the King asked. 'I have heard how he saved the ship.'

'I regret to inform you, sir,' the captain said, addressing the King as his admiral, 'Mackellar died of his wounds on board the hospital ship.'

The King looked reflectively across the Sound. Heavy seas were rolling in from the north-east, and the lowering skies gave a sinister look to the hundreds of gulls circling around the ship.

'Mackellar was a brave man,' the King said, returning the captain's salute, 'and my navy ought to feel proud of him.

The officers and men of H.M.S. *Alcibiades* stood rigidly to attention, as the boatswain and his mates piped their royal admiral over the ship's side.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WONDERFUL WORKING MODEL OF THE SUN, THE EARTH, AND THE MOON.

AN illustrated description of an exceedingly interesting astronomical model was given in *The Engineer* of 1st June. This model, known as an orrery or a tellurion, was designed and made by Dr W. Wilson for instructing the Chinese in the relative movements of the sun, the earth, and the moon. All the motions of these three bodies are reproduced in the model with sufficient accuracy to show the causes of the changing seasons, eclipses, and other celestial phenomena. The difficulty of representing the motions of the sun, the earth, and the moon will be appreciated when it is remembered that each turns on its axis, that the three axes have different inclinations, and that the plane of the moon's rotation round the earth is not the same as that of the earth's path round the sun. It will be easily understood that so complicated a model can only be imperfectly described without the aid of illustrations, but readers will be able to grasp the main features from the following explanation. The model is mounted upon a pedestal standing on the centre of a cloth with the months of the year marked round it in the form of a ring. In the centre of the pedestal is a spindle with a ball at the top of it representing the sun, and having its axis at the correct inclination of about seven degrees from the vertical. Mounted on the lower part of the central spindle is a swinging arm with an upright spindle carrying the earth and the moon at one end, and a weight at the other to balance them. The earth is mounted upon another vertical spindle in such a way that its axis is inclined, as in the case of the sun, to the correct angle—namely, about twenty-three and a half degrees. On the spindle carrying the earth are another swinging arm, an upright spindle, and a balance-weight for the moon, of which the axis is only slightly inclined (five degrees). The plane in which the earth rotates round the sun, known as the ecliptic, is represented as being horizontal in the model; and the plane of the moon's orbit round the earth, which makes an angle of about five degrees with the ecliptic, has been exaggerated, for reasons which cannot be explained here. The earth is caused to rotate round the sun by moving the main arm, while ingenious arrangements of pulleys and cords cause the moon to rotate round the earth and the three bodies to turn on their axes at the correct relative speeds. Another interesting device is a cap extending over the half of the moon turned away from the sun, which is maintained in its correct position during the above movements. The model shows evidence of good design and workmanship, no doubt accounted for by the fact that Dr Wilson was trained as an engineer before taking up the study of medicine. Models such as this would be invaluable in schools for teaching astronomical geography, but the cost of making them must necessarily be heavy.

HOW KITES HELP TO PREDICT THE WEATHER.

Box kites are much used for studying the atmospheric conditions at considerable heights above the earth, these devices being less costly in operation than captive balloons or aeroplanes. Some interesting particulars were given recently in the *Scientific American* of a kite meteorological station established by the U.S. Weather Bureau. The kites used are of the box type, and measure seven to nine feet square by nearly three feet in depth. They consist of a framework of light wooden struts braced with piano-wire, and carrying the usual 'box' at each end. One of these boxes is white and the other black, so that at least one of them is easily distinguishable whatever may be the shade of the background of clouds. The kites are flown by piano-wire, and as numbers ranging up to a dozen are attached to one wire, the pull in high winds is very strong. This feature, together with the length of wire let out, which may extend to several miles, necessitates a large reel or drum with an electric motor to drive it. The reel with its driving motor is mounted in a circular house, which can be slewed round so as to allow

the wire to lead in any direction to suit the wind. An instrument known as a meteorograph is mounted on the framework of the uppermost kite, and by means of fountain pens acting upon revolving drums of paper, records the temperature, the wind velocity, the humidity, and the air-pressure. The vertical height of the kite is found by measuring with a theodolite the angle which the line makes with the vertical; if this angle is known, together with the length of the wire let out, only a simple calculation is necessary to ascertain the vertical height. Other kites are attached to the wire at intervals to help to carry the weight, which is considerable, for a length of several miles. As is well known, the upper air is charged with electricity, the pressure of which is measured by a voltmeter when the reel is insulated. Pressures up to and sometimes exceeding 50,000 volts have been recorded. The results of each day's observations are wired to Washington and Chicago every evening.

NOVEL METHOD OF DEMOLISHING A LARGE STEEL STANDPIPE.

The quickest and cheapest method of demolishing tall factory chimneys and similar structures, whether of brick or of steel, is to weaken one side of the base and topple them over. This plan, however, is not always practicable, owing to the nearness of other buildings, and more laborious means often have to be employed. An ingenious scheme was recently carried out for demolishing a tall standpipe in connection with the water-supply system in Chicago. This pipe measured about twenty feet in diameter, and rose to a height of over one hundred feet. Adjacent buildings rendered the felling of it in the ordinary way quite out of the question, while the building of a scaffolding upon which to do the work of demolition would have been very costly. The difficulty was overcome by constructing a circular platform slightly smaller than the inside of the pipe, and floating it upon the surface of the water contained in the pipe. The pipe was pumped full to begin with, the surface being lowered as the work proceeded by running off the water through a discharge-pipe at the base. Empty barrels were fixed under the platform to enable it to support the weight of a gang of men, and of the oxyacetylene apparatus used for cutting the steel plates. These were pushed outwards and allowed to fall as they were cut through.

WASTE PRODUCTS UTILISED FOR MAKING DYES.

Even America was largely dependent upon Germany for dyes when war broke out, and the cutting off of this source of supply necessitated the establishment of a home dye industry. One of the most interesting developments arising out of this position is the manufacture of dyes from slag and other refuse which had previously been thought worthless by a coke-making company, and had been dumped into Lake Michigan. This waste product was brought to the notice of a chemist with wide experience in England and Germany, who, after much experimenting, succeeded in producing a dye therefrom. Eventually the new discovery was taken up by the coke-making company, which built a factory early in 1916 for producing the dyes on a large scale. No particulars of the processes employed have been published; in fact, great secrecy is maintained regarding them. With this object in view patents have been avoided, as they would have involved disclosure. The finished dye is in the form of crystals, and it is sold by the barrel of 360 pounds at about five shillings per pound.

STARTLING DEVELOPMENT IN THE MANUFACTURE OF FURNITURE.

Most people are familiar with the standardised bookcase, which can be extended from time to time as required by the addition of extra portions. This principle has been carried a great deal further by a Danish inventor, Mr Söron Ringer of Copenhagen, who has devised a series of wood and metal parts with which any article of furniture can be constructed, the apparatus bearing a close resemblance in principle to 'Meccano.' No glue, nails, or screws are used to fasten the parts together, this function being performed by a special iron clip made in a number of standard sizes, or by means of the specially formed ends of the main members of each piece of furniture. Bookshelves, chests of drawers, office cabinets, and similar articles lend themselves particularly well to the new system. Moreover, they can be added to at any time or altered in form; while for removal the articles of furniture may be taken to pieces in a few minutes, and the separate parts packed flat in very little more space than would be occupied by the wood in flat boards. According to the *Scientific American*, Mr Ringer's method of building furniture from standard parts is the result of over fifteen years of experimenting and the construction of some eight hundred different models. Patents covering the system have been taken out in all countries.

PEAT AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR COAL.

The present high prices of coal, owing to the enormous shipping freights, in countries which do not possess this commodity and have to import it, have given a great impetus to the use of peat. According to a recent article in *La Nature* by M. Renié, the most effective way of dealing with peat is to utilise it where found for producing power, in conjunction with apparatus for recovering the by-products. Peat can be burnt under boilers to generate steam, or distilled in retorts for the production of gas and coke, or it may be burnt in gas-producers from

which the gas is used direct in engines or for industrial purposes. The first plan is inefficient, as it is with coal, because when burnt in this way the valuable by-products, including tar, sulphate of ammonia, and acetate of lime, are lost. Distillation in retorts gives the greatest value in resulting products, although burning in gas-producers, assuming the by-products to be recovered, is a near second. Peat must be dried before it can be utilised in the ways suggested, but the process is not a costly one. When the moisture has been reduced, one pound of peat will produce 4·3 pounds of steam, while a pound of coal will produce about 75 per cent. more. For making power-gas peat is particularly effective, the saving over coal at Portadown in Ireland, where engines are worked with peat-gas, being 50 per cent. Peat when dried makes an excellent slow-combustion fuel for domestic purposes. If distilled in retorts the resulting coke is valuable for both industrial and domestic uses.

MACHINE FOR CUTTING STENCIL PLATES.

When packing-cases of goods are despatched from a factory or a warehouse, certain letters and figures are usually marked upon them with stencil plates for the instruction of the transport companies. Other uses for stencil plates will occur to most of us. Hitherto these plates have been cut by hand at considerable cost. For large type a separate plate for each letter is often used, and the operation is a tedious one, while the results are irregular. Recently a machine known as a 'Diagraph' has been placed on the market, which cuts stencil plates of any length in strips of tough oiled paper. This work is done very quickly, and the paper stencil plates are said to last for one thousand markings. Moreover, the complete marks or names being cut in one piece, much time is saved in stencilling, and the results are uniform. The machines are made in three sizes, to produce half-inch, seven-eighths of an inch, and one-and-three-quarter-inch letters respectively. The letter and figure punches and dies are arranged in a circle, and they can be moved into the correct position for punching the paper strip by a hand-wheel. When the machine is set, each letter or figure is punched by a hand-lever.

A METHOD FOR INCREASING OUR SUPPLIES OF SALMON.

There was a time when salmon were so plentiful in the rivers of this country that a clause in the apprenticeship indentures of the period prohibited the giving of this fish to apprentices more than three times a week. According to the Fisheries Sub-Committee of the Empire Resources Development Committee, something approaching this abundance of salmon might be reproduced by 'stripping' the fish of their eggs and protecting the latter in hatching-troughs. By this means some 95 per cent. of the eggs would be hatched, against 5 per cent. in the wild state. As a female salmon of average weight produces 10,000 to 15,000 eggs, it is easy to understand that the above method, even if only partially carried out, would enormously increase the supply of this fish. The Government hatcheries in Canada hatch out 100,000,000 salmon and trout every year, and a similar procedure is followed by the United States fishery authorities.

WALKING-MACHINE FOR TESTING LEATHER.

According to modern business methods all materials purchased are tested for quality as well as quantity before acceptance. When substances have to be tested for wearing qualities, machines are employed which closely reproduce the conditions of actual use, but the results are much more quickly available, owing to the rapid and continuous operation of these appliances. One of the latest testing-machines of this character has been devised for ascertaining the quality of shoe leather, which it does by imitating the motion of walking upon a cement pavement. The main feature of the machine is a disc with four cams upon its periphery to imitate feet. Samples of leather to be tested are mounted upon these cams, and the disc is rotated by an electric motor. This disc is carried upon the middle of a lever which is fulcrumed at one end and free at the other. The edge of the disc with the leather samples bears upon the face near the edge of a horizontal disc of cement, or whatever type of pavement is to be represented. As the leather samples revolve they turn the cement disc by friction, and a very fair imitation of walking is obtained. Weight is got by hanging weights to the free end of the lever, while the horizontal disc has a brake attached to it, so that the leather samples may be made to push as do the soles of a person's boots when he is walking uphill. Two thousand revolutions of the disc are equivalent to a mile of walking.

WINE AS A NATIONAL BEVERAGE.

One effect of our alliance with France during the present war is the tendency towards the acceptance of French customs in this country, and the corresponding adoption of British usages across the Channel. Shortage of staff has caused many British shopkeepers to follow the Continental plan of closing their places of business during the luncheon-hour; while the movement for the securing of a weekly half-holiday has recently made great strides among French workpeople. It will be interesting to observe whether wine, the French national drink, shows any tendency to displace the alcoholic drinks more commonly in use in this country, thus repeating the effect of the Franco-Scottish alliance of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, which led to claret becoming the

principal beverage of the upper and middle classes north of the Tweed. That the French authorities, supported by many of their leading medical men, have a firm belief in the value of wine as a factor in maintaining the efficiency of their army is shown by the fact that a daily ration of half a litre, or seven-eighths of a pint, is issued to each officer and man. It is claimed for wine, particularly red wine, that it is a valuable food as well as a beverage; that it aids digestion, and thus increases the nutritive value of other food-substances; and that it helps in the building up and the restoration of the body, and in the more efficient performance of the vital functions. That the health and the fighting efficiency of the French troops has been splendidly maintained is known to all the world; and it is a fact worthy of note that drunkenness is much less prevalent in countries where wine is the national beverage than in those countries where other forms of alcohol are more largely used.

VALUABLE FIELDS FOR PAPER-PULP.

It is strange how Burma has been neglected as a field for paper-pulp. In 1905 the Government of India deputed an expert to travel over various parts and investigate on the spot the possibility of utilising its many woods, fibres, and grasses as material for paper-making. He wrote a very interesting and exhaustive report; but twelve years after its publication matters remain very much as they were as regards paper production, though prices are at least treble what they were then. Burma has this great advantage over some other countries: where its paper-making material grows in tropical luxuriousness over thousands of square miles, there are usually navigable streams to be found which could cheaply convey any amount of pulp to the nearest seaport by boats or rafts. It seems strange that what seems likely to prove such a profitable industry should have been so long neglected both by the Government, which has a scientific department in Burma, including many highly trained officers on the spot, and by private capitalists. Another possible material is tambookie or tambootie grass, which grows abundantly over large areas of the Transvaal, especially in the northern parts of the country. According to a recently issued *Bulletin of the Imperial Institute*, tambookie grass has now been proved to yield, when subjected to the same treatment, more pulp than Algerian esparto grass, though rather less than Spanish esparto. Not only is the yield high, but the pulp is of good quality, and is readily bleached. Trials carried out at the Imperial Institute show that a satisfactory paper of fairly good strength can be made from it. In all probability, when tonnage is once more available, the most advantageous method of utilising this new material will be to convert it into 'half-stuff' in South Africa, and export it thence to be turned into the finished product in Europe.

A MACHINE TO INCREASE THE FERTILITY OF WHEAT.

A machine of recent invention may ultimately come to have a most important bearing on the world's supply of wheat. The 'tillerer,' as it is called, is designed to increase the yield of this cereal by inducing the plant to produce both more roots and more stems than it does under ordinary methods of cultivation. Wheat has a natural tendency to 'tiller' or 'stool'—that is, to produce additional stems and roots from the stem-joints at the level of the ground-surface; and by raising the level of the earth round the plant at intervals during the early stages of its growth this natural tendency is greatly increased. It is to effect this result, and also to prevent waste in the use of seed, that the 'tillerer' has been designed. Using in some cases only half-a-bushel of seed per acre, instead of the usual two or two and a half bushels, the 'tillerer' first sows the seeds in the earth at the bottom of the four-inch-deep furrows which it makes. When the seedlings show three small blades, the 'tillerer' is drawn over the ground again, and by means of a set of forks takes about half the soil from the ridges on each side of the furrows, and deposits it in the furrows, nearly burying the plants. When the plants have again put forth three or four blades, the process is repeated, a second set of forks taking the rest of the soil from the ridges and completely filling the furrows. At a later stage the machine converts the original ridges into furrows about two inches deep by taking the soil from them and using it to earth up the rows of young plants. The average increase obtained from wheat in England is about twenty-fold, but the average increase obtained from three kinds of wheat on the Nottingham Corporation's farm at Stoke Bardolph by the use of the new method was over eighty-fold, the variety of seed known as 'Little Joss' being multiplied no less than ninety-seven-fold.

HOME BOTTLING OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES.

A valuable leaflet showing how to bottle fruit and vegetables at home has just been issued by the Board of Agriculture for Scotland, by arrangement with the Edinburgh and East of Scotland College of Agriculture. Where the special bottles designed for this purpose are not readily obtainable, ordinary bottles or jars may be used instead. They should first be thoroughly cleansed with hot water, and then filled to within half-an-inch of the top with sound fresh fruit from which the stalks, &c., have been removed, the vessels being frequently shaken so as to get in the maximum amount of fruit. When they are full, sufficient water should be poured into them to cover the fruit, and they should then be placed

in a fish-kettle or a large, deep pan, and surrounded with cold water at least up to the level of the fruit. (To prevent breakages during the subsequent heating, the vessels should rest on a false bottom—a piece of wood or a layer of hay answers admirably.) The water should then be brought nearly to boiling-point, but not quite, and allowed to simmer (but not to boil) for about ten minutes, so as to destroy the germs and expel as much air as possible. *Immediately* on their removal from the pan, the jars or bottles should be corked or bunged up, the stopper being pressed down tight and tied securely in its place. The stopper should then be coated with a layer of *hard* paraffin-wax, obtainable from most chemists, and easily applied with a brush after being melted. In its absence a wax candle may be melted and used instead. If, however, the vessels have no stoppers, 'they may be sealed by pouring in, until full to the rim, a thick layer of melted fat, or a mixture of eight and a half parts of vaseline and one and a half parts of paraffin-wax previously melted by warming. This should be done *immediately the jar is taken out of the pan.* The melted fat or wax remains on the surface of the water in the jar, and, on cooling, solidifies and forms a thick seal. After the vessel has cooled, the wax may be found to have contracted slightly in the neck; in this case it is advisable to pour on a further quantity of wax to fill the neck up to the rim. The mouth of the jar should then be covered with parchment, such as is used to cover jam-pots, and tied firmly down. The filled jars should be stored in a cool room,' and examined from time to time, in order that any imperfections in the seal caused by cracking of the wax may be remedied. This method of preserving for winter use is applicable to all kinds of fruit, but the best fruits for this purpose are gooseberries and the various kinds of stone fruits. Strawberries, unfortunately, are apt to be discoloured when subjected to this process. The leaflet referred to (No 38) may be obtained gratis and post free on application to the Board of Agriculture for Scotland, 29 St Andrew Square, Edinburgh.

SAILORS' AND SOLDIERS' WILLS.

In the hope that they will bring it to the notice of their friends in the navy and the army, we desire to draw the special attention of our readers to the announcement regarding Sailors' and Soldiers' Wills which will be found on the last page of the Advertising Sheet. Though nearly every one would agree as to the manifest wisdom of the proceeding, the making of a will is apt to be indefinitely postponed—sometimes with disastrous results. It is a duty specially incumbent upon those serving with His Majesty's forces, and the steps we have taken in this connection will, we trust, be the means of leading many to secure, with a minimum of trouble to themselves, the maximum of benefit to those whose welfare is often dearer to them than life itself.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

A DEVON SAILOR-MAN.

By Beatrice Chase, Author of *The Heart of the Moor, Through a Dartmoor Window*, &c.

IN the heart of the winter there came to me a letter which is a priceless literary document, though the writer is only a very humble member of the British Navy. It is lying now, after many months, open on the table before me as I write in the Room of Shadow, while a vaseful of big white lilies are leaning their perfumed heads down carelessly towards the sheets of mingled handwriting and type-script of which the letter is composed. Under the lilies is the naked soul of a common sailor-man. I use the word 'common' in the most reverent and laudatory sense. One of the glories of life is that such men are common—as common as the sunshine, the running water, the fragrant June breeze. If this man were asked to write an article or a book, he would be scared out of his senses, and would probably make a hideous mess of the job. We all know, and none know it better than authors, that the best always goes into personal letters to individual friends. It is a crime that it should be so, for such letters would be things beyond price to thousands. Feeling this, I have obtained leave from this sailor-man to use his words as I choose, and many will bless me for extracting this permission.

'H.M.S. ——,
Jan. 18, 1917.

'"Dear Lady of the Moor,"—After writing that line I was called away, and during the interval have, curiously enough, discovered that you have already been given this title by Mr Oxenham in a book of his. For a long time I have intended to write to you. I read *Chambers's Journal* wherever I am, and in your "Pages of Peace" of Sept. 9th you touch us at sea very nearly, and in this ship perhaps particularly. My heart has always found its peace on Dartmoor, and that field, that buttercup-field, so near your house, which you describe, lives for me also.

'And you say: "Among the earth's unspoiled places of peace, hill and mountain and moor country hold first place. To war-worn nerves, the restlessness of the sea is wearisome." It is

good to read; but I wonder if you know what tugging at the heart-strings it causes to the moorland lover, thousands of miles away from home? We left England at the declaration of war, and since then we have not even seen her borders, and the restlessness of the sea has been ever with us. Here, there, and everywhere have we travelled, always thousands of miles from home, and nearly 80,000 miles in all, till at last we hear rumours of a temporary respite in the future, when one who is now a captive on the wrong side of your hills will once again be seeking the glamour and peace of Dartmoor.

'Again you say: "I cannot forget that my sheltered home lying in the arms of the great moor is safe because of the men who are fighting and dying to protect us—and some of these men are Devonians." Ay, and glad and proud we are to be able to fight for such as you, and to fight also for a greater peace than the world has ever known. The curlews are your favourite birds, you say. They are mine. But should you have left out the owls? What would I give to hear them both again! A crying owl in a clump of trees on a frosty night—that sound will never leave my memory!

'For the last three years I have had a picture of an old Dartmoor well hung up in front of my desk, and it has been a daily feast. The stunted tree beside it, the rough granite, the bunch of twigs ready for burning—they all speak to me with no uncertain voice, and I can hear the wind whistling round them. The smell of the hearth-fires comes down the wind, mixed with the salt sea spray, and my spirit tramps the tors while the boundless ocean claims my body. The picture has woven a spell not to be broken, and your written words have put a golden lock on the woven chain, and the key is in my heart for safe-keeping.

'What a mixture of joy and tragedy is life! Just as I reached this portion of my letter a man came in with a cablegram, "Come at once; wife dying." The ocean lies between, and days must elapse before he can possibly get moving. *C'est la guerre.*

'I have also lately learnt of your activities in another direction. Please add my name to your splendid list of White Knights, and I hope and pray I shall always prove worthy of its place there. You will find that the majority of your names are not those of seafarers, simply because they have not the chance of hearing about it.

'Hawthorne, writing in *Our Old Home*, says: "Their stay there may be cold comfort for the evening of life, yet it may compare rather favourably with the preceding portion of existence, which comprised little save imprisonment on shipboard, in the course of which they have been tossed about all over the world and caught hardly a glimpse of it, forgetting what grass and trees are, and never finding out what woman is, though they may have encountered a painted spectre which they took for her. A country owes much to human beings whose bodies she has worn out and whose immortal part she has left undeveloped or debased."

'The latter part is too strong to be applied to the navy under modern conditions, as it was written in '63, but it illustrates some of my meaning. For instance, at periods, even in this ship, we have not been ashore for nine months at a time.

'If you take me for your knight, I thank you from my heart. It shall be to me as a sacrament with you to guard. King Arthur's days come back. "Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of."

'May you always enjoy that deep peace passing understanding which comes of oneness with God in His lonely holy places.

'By the help of God and you, and women like you, I dare to sign myself,

'WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR.'

Time passed till the end of May, when my knight came. I have never seen anything more perfect than the circumstances of his coming. He reached Venton late in the evening, and his sweetheart was with him. She, too, is a native of Devon, and is moor mad. The lovers had not met for nearly three years—not, in fact, since their engagement. They reached my door at sunset, in the red and gold glory of a perfect May evening. I brought them first into the Room of Sunshine, spangled with great rainbows from the crystal ball radiant with the vivid tulips in the garden-beds outside the low windows. Then we went to the Dartmoor window itself, and gazed through the blue willow-pattern curtains out on the buttercup-field, that field which he had quoted months before, thousands of miles away from home. There it lay, the field of the cloth of gold, quivering all over to a quick westerly breeze, shimmering under the sloping rays of the sinking sun. Through the open casement came the cries of cuckoos and curlews. They stood entranced, these long-separated lovers. Not one tiny thing had been forgotten. One week earlier or later would have been either too early or too late for that field. Then I led them to my chapel, the place he had dreamt of, time after time, in his craving to see it. The west window is the largest, and through its colours, the sun-glow was rich crimson. Great, scented, white trumpet-lilies were on the altar, and the lamp glowed like a huge ruby. Even the lilies were stained rose-colour. It was as if the little white place had put on a rose-red, love-red robe to welcome these brave young lovers. Looking at it through the man's eyes, I could see that it was indeed a vision to any one who had lived so long on the lower deck of a cruiser.

Even there the cries of the curlews and cuckoos haunted us. We shall none of us ever forget it.

The next day was veiled with the real white fragrant moor mist so dear to the exile from tropical lands. In the afternoon I lighted a log-and-turf fire on the big cobbit, and we lounged beside it like happy children, while the white wings of the mist overshadowed the house and tors. I even went the length of hoicking up a chunk of burning turf with the tongs, and holding it out in the room so that the sailor-man's craving nostrils might once more savour that scent which is sweeter than incense to the moor-mad person. It was here, in the Room of Shadow, beside the fire, that I saw to the very heights of my knight's white soul. His sweetheart had gone to the other room for a tell with the Rainbow-maker, and, when alone with me, he poured out all the white flame of love he felt for his chosen one. All the unspoken ideals of a man's soul flowed out in a mighty torrent of words. The ideals of what a husband's love should be for his wife, of the utter reverence and consideration which should form the essential foundation of married love. Many of my knights, thank God! love their wives and children better than themselves; but listening to this humble sailor, I realised that not one among them is a greater and more gallant gentleman.

On the third day we three stood together in the 'Poet's Corner'—which I always brazenly write in the singular number, as if there were only one poet; but, as far as I know, no one else has written poems in the sheltered rock nook of that particular tor. From there we skimmed to Dream Tor, finding on the way a lark's nest right in the very centre of a thick clump of dale gorse. Little orange-lined bills opened at us, and on the tiny heads were feathers so soft that they looked like mist. From Dream Tor we gazed at Bellever and Laughter Tors, which are an allegory. Bellever, the central tor, is the heart of the moor, and the heart symbolises love; Laughter Tor is his mate, the only one near him; so in the central part of Dartmoor you find eternal love and laughter.

The next night they came to say *au revoir*. I never permit good-bye, since there is no separation to hearts that love. Though May had melted into June, it was a twin-sister of their first evening, and I sat in the Dartmoor window for my first quiet tell with the maiden, looking over the buttercup-field with its shimmering glory. To my intense joy, I found she understood and appreciated to the full the wealth of the love that is given to her. Not all women do. One never knows till one asks them. During that interview I made her the 'guardian angel' of a poor knight whose sour-souled, unworthy crank of a wife has broken his honest heart. These guardian angel ladies are an essential part of my Order, and they, too, receive many of the daily prayers given to the knights. They will also be entitled to wear the beautiful badge which is being designed for us all. I felt by this means I had drawn her yet one degree nearer to her knightly lover, whom we then joined in chapel. As we knelt in the gloaming, I was between them, and I held a hand of each, and prayed, deep in my heart, that no ignoble thing might ever mar their perfect love. Then I watched them go till they were out of sight, past the golden field under the shadow of great benignant Hamildown with his purple grape bloom.

Early next morning Mr Blue-Jacket handed me a post-card. It was one of the interior of my own chapel. In one corner the girl had signed; in the other corner the man had. A long line was put between the two sets of initials, under which line were the words: 'You will know how to fill the vacant space.' It was, of course, the order in which we had knelt to say *au revoir* the previous evening. Above, in the centre, he had written:

> 'And looking upwards, full of grace,
> They prayed, and from the Happy Place,
> God's glory smote them in the face.'

The following day I received another card. This time it was of Dartmouth, showing where the moor-born river mingles at last with the sea. On it was written: 'From the source to the mouth the river rolls. From the beginning to the end we send you our love.'

Just a common Devon sailor-man! Please love him—I was going to say, 'as much as I do,' but that would be impossible. Anyway, please do love them both, and wish them the one thing that matters on earth and in heaven—perfect love to the very end.

FROM THE RUSSIAN.

Translated by Dorothy E. Stevenson.

I HEAR the church bells ring; wistful and drear
Strikes that faint tinkling on my longing ear
And exiled heart. Dull sorrow dims mine eyes,
And, in the mist, my dear homelands arise—

The soft, gray northern skies that hang so low,
The still, white plain, the bells across the snow.
Dear friendly village bells, where'er I roam
I hear you tinkling messages from home.

K. R.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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SEVENTH SERIES

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

A LITTLE ROMANCE OF THE FAR WEST.

By Mrs W. F. IRVINE BELL, Author of *Ole Cam'ron*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

UP the rough, deeply-rutted road that led past Michael O'Keefe's homestead to his own isolated ranch, swung the tall, sinewy figure of John Pardon. Instinctively avoiding pitfalls in the shape of stones and holes, the more obscure because of the unilluminating twinkle of stars deep-set in the remote vault of an early spring sky, he reached a long-poled gate, viciously crested with barbed-wire, and passing through it, gained, a moment later, a small, ill-hanging picket-gate, where tall, unkempt bushes of lilac and rose slapped his broad-brimmed felt hat. A narrow, overgrown path brought him to the back-porch of a large, squarely-built bungalow, alike silent and unlighted. Mechanically feeling on the ledge above the door for a key, and heedless of two or three cats that joyfully sprang from a wood-pile and rubbed enthusiastically against his legs, he ducked his head as though from sheer force of habit, and entered a dark, empty kitchen.

The cats, in instant anticipation of fire and supper, mewed, and jumped from chair to table; but the man, having drawn from the pocket of his overalls a block of matches, broke off one, and lighting an ill-kept glass lamp, strode across the room to where a small, six-by-four mirror hung against the whitewashed wall. Holding the lamp above his head, he stood for some moments studying his own reflection — studying it as though it were that of a stranger. A face by no means unattractive looked back at him from the bit of poor glass—a face healthy with sunshine and good clean blood; a pair of well-shaped, steady gray eyes, the pupils of which were just now large and dark from some unwonted emotion; a good mouth, that needed not the cover of the dark, heavy moustache; and crisp, black hair, which, if somewhat thinning on the temples, did not suggest other than a man in the prime of life. As a matter of fact, John Pardon had only just passed the high-water-mark of forty, and he scarcely looked it. Turning slowly away from the mirror and setting down the lamp, he dropped into one of the comfortless wooden chairs, ejaculating in low, musing tone, 'Mary begins to look *old*—she sure does!' then continued to sit staring in front of him with unseeing eyes. The cats, however, encouraged by even a murmur from their master in this unaccustomed mood, did their best to arouse him to the usual evening routine—rounding their backs, erecting quivering 'flag-staffs,' rubbing moist chins against his tall boots, and 'kneading' his trousers with persuasive claws. At length, thus evoked, Pardon sprang to his feet, exclaiming in tones of exasperation, 'Durn ye! Can't ye give a man a moment's peace? I'd drown the whole outfit for two cents!' But there was no anger in the rough speech, and the cats persisted in their attentions, while Pardon, with quick, experienced hand, kindled a fire of split pine and manzañita in the rusty stove, drew forward a smoke-blackened, much-battered coffee-pot, produced from a bare-looking cupboard a tin plate and knife and fork, and from the oven a large brown crock of pork and beans. Next he fetched a loaf of bread—large, white, beautifully baked, with gold-brown crust—and hewed off several thick slices. Having helped himself to the pork and beans, and filled his cup with coffee, black as a boot-lace, he sat down to his solitary supper, closely observed by a row of expectant whiskered faces. Yet John Pardon, for once at least in his healthy, hearty life, seemingly had no appetite for the evening meal. The baked beans slowly solidified to a chilly mass, his cup of coffee steamed itself to flatness, while the man absent-mindedly flicked from the two-tined fork bits of succulent pork to his appreciative guests, or with strong, brown fingers crumbled the fair slices of bread—*Mary's* bread. At last, rousing himself with a jerk, he pushed away his plate, scraped together beans and bread for his feline family, then tipping back his chair so as to rest his feet on the edge of the newly-replenished stove, fished out an old pipe, stuffed in some tobacco, and lighted it with a bit of shaving from the wood-box.

The cats, satisfied that things were finally resuming their normal course, jumped up on the long knees, purring noisily, while Pardon mechanically pulled their ears or scratched an importunate chin. But to-night, even for smok-

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ing, the man was in no mood; unnoticed his pipe went out, while his thoughts wandered far from the lonely kitchen, and his eyes grew soft and dreamy before a picture of his own conjuring. Presently a half-smile dawned on the kind mouth beneath the heavy moustache, and musingly fell from his lips these words: 'Just —like—a little *bird*, she—is!' Then raising his arms above his head, he gave a great stretch, and suddenly rose to his feet, ruthlessly sweeping his furry companions from his knee.

'Lordy, lordy!' he exclaimed, glancing round the bare room, where the only sounds were his own voice and the raucous ticking of a clock against the wall; 'Lordy, lordy!—just to fancy *her* a-flittin' round these old rooms! Why, "Sally,"' he went on, addressing an old gray cat who sat watching his every movement—'why, "Sal," old girl, you and me wouldn't *know* ourselves with that little bird singin' and hoppin' in and out—not the kind o' bird, mind you, for the likes o' *you* to stick them durned claws o' yourn into!' he added, chuckling, and boosting 'Sally' ignominiously away on his boot-toe. 'But goshamighty!' he continued, 'this bain't no fit cage for the likes of *her*, "Sally"—nothin' but a crumblin' old shack. Come along; let's take a look round,' he ended in his usual cheery manner, for John Pardon's temperament was not one to remain long behind a cloud; already the look of abstraction had vanished, and his tanned face wore the almost roguish expression of a boy. Lighting a lantern for better ease of carrying, and followed closely by old 'Sally,' he opened a door leading into a long, low room, the very smell of which, and the fixity of the furniture, bespoke disuse—not the proud aloofness of a 'best parlour' reserved for state occasions, but the pathetic forlornness of a room where neither hostess nor guests ever broke the silence or shifted a chair. Into John Pardon the inhospitable atmosphere seemed to strike a chill; he hesitated an instant on the threshold, then with a half-mock, half-real shiver, went in and began a slow tour of the room, the while addressing detached remarks to 'Sally.' '*Dreary*, bain't it, "Sal"? But, bless you, *she'd* soon stir the old place up; and' (the natural pride of a householder asserting itself) 'it's good and sizeable, and the furniture ain't wore. Sure I can just *see* her,' he continued dreamily, 'settin' things to rights; she'd have them south winders open powerful quick, I'll bet, lettin' in the sunshine—and flowers! Why, she'd have a bunch o' *somethin'* everywheres;' he paused before one of the windows, and rattled up to the very top the long-drawn, faded green shade. 'Purty view, too—over the fields beyond to them hills—ain't a purtier view anywheres in the country—there bain't *none* from *Mary's*.' Then, tenderly, 'And here's little Sissy's rockin'-chair. She could sit and sew and sing in that —gee!—but it makes a man's heart jump to think of it. And here's poor old "Tad's" collar, "Sally." You weren't nothin' but a half-baked kitten when poor "Tad" got run over—vowed then and there I'd never have another dawg, "Sally" —it so near bust this old fool heart o' mine. But I reckon *she'd* want a dawg—all the tikes in the country—and no cold-water cure for any o' *your* youngsters, "Sal." Never in all my life saw such a body for havin' *beasts* all over the place! "I just *love* 'em," she said—*love* 'em—yes, "Sally," that's what she said, and she didn't mean you, "Sally," old girl—nor me neither, I reckon.' Thus ruminating, he presently halted again before an old couch. 'Here's poor ma's sofy—never felt the weight of a body since she used to lie there, tryin' to rest the pain in that everlastin', tormentin' back o' hers—gee! *them* were days and nights—makes me right down sick to think o' them even now, "Sally." But that little bird over there—why, *she'd* soon drive away the shadders—it's a comfortable old sofy, ma used to say,' he added, rather inconsequently, 'and—take your durned claws out o' it, you good-for-nuthin' mouser!' he broke off wrathfully, and swooped down so suddenly upon the old cat that, much affronted, she betook herself, with slow dignity, back to the kitchen stove and to the companionship of her own kind.

Thus deserted, Pardon continued his tour of inspection, critically scrutinising each chair, the table, the shelf of books rigid and dusty, the framed lithographs, his mother's work-basket, from all of which his overwrought fancy dispelled the ghosts of long-dead years, and in their stead created the radiant presence of a living, loving woman. Presently, his eye falling upon some burnt matches and bits of crumpled paper, he hastily stooped to pick them up, exclaiming with a whimsical laugh, '*She* wouldn't stand for no litter or messin', that's one thing sartin, John Pardon—as fresh as a mornin' breeze she is, and no cobwebs no more on her ceilin' than there be in her hair—just God's own sunshine she sure is—and everything about her must be bright and shinin' same as silver.' And again the gray eyes grew dreamy, and the whole expression of his weather-beaten face softened into tender lines. From his loosened grasp some of the scraps of paper fell upon an old rag-mat, full of soil and dried mud, that lay before a door, and as he raised himself from gathering them up, the lantern faintly illumined a bare-looking room beyond. It was Pardon's bedroom, in all the comfortless disorder of a bachelor's sleeping-quarters—faded quilt dragging on the floor, blankets in a snarl on the lumpy mattress—cast-off clothing of various kinds tossed about awaiting his fortnightly wash-day. For a moment his eyes carelessly scanned the unkempt room; then suddenly a deep flush surged up in the man's face, mounting from chin to temples, while a great, glad light broke over it as

a thought—wonderful, thrilling, bringing an almost suffocating sense of joy and comfort—flooded the lonely man's whole being. Only for an instant. Then, as suddenly, the colour fled, leaving John Pardon's face ashen white, and all the joy blotted out in fierce anguish. 'My God!' he cried. 'What am I thinking of? Mary—girl—forgive me; but it's more than a man can bear!' The lantern crashed to the floor, flared, and went out, and John Pardon, dropping heavily to a chair, buried his face in his work-roughened hands. There alone, among silent ghosts of the past, the man sat on, wrestling with the foe that had suddenly confronted him, fully armed, to threaten his future—wrestled as only a good, brave man *can* wrestle—until the night stars had faded into the pale dawn of a new day.

CHAPTER II.

A DOZEN years or more previous to that in which this story begins had come and gone since first John Pardon proposed to Mary Patrick. The pair had then already been 'keeping company' for a considerable time, indeed from a certain scorching August day when Pardon, then a lithe young buccaroo, in all the picturesque glory of corduroy breeches, angora 'chaps,' scarlet neckerchief, and wide sombrero, driving a bunch of cattle from a neighbouring state, had lightly sprung from his saddle, and flinging down the long lines of his panting horse before the Patricks' gate, asked Mary for a drink of water, the brown-eyed girl had walked straight into his heart. Like Isaac of old, he found his 'Rebecca' at the *well;* saw her, to his sun-wearied eyes, a cool, refreshing vision, in a pink cotton frock, flecks of sunlight falling on her smooth dark hair, and her rolled-up sleeves showing plump, white arms, which, to John Pardon, looked far too soft to draw up from the deep well the solid bucket, dangling moist and inviting from its rope. Anxious to do her service in winding it up, he hastened forward, but the long-reaching boughs of a giant fig-tree caught his sombrero and whirled it into the depths of the well! Mary had laughed, and gaily chaffed the buccaroo, as lying flat on the ground he fished for the drowning hat, but when he again rose to his feet, and holding the dripping object, began an elaborate apology for being such an 'awkward chap,' the magic thing had happened, and they were no longer strangers. Pardon, coming straight from a cattle country, where, as he had been wont to bemoan, 'Women-folk were as scarce as angels,' fell head over heels in love with the 'round little apple of a girl,' as in his fond mind he used to call her—round cheeks, round waist, round arms, and small round wrists to the fair, plump hands. Short, too, was she—so short that Pardon, looking down upon her up-turned face as she handed him a shining dipper of water, had suddenly found himself feeling strangely overgrown and gawky, yet half-proudly conscious that, did he choose so to do, he could pick her up in one hand.

From that day forward John became her devoted lover, nor was it due to sluggish blood in his veins that he had not speedily asked Mary to marry him. John Pardon, however, like his famous prototype, was 'an honourable man,' and hesitated to ask the woman he devoutly loved to leave her comfortable home and share with him a life of comparative poverty and hardship. He had, to be sure, as with a touch of pride he was wont to claim, the 'finest bunch of cattle in the country, and the prettiest band of horses to boot;' but he had not come alone to his new home. There was an invalid mother, whose pain at least to ease he had eagerly depleted his pocket, so that his isolated ranch was encumbered with debt, and the little time he could spare from his cattle had to be devoted to helping his only sister with the work of the house; small opportunity then had he to improve the place, let alone make it attractive. The Patricks, on the other hand, were well-to-do. The 'old man' had chanced on a 'good thing,' and when he died, left behind him not only a tidy little sum of money, but one of the best ranches in the district, close to the village, and a modern house, eminently ugly and set down in all its angular unloveliness in a hollow under a hill, but thoroughly comfortable and convenient. His wife soon following the 'old man,' Mary reigned supreme, keeping house thriftily and well for two bachelor brothers, who, both being steady, industrious men, were doing well and saw to it that their sister lacked nothing. There was talk, too, of an uncle, living in a distant city, who had made a fortune in some 'patent paint,' and who, being unmarried, would doubtless eventually leave his money to his niece and nephews.

Upon all this John Pardon had long pondered, his independent, albeit easy-going nature recoiling at the thought of his being supposed to seek Mary for what she had or might have, and reluctant to ask her to give up so much for what he felt to be so little that he could offer her. As to Mary Patrick herself, or Polly Patrick as she was commonly called, she, for her part, was quite content to let things stand as they were. Not but what she was secretly proud of her sweetheart, and knew herself to be rather envied of the other girls, John being not only far and away the best-looking young man in the district, but not one other, in that country of good riders, sat his horse with such ease and grace as did Pardon his big buckskin 'Brady,' or handled with such skilful yet gentle control a span of spirited steeds, such as his roan mare 'Kate' and her mate 'Custer.' Very flattering, too, was it to Mary's vanity that

whenever dance or picnic to some distant place was planned, John Pardon's neat, light 'buggy' and fleet horses were sure to be at her disposal, so that while the other girls must either walk in mud or dust, or, at best, squeeze together in some rancher's wagon, drawn by slow, heavy teams, and arrive crumpled and weary from a long, jolting ride, she, with John's rug or dust-sheet carefully tucked about her, and John's skilful hand piloting his overwilling horses, would presently be lifted in his strong arms clear over the wheels, and set down as fresh as paint, unruffled and uncreased.

John, too, though tacitly considered not quite so 'genteel' as some of the young men who on festive occasions came from stores and offices in neighbouring towns, yet held the palm as the nimblest and most tireless of dancers, as well as the most considerate of partners. And though Mary's looking-glass plainly told her that she was not nearly so pretty as Hazel Hubbard, with her auburn hair and peach-like complexion, nor was she so light and graceful a dancer as Annie M'Coon, yet her buccaroo lover was her steady partner, and when *she* 'sat out' he invariably 'sat out' *too*.

All this notwithstanding, Mary in her secret heart cherished a conviction that, among the people of her own native district, John Pardon as a husband would not be accounted a 'catch,' and that did she marry him she would in some indefinable way step out of the exclusiveness of her own small set; for probably nowhere are there more or so jealously-guarded social quibbles as are to be found in just such a narrow community in the Far West as that in which this story is laid. Handsome, merry, kindly as was John Pardon, the fact still remained that he was a buccaroo; that he had come from some 'cattle country up north;' that he lived on a half-reclaimed ranch 'way back' from the village, with its post office, store, and dozen or so small houses; while his sole capital was his cattle and his own rugged health. Mary's greatest friend, Maggie Peterson, had married a grocer, and now wrote glowing letters about their furnished flat and the social gaieties in the small town of W——. Daisy Grant, now the wife of a school superintendent, wrote to Mary quite learnedly on the subject of 'meetings,' 'directors,' and high school 'class-days.' Pretty Hazel Hubbard was 'keeping company' with the Baptist minister in Orangeville, the provincial town a few miles distant, that gave itself great airs over and above the tiny village of Beestop, where Mary and her friends had been born and bred. In short, among all her classmates at the village school, Mary Patrick was one of the few who still lived on at the home ranch. Yet of all the natives Mary was socially the leader. The Patricks were among the oldest inhabitants, and quite the 'best off,' so naturally her friends looked to her to make a good match. Added to all these considerations was the one of religion. The Patricks were strict Roman Catholics, and it was with them that the aged priest, who had married Mary's parents and christened Mary herself, always had his Sunday dinner when he drove from a distant town for a monthly celebration of mass.

John Pardon, on the other hand, came of old New England Puritan stock—never saw the inside of a church, for the very good reason that most of his life had been spent on the wild 'plains,' far away from churches, and his simple, unadorned creed was an absolute faith in the 'Good Man,' as he quite reverently but with the frankest sense of *fellowship*, spoke of the Deity, and in His overruling Providence. Mary, schooled to a profound and reserved awe of the mysteries of the Holy Catholic Church, was at first utterly shocked by the easy familiarity with which Pardon associated the 'Good Man' with the common round of his rough life, and finally withdrew altogether, so far as religion was concerned, behind the reserve fostered by her own special dogma. No, all things considered, Mary Patrick had no desire to take John Pardon 'for better, for worse,' nor, if at times, woman-like, she wondered at and perhaps a little resented his stoutly maintained silence on the vital question, was she at all anxious to bring things to a head, and so probably lose her lover and all his comfortable attentions.

When, however, matters between them had subsisted in such fashion for, as we have said, several summers since their first merry meeting at the well, the inevitable day arrived when John Pardon's devotion, and the real depths of Mary's regard for him, were to be put to the test. Things had, in the meantime, a good deal changed with Pardon. The poor, pain-racked mother had at last been laid to rest in the least dreary spot that John could find in the rather forlorn, unkempt cemetery, towards which most of the inhabitants of Beestop were travelling; and Sissy, clinging to her big brother and weepingly declaring that she was a 'wicked girl' to leave him so utterly alone, had nevertheless received his blessing and a hearty kiss, and waving a wet handkerchief to him as he stood smiling cheerily at the old bungalow gate, had driven away with her 'doctor chap,' to be married and live in a distant State.

(*Continued on page 649.*)

ON LUCK AND CHARACTER.

By G. R. Glasgow.

ONE would like to begin by saying definitely that there is no such thing as luck, and if we could dive far enough back into our own or any one else's past, it is probable that that would be our ultimate conclusion, but so far as one can see, which is but through a glass darkly, it is sufficient to say that most of the things we blindly ascribe to luck are really the outcome of that mysterious compound we speak of as *character*. 'How lucky you are!' 'Just my luck!' 'A lucky accident!' 'I have no luck!' How often we hear these remarks in the course of the day, and how definitely we can picture to ourselves the speakers; the rather flabby, rather muddle-headed, indolent, 'unlucky' ones, who are sticking in the mud, uncertain and irresolute, and, like Mr Micawber, waiting for something to turn up; for in these days of mascots and charms, and touching of wood, the training of character is apt to be rather lost sight of. And yet character is, in itself, the surest armour against fate; the steady resolution that considers a difficulty from every point of view—the will that controls it—the courage that overcomes it, are the most effectual challenge to the gods, and a character possessing these qualities is more likely to bring us luck than all the black cats and four-leafed clovers in the world.

So many great events are due to small beginnings—to neglect of warnings, to a want of instant action, to a policy of drift, partly caused by vague terrors which we are afraid to put into words, partly by the indolent hope that there may be a turn for the better, that nature may relent, that the river may perhaps run back to its source by some unforeseen miracle; and when the inevitable sequel comes, and no miracle has happened, we say helplessly, 'I am so unlucky.'

Take every accident of life, its successes and its failures, and trace them back to their first faint beginnings, and, if you deal honestly with yourself, you will recognise that there was not any luck about it at all—that if you had had prudence and courage and foresight, and so shaped your destiny as to achieve success, you would never have dreamt of ascribing it to luck; it is only the unsuccessful who must have a scapegoat!

The effort to guide and control one's self in all the circumstances of life by a firm will and a considered purpose, very soon develops into a habit, and hardens into what we describe as character.

The creed of luck precludes the possibility of freewill, an impossible position to most people who have had any experience of life. We instinctively know that the inevitable moment comes when a choice has to be made, and that we are free to choose. 'Choose ye *this day*.' The moment passes, and if we let the opportunity slip by, it is no use to say later, 'Luck was against me'—it was not luck but character that played us false.

To even the greatest traitor that the world knows the choice was given. Judas was not predestined to condemnation—it was not by some unlucky accident that he became the betrayer of his Lord. He was one of the chosen twelve, the intimate friend and companion of a Master whom he doubtless began by loving. Every confidence was shown in him; he held and distributed the money. Again and again the appeal of love gave him his chance, even to those last tender words, 'Friend, wherefore art thou come?'

To have been born under an unlucky star, and predestined to such a fate—to have lived with Christ for three transcendent years—and then suddenly to have been thrust out of His presence through no fault of his own, but only because of some primeval curse, would have been impossible. No, the choice had been put before him—life or death—good or evil—and he had chosen; perhaps he himself hardly realised how widely his road had diverged from the one his Master trod, how his soul had deteriorated, how the evil in his character had blotted out the good, until he heard the tragic words that drove him to self-destruction—'What is that to us—see thou to that.' And yet because Leonardo da Vinci represents him as having overturned the salt, we make ourselves miserable over a like accident and consider it 'unlucky.'

A bad character is not so common as a *want of character*, a feeble uncertainty and beating about the bush that prevents our taking the instant swift resolve for right or wrong. We are so apt to linger in the Valley of Decision, but that does not mean that we are therefore doomed to absolute failure; there is never a moment in life when it is impossible to start again; it is only Death that closes a door on which we beat (like Tintagiles) in vain.

There is a moral flabbiness too, which, by always expecting misfortunes, tends to attract them, and so depresses and weakens the mind that it makes no effort to avoid them, and offers no resistance when they come. 'Misfortunes never come singly,' such people say, and they sit gazing out of the window at which they expect the second sorrow to enter or love to fly out!

Many of the natural calamities of life, which are in themselves sufficient for most people, are increased and magnified because of this un-

reasonable outlook on life, this groundless theory that we are born under a lucky or unlucky star, and that therefore it is waste of time trying to avert disasters—disasters which, if we exerted ordinary prudence, a steady habit of mind, and a controlling will, would probably never come near us at all!

It is unreasonable not to look before you leap, to throw yourself blindly into a millstream, and then resent the inevitable consequences and simply curse your luck! It is pitiful to give to yourself and others feeble excuses of heredity or overwhelming temptation for a turbulent temper or a miserly disposition; it is your weak will that is in fault, not your strong passions; it is the feebleness of the nerveless hands that have lost control of the reins, not the fieriness of the steed that has taken the bit in its teeth, that brings disaster. The family temper, to which we refer with a sort of curious pride, and the hereditary vice of which we are hardly even ashamed, are poor excuses for what is not fate at all, but only a tragic acquiescence in a habit of mind we had not the courage or the strength of will to conquer. The choice was there, and we chose. It is at the outset, when we see only the one step before us, that it is most necessary that our feet should be set in the right direction; it is then that we must train the character, and let luck go to the wall; and when you find yourself saying, 'I am so lucky,' you may have the pleasant assurance that you are gathering in the harvest of your own sowing, for, as Bacon says, 'A man's nature runs either to herbs or weeds, so let him seasonably water the one and destroy the other.'

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

By Jeffery Farnol.

CHAPTER XLI.—OF A PACKET OF LETTERS.

M'GINNIS jerked aside the roll-top desk, and falling on his knees before a small but massive safe built into the wall behind, set the combination and swung open the heavy door, talking to his companion as he did so, and quite unconscious of the pale face that watched him through the dingy window.

'Soapy's gettin' ugly,' he was saying; 'an' it don't do t' get ugly with me, Heine boy! Soapy thinks he's smart Alec all right, but I guess I'm some smarter. Why, I got evidence enough in here t' 'lectrocute a dozen Soapys.'

'So?' said Heine, chewing on his cigar and peering into the safe. 'Say, what's all them tied up in sassy blue ribbon, Bud?'

'These?' said M'Ginnis, and he took out a bundle of letters, turning them over in his big hands.

'Skirt—hey, Bud?'

'Sure thing!' he nodded, and as he stared down at this packet how should he guess how tense and rigid had become the lounging form in the darkness beyond the window, how should he know of the wide glare of watchful eyes or of the sudden quiver of a smouldering cigarette?

'Yes, a girl's letters, Heine! An' a big lot of 'em. I dunno why I keep 'em, but'—— So saying, he tossed the letters back again and turned to his companion. 'Hand over that dope!' he commanded, and Heine passed over a bundle of papers, which M'Ginnis carefully slipped into a certain compartment.

As he did so, Heine spun round upon his heel. 'Gee-whiz!' he exclaimed, 'you shook me that time, Soapy! Where 've you been blown in from?'

'An' what are you nosin' around here for, anyway?' snarled M'Ginnis, shutting the heavy safe with a fierce slam. 'Since you've come in you can get out again—right now!'

Soapy seated himself upon a corner of the desk, and placidly breathed out two spirals of cigarette smoke. 'Heard about Hermy being married, Bud?' he inquired.

'Married? You're a liar! Hermy married!'

''S right!' nodded Soapy; 'she's married th' millionaire-guy as got shot—you know—got shot in that wood. You'll remember, Bud?'

M'Ginnis sank into a chair, and fell to biting his nails, staring blindly before him. 'Is—this—straight goods?' he inquired thickly, without altering his gaze.

'Sure! Ye see she nursed him through his sickness, Bud—kind o' did the piller-smoothin' an' brow-strokin' act. Oh, I guess she comforted him quite some.'

M'Ginnis stared before him, worrying his nails with sharp white teeth.

'Ravenslee's a well man again, I hear, an' they're honeymoonin' at his place on the Hudson—devotion ain't the word, Bud! 'S funny,' said Soapy, 'but the bullet as downed this guy drove Hermy into his arms. 'S funny, ain't it, Bud?'

With a hoarse, inarticulate cry that was scarcely human M'Ginnis sprang from his chair, his quivering fists up-flung. For a moment he stood thus, striving vainly for utterance, then wrenched loose his neckerchief, while Soapy methodically lighted a new cigarette from the butt of its predecessor.

'Easy, Bud, easy!' he remonstrated gently when M'Ginnis's torrent of frenzied threats and

curses had died down somewhat; 'if you go on that way, you'll go off—in a fit or somethin', an' I shouldn't like t' see ye die—that way!'

'Up the river, is he?' panted M'Ginnis.

''S right, Bud, up the river in his big house—with her. I'——

'Is he, by'——

'A dandy place f' honeymoonin', Bud!'

'Loan me your gun, Soapy. I'll get him, by God! if I have t' shoot him in her arms. Loan me y'r gun!'

'I guess not, Bud; no, I guess not. I'd feel kind o' lonesome without th' feel of it. Ask Heine; he'll loan you his; it's gettin' t' be quite a habit with him. Ain't it, Heine?'

M'Ginnis sat awhile glaring down at his clutching right hand; then he rose, and opening his desk took thence a heavy revolver and slipped it inside his coat. 'You're comin' with me, Heine,' said he; 'I'll want you.'

'Sure thing, Bud,' nodded Heine, chewing his cigar, 'but what about lettin' Soapy tag along too.'

'Soapy,' said M'Ginnis, striding to the door—'Soapy can go t' hell right now.'

'Why then, Bud,' drawled Soapy, 'I'll sure meet you—later. S' long.'

Left alone, Soapy's languor gave place to swift action. In two strides, it seemed, he was in the saloon, had beckoned the quick-eyed bar-tender aside, and put the question: 'Where's the kid, Jake?'

The bar-tender lifted an eyebrow and jerked a thumb upwards. 'Shut-eye,' he nodded, and turned back to his multifarious duties.

Up a narrow stair sped Soapy, and opening one of the numerous doors, crossed to a truckle-bed, wherefrom a tousled head upreared itself.

'Who th''——

'Say, kid, are ye drunk, or only asleep?'

'Whatcher want, Soapy? You lemme be. Watcher want?' began Spike drowsily.

'Nothin' much, kid; only Bud an' Heine's gone t' shoot y'r sister's husband.'

'Husband!' cried Spike, drowsy no longer. 'Husband—say, d' ye mean Geoff?'

'That's who, kid. You was crackin' on t' me about wantin' t' make good—well, here's y'r chance. Bud aims t' get there 'bout midnight—up th' river, you know—so you got two hours. You'll have t' go some t' get in first, but I guess you can do it.'

'I will if it kills me!' cried Spike, springing towards the door.

'Hold on, kid! you'll need some mazuma, maybe. Here's a ten-spot. It'll be more useful t' you than me after t' night, I reckon. So get your hooks onto it; an' now—beat it!'

Without more words Spike snatched the money, crammed it into his pocket, and running down the stairs, was gone.

Then, after having lighted another cigarette, Soapy descended to M'Ginnis's dingy office, where, having dragged away the desk, he brought a chair and sat with his ear against the safe, turning the combination lock with long, delicate fingers. To and fro he turned it, very patiently hearkening to the soft clicks the mechanism gave forth, while the cigarette smouldered between his pallid lips. Soapy, among other accomplishments, was a yegg-man renowned in the profession, and very soon the heavy door swung softly back, and Soapy became lost in study. Money there was and valuables of many kinds; these he didn't trouble with, but to the papers he gave a scrupulous attention. Sometimes as he read, his white eyelids fluttered somewhat, and sometimes the dangling cigarette quivered. Presently he arose, and bore these many papers to the sheet-iron upon which stood the rusty stove. Here he piled them and set them alight, and stood watching until they were reduced to a heap of charred ash. Then, returning to the safe, he took out a bundle of letters tied up in a faded blue ribbon, and seating himself at M'Ginnis's desk he slipped off the ribbon, and, very methodically, began to read these letters one after the other.

But as he read the humble entreaties, the passionate pleading of those written words, blotted and smeared with the bitter tears of a woman's poignant shame and anguish, Soapy's pendent cigarette fell to the floor, and lay there smouldering and forgotten, and his lips were drawn back from sharp, white teeth—pallid lips contorted in a grin the more awful because of the two great drops that welled from the fierce, half-closed eyes. Every letter he read and every word; then, very methodically, set them back within the faded blue ribbon, and sat staring down at them with eyes wider open than usual—eyes that saw back into the past. And as he sat thus, staring at what had been, he repeated a sentence to himself over and over again at regular intervals, speaking with a soft inflection none had ever heard from him before: 'Poor little Maggie—poor little kid!'

CHAPTER XLII.—TELLS HOW RAVENSLEE BROKE HIS WORD, AND WHY.

'PAST eleven o'clock, dear!' said Hermione.

'Still so early?' sighed Ravenslee.

They were sitting alone in the fire-glow, so near that by moving his hand he could touch her where she sat curled up in the great arm-chair; but he did not reach out his hand, because they were alone and in the fire-glow, and Hermione had never seemed quite so alluring.

'How cosy a fire is—and how unnecessary!' she sighed contentedly.

'I'm English enough to love a fire, especially when it is unnecessary,' he answered.

'English, dear?'

'My mother was English; that's why I was educated in England.'

'Your mother! How she must have loved you.'

'I suppose she did; but, you see, she died when I was a baby.'

'Poor lonely mite!' Here her hand came out impulsively to caress his coat-sleeve, and to be prisoned there by two other hands, to be lifted and pressed to burning lips; whereat she grew all rosy in the fire-glow.

'I suppose,' said he, the words coming a little unevenly, 'it would be too much to ask my wife to—come a little—nearer?'

'Nearer? Why, Geoffrey dear, our chairs are touching now.'

'Our chairs? Why, yes—so they are! I suppose,' sighed he—'I suppose it would be breaking my word to my wife if I happened to kiss my wife?'

'Why, Geoffrey—of course it would!'

'Yes, I feared so!' he nodded, and kissed her hand instead; and there fell a silence.

'How heavenly it is!' she whispered softly, leaning a little nearer to him.

'Heavenly!' he answered, leaning a little nearer to her and watching the droop of her lashes.

'So—so quiet and—peaceful!' she added, drawing away again, conscious of his look.

'Horribly!' he sighed.

'Geoffrey!'

'Quiet and peace,' he explained, 'may hold such an infinitude of possibilities impossible of realisation to a husband who is bound by promises, that it is apt to be a little—trying.'

Hermione did not speak, but drew his hand to be caressed by the soft oval of a cheek and touched by the velvet of shy lips.

'And yet,' he went on, staring resolutely at the fire, 'I wouldn't change this for anything else the world could offer me!'

'Bear with me—a little longer, dear!' she murmured.

'As long as you will, Hermione, providing'——

'Well, my Geoffrey dear?'

'That it is only—a little longer.'

'You don't think I'm very silly, do you, dear?' she inquired, staring into the fire.

'No, not very!'

'Oh!' she said softly, glancing at him reproachfully. 'You don't think me cruel?'

'Not very,' he answered, kissing her hand again.

'Dear Geoffrey, you don't think I'm very selfish, do you?' she questioned wistfully.

'No—never that!' he answered, keeping his gaze averted.

'Because if'——

'If?' said he.

'If it is hard for you'—— The soft voice faltered.

'Yes, Hermione?'

'If you really think I'm—cruel and—silly, you—needn't wait—any longer—if you wish'——

His arms were about her, drawing her near, clasping her ever closer, and she held him away no more; but beholding her wistful eyes, the plaintive droop of her vivid mouth, and all the voiceless pleading of her, he loosed her and turned away. 'I love you so much, Hermione—so much, that your will shall be my will.'

She rose, and leaning against the carved mantel stared down into the fire. When at last she spoke there was a note in her voice he had never heard before. 'Geoffrey dear, this world is a very bad world for a lonely girl, and sometimes a very hateful world, and I have been lonely nearly all my life—and I didn't think there were such men as you; I didn't think any man could love so unselfishly. All my life I shall treasure the recollection of this hour—yes, always! always!'

Then she turned, and, ere he knew, was on her knees before him, had twined soft arms about his neck, and was looking up at him through shining tears.

'Yes, I'm crying a little! I don't do it often, dear—tears don't easily come with me. But now I'm crying because—oh, because I'm so proud—so proud to have won such a wonderful love. Good-night—good-night! Oh, break your word for once—kiss me, my husband!'

So while she knelt to him thus, he kissed her until she sighed and stirred in his embrace. Then she rose, and hand in hand they crossed the room, and he opened the door. For a blissful moment they stood there, silent in the shadows; but when he would have kissed her again, she laughed at him through her tears and fled from him up the wide stairway.

CHAPTER XLIII.—HOW SPIKE GOT EVEN.

A CLOCK in the hall without struck midnight; but Ravenslee sat on long after the silvery chime had died away, his chin sunk on broad chest, his eyes staring blindly at the fading embers, lost in profound but joyful meditation. Once he turned to look where she had stood beside the mantel, and once he reached out to touch the thrice-blessed chair that had held her.

The curtains stirred and rustled at the open window behind him; but he sat looking into the flickering fire, seeing there pictures of the future, and the future was full of a happiness beyond words, for in every picture Hermione moved.

All at once he started, and glanced swiftly round, his lounging attitude changing to one of watchful alertness, for he had heard a sound that drew rapidly nearer—the hiss and pant of breath drawn in quick gasps. Silently he arose, and turned to see the curtains swing apart, and a shapeless something stagger forward and fall

heavily. Then he reached out to the switch beside the hearth, and the room was flooded with brilliant light; the figure kneeling just inside the swaying curtains uttered a strangled cry, and threw up a hand before his face, a hand dark with spattering blood.

'Oh Geoff—oh Geoff!' panted Spike, 'I ain't come thievin' this time—honest t' God, I ain't!'

'Why, you're hurt! What's the matter?'

'They see me down th' road as I came, an' shot me; but this ain't nothin'. Out th' lights, Geoff! Out 'em—quick!'

But Ravenslee had crossed the room, had seized the lad's arm, and was examining the ugly graze that bled so freely.

'That ain't nothin'. Douse th' lights, Geoff! Out 'em quick; Bud's coming here close behind—Bud and Heine; they mean t' plug you. Oh, put out th' lights!'

Instinctively Ravenslee turned, but even as he did so Spike uttered a hoarse cry. 'No ye don't, Bud—not this time!' and sprang upon the form that towered between the curtains. Came the sound of fierce scuffling, a deafening report, and running forward Ravenslee caught Spike as he staggered back; heard a rush and trample of feet along the terrace, the sound of blows and fierce curses behind the swaying curtains; heard the Spider's fierce shout and Joe's deep roar; two more shots in rapid succession, and the swift patter of feet in flight and pursuit.

'How is it, Spike? Are you hurt, old chap?'

But Spike just then was beyond words, so Ravenslee bore the swooning boy to a settee, and laying him there, began to search hastily for the wound.

But now the door was flung wide, and Hermione was beside him. 'Geoffrey—oh, my love! Have they hurt you?'

'No, dear—thanks to Spike here!'

'Arthur! Oh, thank God! Did he'——

'Took the bullet meant for me, Hermione. I owe your brother my life!'

She was down on her knees, and very soon her skilful fingers had laid bare the ugly wound in the lad's white arm. But now came Mrs Trapes, looking taller and bonier than ever in a long, very woolly garment; and while she aided Hermione to bandage the wound, Ravenslee brought water and brandy, and very soon Spike sighed and opened his eyes.

'Hello, Hermy!' he said faintly. 'Don't worry; I'm all O.K. Bud shot me, an' I'm glad, because now I can ask you t' forgive me. Y' see, he'd have got old Geoff sure if it hadn't been for me; so you—you will forgive me, won't you?'

For answer, Hermione bent and kissed his pallid cheek.

'I'll go and phone for the doctor,' said Ravenslee.

'Which,' said Mrs Trapes, 'I done ten minutes ago, Mr Geoffrey. Doctor 'll be right along.'

Ravenslee turned to Spike. 'How are you now, old fellow?'

'Only a bit sick-like. But say, Geoff—I know I played it low down on you, but—will you—shake an' try t' forget it?'

Ravenslee took and held the boy's outstretched hand. 'I think we're going to be better friends than ever, Spike!'

'Good!' said Spike, smiling wearily. 'But say, Geoff—dear old Geoff—if I got t' die, I don't mind—because I guess this makes us quits at last—don't it, Geoff?'

(*Continued on page 648.*)

THE ROMANCE OF SHEFFIELD STEEL.

By E. T. Good.

WHEN we and our Allies have at last beaten German militarism the victory will be in a large measure due to the capacity of Sheffield steel-works, the skill and sweat of Sheffield steel-workers, and the superior qualities of Sheffield steel products. We owe a debt of gratitude to the people who prior to the war maintained in this country, and particularly in Sheffield, plants capable of turning out the highest class of armaments in great volume, in spite of much discouragement from successive governments and bitter criticism from public speakers and writers. In works designed for the production of munitions of war not less than £40,000,000 of private capital was invested in Britain before Germany made her mad plunge—half of it in Sheffield alone. To-day Sheffield is providing the allied armies and navies with munitions on a scale that no one could have imagined remotely possible three years ago; and when the war is over Sheffield, with a vastly increased productive capacity, will be able to turn its resources to the manufacture of ordinary peace-time goods on an unprecedented scale, and will export these to foreign markets in variety and quantity, and of a quality and at a cheapness that will defy German competition.

Prior to the war the history of Sheffield's heavy trades was an industrial romance. Developments in both the light and heavy trades of this city during the war have been dramatic. Sheffield has revolutionised itself. It has spent millions on new plants and machinery. Scores of acres of land have been covered with new workshops. Skilled workmen have speeded themselves up. Unskilled have become skilled. Tens

of thousands of women have attained a wonderful degree of efficiency, and when the bulk of the 30,000 young Sheffield workmen who are in the army return home this city will turn out probably three or four times the quantity of steel goods that ever it did before the war. German steel and steel products have been swept pretty nearly off all British, allied, and neutral markets, and Sheffield intends to keep them off.

Before the adoption of the Bessemer process in 1856—a process which converted iron worth £7 a ton into steel worth £70 a ton in fifteen minutes, and almost immediately rendered steel available for rail-making, shipbuilding, &c.—Britain's output of steel was only about 40,000 tons a year, of which Sheffield contributed 35,000 tons. Steel-making was then confined to the costly and tedious crucible process, and it was a case of Sheffield first and the rest out of the running. At that time Sheffield made as much steel as France, Austria, and the United States put together. Since then this city has witnessed the rise of many ambitious imitators and formidable competitors—rivals whose rise has been mainly due to Sheffield inventions—but Sheffield is still Sheffield, and its staple industry, alike in the variety and excellence of its products and the skill of its craftsmanship, has no peer.

The purchaser of steel goods, whether he requires a pocket-knife or a huge casting, a fine tool or a 100-ton armour-plate, can be accommodated in Sheffield. Such a variety of steel and steel goods as Sheffield produces is not to be found elsewhere. In quality also Sheffield is at the top. The resistive strength of its armour, the piercing power of its projectiles, the durable quality of its rails and plates, and the cutting power of its tools and knives are unequalled. And Sheffield is in no danger of losing its supremacy. Just as it took the lead in armour-plates two generations ago, so is it leading now in bullet-proof and high-speed tool steels, and it has recently marketed a rustless steel—a unique product from which knives are made which will not rust or stain, but will maintain their original brightness no matter how used.

Until Bessemer discovered the pneumatic method of turning iron into steel the trade was limited to the light industries—cutlery, tools, implements, small-arms, &c. But Bessemer altered that. Strangely enough, his invention, which revolutionised the world's iron, steel, engineering, shipbuilding, and general manufacturing trades, was the result of experimenting in the manufacture of munitions. Bessemer first invented a method of firing elongated projectiles. The British Government rejected this without a trial, but Napoleon III. accepted it and assisted and encouraged the inventor. The invention was satisfactory so far as the projectile was concerned, but there was no gun exactly suitable. Bessemer then started experimenting with the object of producing a metal from which a gun to suit the new projectile could be made. The result was the discovery that molten iron could have its heat intensified, its impurities eliminated, and could be converted into strong, malleable, uniform, and homogeneous steel by the simple process of forcing minute streams of cold air through it. In the words of Stephen Jeans, this was, and still stands, 'the greatest metallurgical discovery of the age.' That was the genesis of Sheffield's heavy steel-trade. Within a dozen years Sheffield was producing huge armour-plates, big guns, giant steel castings, and enormous quantities of steel rails and ship-plates. Steel which cost between £60 and £70 a ton to produce, and was much too costly for heavy work, was brought down by the Bessemer invention to less than £10 a ton, and before the end of the century to £5 a ton, to the infinite benefit of mankind.

In the early sixties (Bessemer took out his patent in 1855, and demonstrated his process the following year) Sheffield made great progress in the manufacture of armour-plates. In 1863 plates twenty feet long and twelve inches thick were rolled in the John Brown Works. In 1868 Charles Cammell produced compound armour-plates which withstood severe tests at Tegel, the Prussian armament testing-station. In 1876 the Italian Government conducted a series of tests between iron and steel plates. The result was not conclusive, and it set Bessemer, Cammell, Brown, and other Sheffielders experimenting again with renewed vigour. Wilson, Ellis, Tresidder, and others soon joined in the work of this city, and as a result the first 'cemented' armour-plate was produced in the Atlas Works (John Brown), and the first 'all steel' plate in the River Don Works (Vickers, Limited), in 1888. The Cyclops Works (Cammell-Lairds) then produced the part-iron, part-steel plate; and in 1891 Tresidder improved his famous chilling process (patented in 1887), which greatly strengthened armour-plates. To-day Sheffield produces steel ingots weighing up to as much as 130 tons, and makes them into armour-plates and guns by hydraulic presses exerting pressures of as much as 10,000 tons.

In remarkable contrast to the progressive development of the Sheffield heavy trades since the middle of the nineteenth century, the light trades of this city have remained in a condition of comparative stagnation. Sheffield was noted for its cutlery, tools, implements, and small-arms centuries ago, and in the nature of its steel and the competence of its workmanship this city has never fallen below the topmost mark; but these light trades have for two or three generations been afflicted with an almost chronic conservatism. The Sheffield cutlers have been too proud and self-reliant to allow modern machinery to

displace their handicraft. The capacity of Sheffield light trades was little or no greater in 1914 than in 1854.

Meantime, the Germans had as far as possible copied Sheffield methods, and gone one better by adopting machinery. By virtue of producing on a large scale by machinery, and by subsidising their export trade, whilst Sheffield stuck to its handwork and failed to increase its productive capacity as the world's population and its demand for cutlery grew, the Germans succeeded in first overtaking and then outdistancing this country in the world's markets. In the last year before the war Solingen, the German cutlery town, exported twice as much as Sheffield. But that will never happen again. This German-made war is proving the salvation of the Sheffield trades, as it is of several other British industries.

In a comparison between the Sheffield heavy and light trades before the war we have a striking object-lesson in industrial economics. In the effects of the war upon both heavy and light trades we have magnificent revelations. Under patriotic impulses Sheffield employers and workmen have effected more mechanical improvements in thirty months of war than they did in sixty years of peace. In spite of the loss of many young workmen by enlistment, Sheffield cutlery works, by adopting machinery and employing women, are to-day turning out articles by the million where previously they produced only in thousands. When our huge army has completed its work and its abnormal demand for cutlery, bayonets, &c., ceases, the Sheffield light trades will be able to rival the heavy industries in the value of their output and the volume of the goods they will export to foreign markets. Before the war Sheffield gave quality, whilst Solingen yielded quantity. In the future Sheffield will produce both quantity and quality.

The strength of German competition before the war, and our future trading possibilities in certain markets, may be gathered from the fact that in the last year before the war Solingen exported to the Argentine four times as much cutlery as Sheffield, five times as much to the United States, seven times as much to China, ten times as much to Mexico, sixty-four times as much to Italy, and seventy times as much to Russia as Sheffield sent there.

Sheffield cutlers and their employers were the most conservative of our industrial classes. Before the war we really had two Sheffields—the old and the new, or the light and the heavy. In the heavy trades, as already noted, where our employers were always prepared to adopt new machinery and methods, and to employ the best men and managers that could be got from anywhere, we saw the constant building of new furnaces and shops and an increasing volume of employment. In the light trades, where old methods, old men, and old managers—or rather, locals—were stuck to with a tenacious affection and religious reverence, we had, until this war broke out, a condition of affairs little better than stagnation.

Had Sheffield been left dependent upon the light trades, with their lack of progressive enterprise, it would only have been a third or fifth rate town to-day, and could have played but a meagre part in this titanic struggle. Thanks to the heavy trades, Sheffield is a city of over half-a-million inhabitants, and it is rapidly growing. It is producing more munitions of war than Krupps, and after the war it will beat both Essen and Solingen, for our cutlery people have shaken off their apathy and lethargy. Workmen have abandoned their old opposition to machinery. Employers are co-operating and organising for the promotion of trade as well as modernising their plants. The Sheffield University, the most up-to-date metallurgical institution in the world, is splendidly assisting industry. In a word, Sheffield—even the ancient cutlery part of Sheffield—is entering into a new era of progress and prosperity.

THE PEACE OF EVEREST.

None but these monstrous children of God know how to join so much beauty with so much horror.

TO the weaklings of the plains who dwell in sight of their snows, obsessed by alternate dread of avalanche and hillmen, the mountains must always be the symbol of frightfulness; but to the traveller they bring a message of infinite peace. Geologists, learned amid the dry bones of their science, vow that mountains are as changeable as any other scenery. They look on the Himalayas as the sport of rivers that grind them to the silt that Brahmaputra carries to the ocean. Yet those who have gazed on Everest see in it the one enduring element in the Indian landscape. The rivers and tanks may run dry, the forests may burn to the ground, the villages may be wiped out by the plague; if the mountains be not immutable, then all our faith in eternity must go.

Yet, for all the atmosphere of peace, there is in these same summits a savour of defiance, as if they would dare us to our destruction. But there is no unfriendliness in this challenge of the Hill Difficult, for its prize, in spite of the risk involved, is blessed change from the dead level of workaday stagnation in the plains.

He who goes to the Hills, even if no higher

than the winding street of Darjeeling, marks first the fall in temperature and then the revolution in perspective. The task of adjusting his vision to the altered focus of the high places is indeed no easy one. He finds that his eyes have much to learn, and even more to unlearn, and his point of view changes with every step nearer to the clouds. His eyes grow keener, yet less discerning. Even the nearer peak of Kinchinjinga is fifty miles from Darjeeling, yet there are moments at which, thanks to the deceptive play of high lights on the snows, it scarcely seems ten. Curiously enough, even the camera records a measure of this illusion, so that it is an actual optical effect and not the result of careless inspection.

If possible, the perspective from the heights is even more startling. Any one moved by the inquisitive spirit which inspired Petrarch to climb his mountain near Vaucluse finds himself master of a wide horizon, but baffled by its details. Only a little way above Darjeeling he may look back on that station and see it only a blur of red and gray, and from the town itself the brighter green of the tea-gardens merges unrecognisable in the purple of the foot-hills and the *duars*. In fact, a bird's-eye view of this sort is like a short index to a crowded book—it embraces wide scope but little detail.

Whether the discriminating eye finds the greater delight in these memorable hill views from the plains or from some point above them is a matter of opinion, even a question of mood. Seen from the Bhutan valleys, those massive peaks hooded with virgin snow seem irradiated with a beauty unsurpassable; yet the mountain prospect can yield even greater delight, given perfect atmospheric conditions, to any one standing on Observatory Hill, for at such comparatively close quarters he seems a part of their glory. Ruskin's definition of appreciation of scenery was the correct one. He who is footsore with climbing will find even the foot-hills hostile; but he who goes forth full of high hope has a welcome even for the difficulties, and struggles manfully to higher view-points from which he may see the wheeling vultures below him no greater than bees droning over a flower-bed.

Thanks to the presence of these soothing neighbours, hill-stations like Darjeeling offer the jaded folk of the plains not only the boon of cold weather, but also a blessed peace after the turmoil of Indian cities. The wearing routine of the plains is soon forgotten in presence of the cold divinity of the snows. The keen mountain-air drives malaria out of the blood and lulls the convalescent in a spell of laziness.

This régime of abiding peace is apparent even in normal years; during the war, when the rest of the world went mad, its healing balm was twice blest. Up in the hills, where Everest rears its head far above the trouble of ants, the war-telegrams daily posted at the club used to read like the stuff nightmares are made of, and came as a salutary reminder to those compelled to stay and work in the lotus-lands of the East of the sacrifices and sufferings entailed on their countrymen at home.

Apart from this willing tribute of remembrance and regret, there was irresistible comfort in the sweet peace of the Himalayas. While shot and shell were ravaging Europe, it was strange to look on those snows undefiled by human foot. Here, in presence of the majesty which invests the Roof of the World, one could see the embodiment of that spirit of enduring calm in which

> The East bowed low before the blast
> In silent, deep disdain;
> She let the Legions thunder past,
> Then plunged in thought again.

There is something unearthly about this peace of the Abode of Snows. It cannot be safeguarded by scraps of paper. It cannot be broken by the sons of man. It is the Peace of God.

THE MINIATURE.

By E. H. LIDDERDALE.

'ROSE—Rose Macfarlane.'

In the one name was the sweetness of June and of herself; in the other the stern, undeviating spirit of economy so desirable in a young matron in time of war. Most expressive, most perfect combination!

Henry Sanders repeated it with rapture as he felt his way along the main street of Southmere-on-Sea, in the super-darkness produced by winter and the Zeppelin danger together. He had just won a striking triumph over the scruples which had made him hesitate to propose to the portionless daughter of a doctor whose income had felt the competition of younger, smarter men. Had he been a millionaire, Henry would still have been temperamentally nervous in money matters, and he was but a young architect who had lost valuable commissions through the war. It is true that he had not to fear the total extinction of professional income which attends the transformation of architects into subalterns. His right arm, badly broken in early youth, and abominably set, was a permanent obstacle excluding him from active service. But people were building nothing but huts and canteens, and everything from boots to butter was 'up' and rising still. These were critical days for middle-class folk

to marry in, now that even the rich had taken to margarine.

And yet he was going to do it. His engagement was an hour old, and the jewels in the shaded shop windows were sparkling for him and her; the sou'-west wind was rising that it might carry his secret far inland. He was intoxicated with his own daring. For a while he bent a keen prospective eye upon the diamond rings, and not the biggest of them all seemed big enough for his happiness. But presently he turned up one of those little side-streets, dignified even in decay, which carry one back abruptly to the quiet elegance, all curricles and malacca canes, of watering-places a hundred years ago. And there, as he stood before the window of a dealer in bric-à-brac, he suddenly saw a miniature from which gazed a pair of vivid dark eyes that seemed familiar to him. But he did not know —how should he?—the owner of those eyes. To judge by the portentous neckcloth and iron-gray coat, the long sparse locks and the black ribbon that tied them, this old gentleman had flourished a considerable time since. Nor was it the beauty of the subject, but the masterliness of its treatment which fascinated him. The clean-shaven face was pale and hatchet-like; the cheek-bones were high; the lips thin, and tightly fastened under a long and rather cheerless nose; gray eyebrows, surprisingly bushy for a countenance otherwise meagre, protruded over the small and vivid eyes.

Henry Sanders had a keen intuitive appreciation of good painting. When the elderly man behind the counter named a sum well within his means, he concealed his surprise that such a fine miniature should be priced so low. It had been but a few days in the shop, said the seller, and was out of his line. And no one wanted such things in these hard times.

Sanders hardly heard him. In his thoughts it was already to-morrow, and he was with Rose, and she was exclaiming with pleasure that he should so soon have brought her a gift. Doubtless a ring is the traditional opening for the ancient lovers' game, the giving and receiving of presents. But Sanders had an idea that he rode superior to convention. And the miniature was a gem—of that there could be no question.

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Rose was more than pleased—she was enchanted! She had no knowledge of miniature-painting, and did not admire the old gentleman here immortalised; it was enough that it was Henry's gift, and that he was ejaculating, 'A Cosway, or I'm a juggins!'

Then, as she turned the little picture over, to admire it every way, it slipped from her fluttering hands and fell sharply on the floor, causing the ebony frame to come in twain. Horrified, they both stooped to pick it up. Henry grasped the front of the frame, discovering the miniature still intact behind its protecting glass; Rose held the little square of wood which enclosed the back.

'Jolly good luck!' he exclaimed, relieved.

But she did not reply. A deeper carmine flushed her cheeks with every moment that she stared at the object in her hand. 'Henry!'

'Yes.'

'Listen! "This miniature, which represents the Rev. Augustus Smillie, D.D., for forty years minister of Gloanside, N.B., at the age of sixty, was painted by Cosway and presented to me by Dr Smillie's widow after his lamented decease in 1820."'

She handed him with a dramatic gesture the wooden square which had so long concealed this information, minutely written in faded ink upon a scrap of paper fastened to its inner side. Wonderful, wonderful Henry! She was silent, and he, suspecting the cause of her emotion, was silent too. But the power of speech quickly returned to her.

'Henry,' she gasped, 'it's a Cosway, and it's more. It's old Dr Smillie himself.'

'Why, yes, I suppose so,' said Henry, feeling the centre of interest shifting a little.

'You don't understand. It is my great-grandfather! How wonderful! How extraordinary!'

'And who is "me?"'

'I can't imagine. But does it matter? This is mother's mother's father. To think of it!'

'I never knew she was a Smillie,' said Henry vaguely. He was so much more interested in the descendant than in the ancestor.

'She wasn't. At least, it depends whom you mean. Oh Henry! it is as though he had returned to wish us joy.'

'Dear old man,' said Henry, *ému*.

'I shall have him set in a wee gold frame with a loop,' cried the descendant, 'and wear him always—you know people do wear miniatures now—for your sake and his. And I shall write to Aunt Meggie to-night; for, to tell the truth, I really know nothing of him but his name. Mother herself was born years after his death. Aunt Meggie is *the* authority on the family traditions, and she shall tell us all about him.' And then, with sweet hesitation, 'Henry *dear*, one knows what sharks dealers are, even when they do not realise the value of what they are selling. You didn't pay an outrageous sum for it, did you—a real Cosway?'

The question was music to him; it showed the gulf that yawned between her and the daughter of the horse-leech. No man of feeling could possibly answer, 'I didn't!' He was clearly called upon to temporise. 'That's all right, little woman,' he said with some princeliness of manner, though without intent to deceive.

'Naughty boy!' she exclaimed. 'You shouldn't—you shouldn't! And in war time, too!'

But her soft brown eyes forgave him. And after that, how could he explain?

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Dr Smillie, in a narrow rim of gold, had been enthroned full three weeks beneath his great-granddaughter's chin, and still Aunt Meggie up in Peebles failed to produce his 'dossier.' They must take the virtues of the fine old fellow on trust until the bronchitis which plagued her should yield to treatment. In the absence of authentic details, Rose, made inventive by happiness, enlarged upon his wit and old-world courtesy. At such times Henry preserved a discreet silence; the ancient's frigid and meagre countenance exercised upon him a depressing influence which not even Cosway's art could dispel. Truth to tell, once he had grown used to the large, tart-shaped ornament riding like a ship at anchor on his fiancée's softly-heaving bosom, he forgot to look at it any more. It was a fine thing to light on a wife and a Cosway in one day; but there was no doubt which was the more permanently interesting find.

He had thought he knew Rose well, but how much he had still to learn! Day by day he found her more delightful; deeper, sweeter, wittier than even he had supposed. She was all that he sought in a wife. He laughed to think that he had ever feared to invite her to become Mrs Sanders. When of an evening they discussed the future, sitting for privacy's sake in Dr Macfarlane's consulting-room, among the horrid properties of his trade, Henry's heart glowed to hear her pungent views on the folly of costly weddings. But when she expressed her eagerness to forgo the bridal white of tradition that organ melted within him.

'No, no!' he cried; 'you are much too pretty to be married in a stuffy travelling-dress. I won't be done out of white satin.'

And, touched by his princely spirit, she forgot that it was her father to whom it would fall to pay the bill.

To do him justice, Henry was in the exalted mood when poor men scatter largesse without a twinge. Rose's prudence deliciously spurred his own to cut capers; he felt so safe in being a little extravagant with such a wife in view. And Rose would have been a super-woman if she could have received those first offerings of his without unmixed delight. But when it came to the third box of *marrons glacés* she made a stand.

'You have given me him,' she said, pointing to the ancestor on the front of her white blouse, 'and this,' indicating a small but lovely diamond sitting on the fourth finger of her left hand, 'not to speak of the rest. And now it is time to stop.'

As she spoke, her brown eyes were so serious that they looked almost black, and for a moment the little dark eyes of the divine glinted as though they too were alive.

'Wonderful chap, old Cosway!' thought Henry, noting both phenomena, and then he laughed and teased Rose about her scruples.

Yes, he was supremely happy in his choice. She was all—all that a wife should be in time of war.

Could it be that she was even a little more The disquieting suspicion dawned, discreetly veiled, after they had been engaged a few weeks. Sweet as it was to know that he was marrying a thrifty woman, he sometimes thought—he wondered—was she just a little—little——

The suspicion did not come into the open till he saw it unmistakably in the breast of another. To be plain, it was Dr Macfarlane who first suggested to him that Rose was just a thought too economical. Not that his future father-in-law said so to him; that which passed was not intended for his ear.

Henry's uncle, a man of means, and not ill-disposed towards his nephew, came to Southmere to leave a cough there; and, anxious to stand well with the Sanders family, the Macfarlanes invited the eminent lawyer to dine. Henry, returning to the drawing-room after he had seen Mr Morton Sanders depart in his cab, found Rose seated by the fire, looking up at her father with defiance in her eye.

'Well, father, people can't expect the meals they had before the sink-at-sight campaign,' he heard her say, gently but dangerously.

'Very likely not,' said the doctor, and then uttered the words that were burning Henry's mouth like a hot potato which it is not manners to eject. 'Very likely not. But parsnips—parsnips and bread-and-butter pudding! And if you must give us Robinson Frères, for heaven's sake, let it be decanted first!'

The doctor was plainly angry; there is something about parsnips that rouses even a mild man to frenzy. Henry did not hear his fiancée's defence; he stole with exaggerated discretion to the back drawing-room, where no one ever sat, and remained there plunged in the evening paper. Was he sorry to find Rose in hot water? Honestly, he could not say he was. The dinner had struck him as shabby to the point of meanness; he tingled when he thought of it. So he sat there feeling very fierce, and yet rather a cad for not taking Rose's part against her father.

And then he heard Rose call, 'Henry!' in a confident voice.

He leaped up, eager to forgive her. 'Here, darling!' he cried, emerging from his lair.

'Henry, what do you think about the dinner to-night? Do *you* still long for our old luxurious ways?'

'How do you mean?' said Henry, temporising, and remembering the frugal Bacchanals, the plain roast and boiled régime of the Macfarlane family in the days of peace.

But Rose saw through him instantly. 'Ah! you men are all alike—*bons vivants* first and

patriots after!' she cried. 'Why won't a simple wholesome meal content you? Think of Belgium—think of Poland!'

'It does content me,' said the craven Henry; then, forcing himself for very shame to be bolder, he added, 'the question is if it contented our guest.'

Her face flushed, then lengthened, hardened, and both eyes and lips seemed to contract under the lover's gaze. Suddenly Henry caught sight of the ancestor on her breast; and then he knew why the little painted face had been vaguely familiar to him when first he saw it in the dealer's window, and the beads started to his brow. He hurried out of the room that he might not see Rose looking so horribly like great-grandfather Smillie. Forgive her, indeed! She was utterly unrepentant!

But there was worse to come. For some time Rose had been busy on a present for him, the nature of which she stoutly refused to disclose. No lover would wish to look a gift-horse in the mouth, but after the affair of the dinner, Henry's interest in that present, the first Rose had ever made him, became too acute for enjoyment. So when next day she called him to the drawing-room, saying triumphantly, '*Now* you may see it!' he obeyed her with painful alacrity, hoping against hope to find a frivolous, even expensive object—something altogether independent of patriotism and cash considerations.

'There!' she said, pointing to the floor. 'Alone I did it!'

At her feet lay a door-mat such as one sometimes sees in dismal lodgings, formed of short tabs of various dark materials, so thickly massed that the foundation to which they were attached by one end was quite invisible. A sickening sensation took him as he beheld it. Of course it was awfully useful and ingenious, and had entailed enormous labour. But how frightful it was! And what was it made of? He stared at it fascinated, paralysed, unable to articulate.

'Now, Sherlock Holmes,' said Rose gaily, as though to unlock the floodgates of his gratitude, 'you know a Cosway at first sight. Tell me what are these?' With her toe she indicated the little tabs.

'*I* don't know,' said the harrowed recipient.

'Then you are less clever than I thought. Why, silly, they are father's trousers—old ones, of course—all cut up and sewn on. I begged them for you because I *knew* you'd like them. They will last for years and years!'

A horrid silence ensued.

And then Rose's pre-eminent virtue flashed out armed for battle. 'It is so much better to use up what one has than to buy anything new,' she said provocatively.

'New!' cried the enraged Henry, the blood rushing to his head. 'As though I supposed you would give me anything new if you could get it second-hand from some one else!'

'*Henry!*'

'Forgive me,' said the wretched man, horrified. 'I'm not myself. I'm not well.' And he poured out apologies and painful thanks in a lame but gallant attempt to restore the *status quo*.

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One is loath to apply the term 'cheese-paring' to one's beloved, but after that day Henry did secretly so apply it. In the watches of the night all her little war economies over 'bus fares, gas, and the like seemed to join hands and dance with horrible grimaces around that sinister door-mat. Why had he not noticed them in time? Why had he let her think him—*him!*—an extravagant dog? He cursed his own weakness until the doctor, in a moment of guilty confidence, let out that he himself could not imagine what had come to Rose. She had never been really close before. Could he bring himself to domesticate such distressing thrift? Affection staggered at the prospect. Six weeks engaged, and already Henry had a furtive eye open for an excuse to break it off!

Light dawned with the arrival ten days later of Aunt Meggie's tardy letter. Rose, after reading it, showed a faint reluctance to pass it on, which so determined Henry not to rest till he had seen it, that he almost snatched it from her. An idea had dawned on him in those sleepless nights for which he needed Aunt Meggie's support. And he found it in the following passage. 'Those who remember him describe your great-grandfather Smillie, I regret to say, as a most disagreeable old man. His parsimony, from boyhood, was pronounced, and became in his later years grotesque. I cannot suppose that he would ever have incurred the expense of a portrait by Cosway; the miniature in your possession, if genuine, was doubtless paid for by some one else. It is authentic that his death was due to a stroke caused by his anger on finding that his daughter, probably for very shame, had secretly bought him a new hat. *De mortuis*, &c., not to speak of the principle of the Fifth Commandment. But such is the truth.'

Eureka! Hope and resolution sprang in Henry once more. When that evening he again dropped in on Rose, she did not guess what deep design led him to propose that they should go down to the beach.

'We shall have it to ourselves,' he said, and she rejoiced to hear the tender suggestion, for of late a faintly perceptible coolness on his part had worried her.

As later they sat crouching on the lee-side of a breakwater, with the windy darkness about them, and the waves slapping the shingle below, she was happier than she had been since Henry had behaved so strangely over her door-mat. They were silent for a time, while Henry prepared for action, and Rose thought how nice it was to feel his arm about her again.

'Rose, do you love me?' he asked suddenly.

'What a question!' she laughed.

'Then give me back the Cosway.'

'Why?' A note of alarm sounded instantly in her voice.

'I don't think those large ornaments suit you.'

'That is not why you want it. Tell me the real reason.'

Now Henry did not choose to reveal his idea to Rose, and while he cast about for an answer she found an idea of her own.

'Oh, I see, I see!' she exclaimed with agitation. 'Oh Henry, you want to pawn it. I might have known!'

'Good heavens, Rose! What do you take me for?'

'For a weak creature—kind, oh yes—but fatally weak and fond of display.'

'My dear, are you mad?'

'Not mad; only observant, only afraid for our future! From the moment you gave me great-grandfather I began to be anxious, and every day your extravagant spirit, your love of costly food and furniture makes me more so. He himself seems to whisper, "You ought not to have let him buy me in war-time." Oh Henry, you need a careful wife indeed!'

'On the contrary,' cried Henry, boiling over at these accusations with a violence which surprised himself, 'what I need is a wife who will spend and spend—even if she ruins me!'

'Then I give you this back!'

She tore off her left glove, and held out to him his ring.

'Nonsense! It's your detestable old forebear I want. It is he who has come between us.'

As he spoke Henry caught at the Cosway which peeped between her loosened furs.

Rose leapt to her feet, clutching her treasure.

'Ye'll no have him,' she cried harshly, suddenly breaking into broad Scots of a distressing variety. 'A winna pairt wi' grandfer! He's ma support—the only one a have. Ay! ye may mock at thrift. Ye'll sing another tune some day!'

At the sound of that accent Henry turned chalky white; he was prepared to marry Miss Macfarlane, but not the Rev. Dr Smillie.

'Rose, give me the miniature. I insist.'

'Ye've no call to insist. We're no mairrit yet,' she retorted.

'If you love me!'

There was no answer.

She leaned panting and defiant against the breakwater, her hands clasped upon the miniature at her throat. In the uncertain moonlight her likeness to the divine was horrible.

'Don't you love me enough to do this one thing for me?' he pleaded.

She wavered visibly at that. 'Oh Henry, and will ye sell him?' she said with a break in her voice.

'Well, and what if I did?' said Henry (who, however, had quite other plans for the ancestor). 'You never knew him, and you can't like what you have heard of him.'

'It's no that exactly,' she hesitated. 'A mean, if ye *must* sell, for the Lord's sake, see ye get a good price!'

At that Henry uttered a word not included in any lover's vocabulary.

'Price be ——!' he thundered, seizing the miniature. 'I'm going to give him away!'

Then Rose closed with him; silently, desperately, the canny Scot and the offended woman within her allied for battle. She was strong and indignant, but Henry was too determined for her. A few seconds of gasping, swaying struggle, and the little chain which held the miniature broke, and delivered great-grandfather Smillie into Henry's impious hand. Before she could recover herself he swung up his arm, and she saw him fling the veteran far out to sea. The little oval disc flashed into the darkness, struck the water, and was gone! Rose shrieked, then wept distractedly; Henry emitted a wild, hyæna-like laugh; the English Channel continued to send its waves hissing along the shingle as though nothing had happened.

How long they stood staring, dumbfounded, at the water, they did not know. But it was Henry who said at last in the tone of one who endorses a desperate measure. 'It had to be!'

He put his arm round Rose, and led her unresisting away from the tomb of her ancestor. She trembled so that she could hardly walk. Anxious to conciliate her, he whispered soothingly, 'We'll take the 'bus home.'

She did not answer for a moment, but when she did she demonstrated the soundness of his idea. The spell was broken. She was convalescent. Her parsimony would soon expand into the comparative extravagance of thrift.

She looked at him with her old sweetness, and said in everyday English, and without apparent embarrassment, 'Thank you, sir; but I should prefer a taxi!'

BLOWN ON THE WIND.

Blow a ship, blow a ship far out to sea,
First one for daddy, and then one for me;
Now one for mummy, a dainty white sail;
Steady, oh steady! oh dear, what a gale!
Which one is leading? Look, look at the pace!
I'm pretty sure daddy is winning the race;
No, he is over: hurrah, now he's right;
Going like this he'll be soon out of sight.

Blow a kiss, blow a kiss far out to sea,
Blow it to daddy wherever he be;
Far from our reach he is tossed on the foam,
So mummy and I blow him kisses from home.
Mummy and I sail our ships on the tide
Because we are certain no sea is so wide,
Nor tempest so stormy but he's sure to find
The kisses and ships that we blow on the wind.

EDITH L. ELIAS.

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A PLAYGROUND AT WAR.

By IGNOTUS.

THIS war has effected such cyclonic upheavals and disturbances of ordered existence that to find schoolrooms turned into barracks, and churches into hospitals, passes as a matter of course, and evokes little, if any, comment; it is but logical, therefore, to go a step further, and find the playground itself masquerading as a barrack square, and in a larger sense the world's playgrounds serving as battlefields.

Such a one is Egypt, fortunately (or unfortunately) so situated geographically as to be for ever the cockpit of the Near East, as Belgium is of Europe. On the outbreak of war Egypt reverted to type, and, casting forth the tourists and the happy dilettantes who for years had made of her a Tom Tiddler's Ground in which to defy the European winter, welcomed as of old the hordes of men-at-arms who flocked from all parts of the Empire to defend her, and use her as a vast training-ground and a jumping-off place.

A glance at the map will show the desirability of Egypt to any Power purposing to bestraddle the world, and it was therefore to be expected as a matter of course that Germany would make not one but many tries to pluck so luscious a plum from what she held to be a rotting tree.

What upset her calculations here, as elsewhere, was her absolute inability to understand any people's psychology other than her own. True, she had prepared the ground systematically, as only Germany could, with a vast network of intrigue. Sedition, at a given signal, was to flame up into a white-heat of fury and fanaticism, under which the British Raj should scorch and finally wither. But setting aside the fact that religious outbreaks in the Empire were only sporadic, she failed entirely to take into account the British 'Terrier' and the yeoman, the Australian and the New Zealander (forever christened Anzacs), or even such an unconsidered trifle as our native regular army from India, for it is a remarkable fact that, barring a few weeks when the 29th Division was here before and after Gallipoli, Egypt has been mainly defended from first to last by amateurs, some of whom had a cursory acquaintance with soldiering before the war, while the bulk of them had none.

Danger to Egypt, as might be imagined, would come from the East, through Palestine and Syria, and lines of defence were therefore thrown up west of the Suez Canal, which were to prove an insurmountable obstacle to German ambition. While the Territorials and the Anzacs got their first taste of real spadework, varied by strenuous route-marching, musketry, and field-days, the yeomen of England crossed the Canal daily to establish contact with the slowly moving Germano-Turk, and their persevering efforts to find some one to tread on the tail of their coats culminated in the battle of Tussoum towards the end of 1914, when, to use a ringside expression, only the call of 'Time' saved the Turks from being outed in the first round.

If any one be curious enough to look, Tussoum will be found on the Canal, south of Ismailia, and the pontoons with which the Turks intended (*inter alia*) to cross the Canal now form very valued 'soovneers,' as Thomas Atkins calls them, at various spots in Egypt. I know of one in the Canal Company's garden in Ismailia, and of others in the Cairo Zoo, where some sarcastic authority, with a blistering sense of humour, deposited them.

The first round being over, all hands turned to and did a bit more soldiering, while the navy took on the forcing of the Dardanelles by itself. This, however, was found to be impracticable, and the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force was accordingly constituted under Sir Ian Hamilton, and assembling from north and south in Egypt, took ship at Alexandria and fared forth on its Odyssey to the now immortalised beaches. The valour displayed was Homeric, and I think sufficiently disposes of the parrot-cry that we are a decadent race; but it was all in vain, and when, at the end of 1915, evacuation was decided upon, and the most magnificent rearguard action in history (far exceeding that of Ney at the Redinha) was fought, no unprejudiced person could deny that Round 2 had ended all in favour of the Germano-Turks. They had immobilised a large striking force which we might have used elsewhere, and the Crescent had badly hammered the Cross, which to us and to the French, as the rulers of the largest Mohammedan communities in the world, was not the least unpleasant feature of the situation.

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Back to Egypt came the undaunted Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and the end of 1915 saw Round 3 open with an invasion of Egypt from the western desert by the Senussi, egged on by the Germano-Turks.

I have written so fully on this little campaign that I forbear going into the subject again; but suffice it to say that the Senussi, a misguided set of fanatics—Mussulmans, indeed, but bearing about the same relation to the Church of Mohammed as the Seventh Day Adventists do to the Church of England—invaded Egypt on the firm assurance that the British Empire was in the throes of dissolution and had no troops to spare to attend to them. Withal, their invasion was not to be entirely academic, inasmuch as Germany had 'promised' them Alexandria to sack and loot.

To meet the Senussi, a composite bit of British Empire moved out, under General Wallace, who was succeeded later by General Peyton, a lineal descendant of the Peyton so famous in bygone coaching annals, and, to the best of my recollection, a friend of George IV. in the days of the Carlton House circle. The bulk of it was infantry, of course, chiefly Middlesex Territorials with some Lowland Scots. But there were also the New Zealand Rifle Brigade; a South African brigade, fresh from victory in German South-West Africa, and then on their way to France, who took the Senussi campaign as a sort of week-end in Egypt; the 15th Sikhs (with the yellow patch in their turbans), who moved the Territorials to tears of admiration, as one of their majors told me, so gallant and soldierly was their bearing under fire; while for cavalry there were Westminster Dragoons, Bucks, Berks, and Dorset Yeomanry; and in case London was still insufficiently represented in the opinion of any homesick Cockneys, 'B' Battery of the Honourable Artillery Company from Finsbury Square hooked in and joined the dance.

Round 3 completely reversed Round 2, and a sweeping victory was scored, the pity being that whereas the eyes of the world were on the ring for the second round, they had shifted elsewhere before the third was fought. Its uses were, however, enormous and far-reaching in Egypt, disposing finally of the illusion that Britain was done, and suggesting to the natives the eminent desirability of revising their hastily conceived ideas.

Somewhere about this time Lord Kitchener came on from Gallipoli to have a look round, and his programme also embraced an inspection of the Canal defences. 'K,' as he was universally called, was never the sort of individual to wrap up his meaning in diplomatic courtesies where plain language was required, and his quietly uttered criticism revolutionised the defence plans, and Thomas Atkins set himself forthwith to work to entrench the east bank of the Canal with the chivalrous and knightly idea of saving the Turk the trouble of crossing when next he came to call. The labour involved in the transference was incredible, almost beyond words, when it is remembered that, in addition to innumerable bridges and ferries having to be constructed, an entirely new set of works had to be dug, and every pound of bully-beef, handful of oats, and round of ammunition removed and stacked afresh; but it was done.

Johnny Turk called, without any preliminary announcement, in the spring of 1915 at Katia, when a very daring and well-executed raid on the Worcester Yeomanry succeeded in taking some prisoners and adding substantially to our butchers' bill; and this, I suppose, might fairly be called Round 4, and all in his favour.

Round 5 was fought rather more than a year later, when Sir Archibald Murray, who had in the interim succeeded Sir John Maxwell, managed to inveigle a force of some 18,000 Turks, under the German Colonel Kress von Kressenstein, into an impossible position, where he pounced upon them and more than made up for Round 4. Roughly speaking, he deliberately weakened his right flank, and when the Turk advanced, singing at the top of his voice 'Easy mutton,' or whatever corresponds in Turkish to 'Six to four on me,' a surprise and a very heavy defeat awaited him. Von Kressenstein personally escaped, but his force was completely destroyed, though parts of it, like the curate's egg, succeeded in getting away in good order.

Rounds 6 and 7 can be disposed of in half-a-dozen lines. The former was our bloodless victory at El Arish in January 1917, when Sir Archibald Murray was at last able to claim that the Sinai Peninsula had been swept clear of the invader; and Round 7 was the cavalry raid on Rafa, in Syria, which retired directly its object had been accomplished.

Round 8 was the tame and anæmic capture of Khan Yunis and Shellal; and at the moment of writing it seems more than doubtful whether the Turk will stand up for another round here.

The heterogeneous mixture of humanity that has garrisoned Egypt for the past two years has left its mark. The natives were formerly accustomed to the British regular soldier, who, if not a very highly polished individual in the mass, was at any rate imbued with a very distinct idea of his status as a white man, and while quite kind to the natives, did not mix with them but 'kep 'isself to 'isself.' That has all rather changed now. Thousands of men who had never left England before in their sheltered lives found themselves suddenly flung pell-mell amongst the natives, and without in the least meaning to lower the white man's prestige, nevertheless succeeded in doing so by their thoughtless familiarities, and by some inherent

faculty dominant in our race, whereby any man with a coloured face is immediately classified as more or less of a comedian. If this be thought an exaggeration, watch what occurs in any English assemblage directly a nigger shows his face, even before he has time to speak. The Anzacs, too, are not guiltless under this charge. Possibly, however, matters may re-adjust themselves after the war, since it has certainly had the effect of broadening the natives' outlook. Witness, for example, Hussein Mustafa, native tailor to Abbassia Barracks, Cairo, who proudly advertises as amongst his customers such strange wildfowl as 'Duke of Lancesterown, Hests, and Westminister Dragons Yeomanry,' his stock including 'Card breechs and frouses, gabadeans, &c.,' the latter presumably for the benefit of those he so kindly distinguishes as 'Australiors.' This may, of course, be only his little joke, for the Egyptian has a very distinct sense of humour, a faculty in which the Turk, a stolid, bucolic sort of person, is reputed to be conspicuously lacking. I cannot help feeling, however, that this judgment does the Turk but scant justice, for the University of Stamboul actually proposed the Kaiser as a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize!

It looks now as though such surprises as the war still has in store for suffering humanity will be hid from us here in Egypt, but one significant fact announced last November gave me pause. It was a three-line telegram sandwiched between the scruples of conscientious objectors and other such warlike items, and stated that the Germans had completed their tunnel through the Taurus Range for the Baghdad Railway, and a new recruiting-field in the shape of Persians can thus be tapped by them. True, the Persian is not a warrior by nature, but who would not fight with the Germans waiting behind him to 'encourage' him as only they know how? It may, therefore, well be that we shall yet see ourselves confronted by Persian brigades under German officers before we can finally pipe down in the Near East.

If so, perhaps some novelties in the art of war will be evolved, for, incredible as it may seem, an entirely new method of bridging, or rather damming, the Canal was going to be used by the Turks at their first attempt at crossing in 1914, had they only succeeded in beating back our covering troops. It was simplicity itself, and consisted of tarring the tails and hind-quarters of numerous camels, and then setting the beasts alight, with their faces to the Canal, so that in their agony they would rush in, and with their piled-up bodies dam the Canal sufficiently long for a proper dam to be built. With German thoroughness Sinai camels were selected, as they would know the direction of the Canal; and lest any one think this a fairy-tale, I may say that the nauseating and revolting scheme had previously been successfully experimented with in the neighbourhood of Nablus, in Syria, the fiend responsible for the idea being Muntaz Bey, aide-de-camp to Enver Pasha, a pupil of the German *Kriegsakademie*, and long *persona grata* in German military circles. The only commentary that fits such a proposal is, '*Kultur* will out.'

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XLIV.—RETRIBUTION.

HALF-stunned by a blow from Joe's mighty fist, M'Ginnis saw Heine felled by Spider, who, having promptly and scientifically kicked him unconscious, snatched the revolver from his lax fingers and turned to pursue. As he came, M'Ginnis fired rapidly; but dazed by the blow, his aim was wild. So he turned and ran, with the Spider in hot pursuit. The moon was down and it was very dark, and soon M'Ginnis found himself in the denser gloom of trees. On he ran, twisting and doubling, on and on, until spent and breathless, he paused to hearken. Far away, voices shouted to each other—voices that gradually grew more distant; so, in a while, having caught his breath, M'Ginnis went on again. But the wood was full of noises—strange rustlings and sudden, soft night-sounds, and at every sound the fugitive paused to listen, finger on trigger. And ever as he went the wild blood throbbed and pulsed within his brain, sounding now like the pad-pad of pursuing feet that would not be shaken off, and again like a voice that mumbled and muttered querulous words in the air about him, and at such times he glanced round upon the dark, but the words would not be stilled.

'She's married—married—married! You drove her into his arms—you did—you did—you did! And he's alive still and with her, alive—alive—alive!'

And sometimes, as he stumbled along through that place of gloom, he cursed bitterly beneath his breath, and sometimes he ground sweating jaws, since needs must he hearken to that taunting devil-voice.

'Alive and with his wife beside him—alive! And yours the fault—yours—yours! Your shot at Spike so near the house lost you the game—lost—lost! Your shot at Spike was a call for help—saved the life of the man you came to kill! Your shot at Spike lost you the game—lost—lost!'

So, followed by the pad-pad of running feet, haunted by the querulous demon-voice, M'Ginnis stumbled out upon the road—a lonely road at most times, but quite desolate at this hour. The fugitive hastened along, dogged by sounds that none but he might hear. Yet to him these sounds were dreadfully real, so real that once, goaded to a paroxysm of blind fury, he whirled about and fired wildly—a shot that seemed to split asunder the deep night silence, filling it with a thousand echoes. Once more he turned and ran, ran until his breath laboured painfully and the sweat ran from him, but ever the sounds were close about him. At last he beheld lights that moved, and reaching a wayside halt clambered aboard a late trolley, and crouched as far from the light as possible. But even so, his disordered dress, his pallor, and the wild glare of his eyes drew the idle glances of the scanty passengers.

'Looks like you 'd been through th' mill, bo!' said one, a great, rough fellow; but meeting M'Ginnis's answering glare, he quailed and shrank away.

Dawn was at hand when at last he reached O'Rourke's saloon; and letting himself in, strode into the bar. The place was deserted at this hour, but from a room hard by came the sound of voices, hoarse laughter, and the rattle of chips that told a poker-game was still in progress.

Scowling, M'Ginnis stood awhile to listen. Then lifting the flap of the bar, he passed through the narrow door beyond, along the passage and so to that dingy office, from the open door of which a light streamed.

Scowling still, M'Ginnis strode in, then stood suddenly still, lifted his right hand toward his breast, then paused as Soapy, turning about in the swing-chair, took a heavy, ivory-handled revolver from where it had lain on the desk beside a packet of letters tied up in a faded blue ribbon.

'Lock th' door, Bud—lock th' door!' said he softly. 'So!' he nodded, as M'Ginnis obeyed. ''N' say, Bud, take that hand away from y'r gun, an' keep it away. See?' And the lamplight glittered on the long barrel that rested on Soapy's knee.

'So—this is th' game—hey?' demanded M'Ginnis hoarsely, his bloodshot eye fixed on Soapy unwinkingly.

''S right, Bud. Y'see, I been takin' a peek int' that little tin safe o' yours. Say, it looks like you 'd had a bit of a rough house, Bud!'

Soapy's cigarette quivered, and was still again; while M'Ginnis watched him, breathing thickly, but speaking no word. Soapy went on again: 'I been takin' a peek into that little tin safe o' yours, an' I found some papers you 'd been kind o' treasurin' up about me, so I burnt 'em, Bud—not as they mattered very much, there ain't nobody t' worry when I snuff it—but I found as you 'd got other papers about other guys as would matter some t' them, I guess—so I burnt 'em too, Bud.'

'Burnt 'em!' cried M'Ginnis in a strangled voice—'burnt 'em—you'——

'It ain't no use t' get riled, Bud—I burnt 'em. There 's the ashes!'

M'Ginnis glanced at the heap of ash by the stove, and burst into a frenzy of curses and fierce invective; while Soapy, lounging back in the chair, watched him unmoved until he had done. Then he spoke again: 'Also I found—letters, Bud, a packet tied up in blue ribbon—an', Bud, they matter a whole lot. Here they are—look at 'em!'

For a moment Soapy's baleful eye turned aside to the desk as he reached for the letters, and in that moment M'Ginnis's pistol spoke, and Soapy, lurching sideways, sagged to his knees, his back against the desk. Again and again M'Ginnis's weapon clicked, but no report followed, and Soapy slowly dragged himself to his feet. His cigarette fell, and lay smouldering for a moment. He stared at it; then he laughed softly, and glanced at M'Ginnis.

'You fool, Bud—you dog-gone fool! Forgot t' load up y'r gun, eh? But I guess you got me all right, anyway. You 're shootin' better t'-night than you did in the wood that time—eh, Bud? Now I want t' tell you'—— He was choked suddenly with a ghastly coughing, and when he spoke again his voice was fainter, and he held a smartly bordered handkerchief to his mouth.

'They say God made this world, Bud. If He did, I guess he was asleep when you was made, Bud. Anyway, remembering little Maggie, you ain't no right to breathe any longer—so that 's for me; an' that 's for her!'

Lounging still, he fired twice from the hip, and M'Ginnis, twisting upon his heels, fell and lay with his face at his slayer's feet. Then, spying the packet of letters that lay upon the grimy floor, Soapy stooped painfully and fired rapidly four times, and, when the smoke cleared, of those tear-blotted pages with their secret of a woman's anguish there remained nothing but a charred piece of ribbon and a few smouldering fragments of paper. And now Soapy was seized with another fit of coughing, above which he heard hoarse shouts, and hands that thundered at the door. Lazily he stood upon his feet, turned to glance from that scorched ribbon to the still form upon the floor, and lifting a lazy foot, ground his heel into that still face, and crossing unsteadily to the door, opened it. Beyond was a crowd—very silent now—who drew back to give him way; but Soapy paused in the doorway and leaned there.

'What 's doin'?' cried a voice.

'Say, run f'r a doctor somebody—quick—Soapy 's hurt bad, I reckon'——

'Hurt?' said Soapy, in soft, lazy tones. ''S right! But—say fellers, there 's a son of a dog in there—waitin' f'r a spade—t' bury him!'

Then Soapy laughed, choked, and groping before him blindly, staggered forward, and pitching sideways, fell with his head beneath a table, and died there.

CHAPTER XLV.—OF THE OLD UN AND FATE.

SPIKE leaned back among his cushions, and glancing away across close-cropped lawns and shady walks, sighed luxuriously. 'Say, Ann,' he remarked. 'Gee whiz, Trapesy, there sure ain't no flies on this place of old Geoff's!'

'Flies!' said Mrs Trapes, glancing up from her household accounts; 'you go into the kitchen an' look around.'

'I mean it 's aces up.'

'Up where?' queried Mrs Trapes.

'Well, it 's a regular Jim-dandy cracker-jack—some swell clump, eh?'

'Arthur, that low, rough talk don't go with me,' said Mrs Trapes, and resumed her intricate calculations again.

'Say, when 'll Geoff an' Hermy be back?'

'Well, considerin' she 's gone to N' York t' buy more clo'es as she don't need, an' considerin' Mr Ravenslee 's gone with her, I don't know.'

'An' what you do know don't cut no ice. Anyway, I 'm gettin' lonesome.'

'What! ain't I here?' demanded Mrs Trapes sharply.

'Sure. I can't lose you!'

'Oh! Now I 'll tell you what it is, my good boy'——

'Cheese it, Trapes; you make me tired—that 's what.'

'If you sass me I 'll box your young ears—an' that 's what!'

'I don't think!' added Spike. 'Nobody ain't goin' t' box me. I 'm a sure enough invalid, an' don't you forget it.'

'My land!' exclaimed Mrs Trapes, 'a bit of a hole in his arm—that 's all.'

'Well, I wish you got it, 'stead o' me—it smarts like sixty!'

'Shows it 's healin'. Doctor said as it 'll be well in a week.'

'Doctor!' sniffed Spike; 'he don't know what I suffer. I may be dyin' for all he knows.'

'You are!' sighed Mrs Trapes, with a gloomy nod.

'Eh—what?' exclaimed Spike, sitting up.

'So am I—we all are—by the minute. Every night we 're a day's march nearer home! So now jest set right there an' go on dyin', my b'y!'

'Say now, cut it out,' said Spike, wriggling; 'that ain't no kind o' way t' cheer an invalid.'

'It 's th' truth.'

'Well, it don't cheer me more, so let 's have a lie for a change.'

Mrs Trapes snorted, and fell to adding and subtracting busily.

'Say, Ann,' said he after a while, 'if you got any more o' that pumpkin-pie I could do some right now.'

'It ain't eatin'-time yet.'

'But—gee! ain't I a invalid?'

'Sure! Consequently you must be fed slow an' cautious.'

'Oh, fudge! What 's the good of a guy bein' a invalid if a guy can't feed when he wants to!'

'What 's a hundred an' ninety-one from twenty-three?' inquired Mrs Trapes.

'Skidoo!' murmured Spike sulkily. But after Mrs Trapes had subtracted and added busily a while, he spoke again. 'You ain't such a bad old gink—sometimes,' he conceded.

'Gink!' said Mrs Trapes, glaring.

'I mean you can be a real daisy when you want to.'

'Can I?'

'Sure! Sometimes you can be so kind an' nice I like you a whole lot!'

'Is that so?'

'You bet it is—honest Injun.'

'Arthur, if it 's that pie you want'——

'It ain't!'

'Well, what is it?'

'How d' ye know I want anything?'

'Oh, I just guess, maybe.'

'Well, say—if you could cop me one o' Geoff's cigarettes—one o' them with gold letterin' onto 'em.'

'You mean—thieve you one!'

'Why, no—a cigarette ain't thievin'. Say now, dear old Trapesy, I 'm jest dyin' for a gasper!'

'Well, you go on dyin', an' I 'll set right here an' watch how you do it.'

'If I was t' die you 'd be sorry for this, I reckon.'

'Anyway, I 'd plant some flowers on you, my lad, an' keep your lonely grave nice.'

'Huh!' sniffed Spike, 'a lot o' good that 'ud do me when I was busy pushin' up th' daisies. It 's what I want now that matters.'

'An' what you want now, Arthur, is a rod of iron, good an' heavy. Discipline 's your cryin' need, an' you 're sure goin' t' get it.'

'Oh! Where?'

'At college. My land, think of you at Yale or Harvard or C'lumbia!'

'Sure you can think—thinkin' can't cut no ice.'

'Anyway, you 're goin' soon as you 're fit; Mr Geoffrey says so.'

'Oh, Geoff 's batty—he 's talkin' in his sleep. I ain't goin' t' no college—Geoff 's got sappy in th' bean.'

'Well, you tell him so.'

'Sure thing; you watch me!'

'No, I 'll get you somethin' t' eat—some milk an'——

'Say, what about that pumpkin-pie?'

'You sit right there an' wait.'

'Chin-chin!' nodded Spike, and watched her into the house.

No sooner was he alone than he was out of his chair, and, descending the steps into the garden, sped gleefully away across lawns and along winding paths, following a haphazard course. But as he wandered thus, he came to the stables, and so to a large building beyond which were many automobiles of various patterns and make. And here, very busy with brushes, sponge, and water, washing a certain car and making a prodigious splashing, was a figure there was no mistaking, and one which Spike hailed in joyous surprise. 'Well, well, if it ain't th' old Spider! Gee, but I'm glad t' see ye! Say, old sport, I'm a invalid—pipe my bandages, will ye?'

'Huh!' grunted the Spider, without glancing up from the wheel he was washing.

'Say, old lad,' continued Spike, 'I guess they told you how I put it all over Bud, eh?'

'Mph!' said the Spider, slopping the water about.

'Heard how I saved old Geoff from gettin' snuffed out, didn'tcher?'

'Huh-umph!' growled the Spider.

'That's sure some car, eh? Gee, but it's good t' see ye again, anyway. How'd ye come here, Spider?'

'U-huh!' said the Spider.

'Say!' exclaimed Spike, 'quit makin' them noises an' say somethin', can'tcher? If you can't talk to a pall, I'm goin'.'

'Right-o, kid!' said the Spider; 'only see as you don't go sheddin' no more buttons around.'

'B-buttons!' stammered Spike; 'whatcher mean? What buttons?'

The Old Un, who happened to have been dozing in the limousine that stood in a shady corner, sat up suddenly and blinked.

'Why, I mean,' answered the Spider, wringing water from the sponge he held and speaking very deliberately, 'I mean the button as you —left behind you—in th' wood!'

Spike gasped, and sat down weakly upon the running-board of a car, and the Old Un stole a furtive peep at him.

'So you—know?'

'Sure I know—more 'n I want t' know about you; so—chase yourself out o' here—beat it!'

Spike stared in mute amazement, then flushed painfully. 'You mean—you an' me—ain't goin' t' be pals no longer?' he asked wistfully.

'That's what!' nodded the Spider, without lifting his scowling gaze from the sponge. 'Kid, I ain't no gold-medal Sunday-school scholar, nor I ain't never won no prizes at any Purity-League conference, but there's some guys too rotten even for me!'

'But I—I—saved his life, didn't I?'

'That ain't nothin' t' blow about after what you did in that wood. Oh, wake up an' see just how dirty an' rotten you are!'

Spike rose, and stood, his hands tight-clenched, and though he tried to frown, he couldn't hide the pitiful twitching of his lips or the quaver in his voice. 'I guess you mean you're goin' t' give me the throw-down?'

'Well,' answered the Spider, scowling at the sponge in his hand, 'there's jest two or three things as I ain't got no use for, an' one of 'em's —murder!'

Hereupon Spike shrank away, an' the Old Un, reaching out stealthily, opened the door of the limousine; while the Spider fell to work again, splashing more than ever. Thus as Spike crept away with head a-droop, the Old Un, all unnoticed, stole after him, his old eyes very bright and bird-like; and as he followed, keeping in the shade of hedge and tree as much as possible, he whispered a word to himself over and over again. 'Lorgorramighty!'

But Spike went on with dragging feet, ignorant that any followed, lost in a sudden sense of shame such as he had never known before—a shame that was an agony; for though his bodily eyes were blinded with bitter tears, the eyes of his mind were opened wide at last, and he saw himself foul and dirty, even as the Spider had said. So on stumbling feet Spike reached a shady, grassy corner remote from all chance of observation; and throwing himself down there, he lay with his face hidden, wetting the grass with the tears of his abasement.

When at last he raised his head he beheld a little old man leaning patiently against a tree near by and watching him with a pair of baleful eyes. 'Hello!' said Spike wearily; 'who are you?'

'I'm Fate, I am!' nodded the Old Un. 'Persooin' Fate—that's me.'

'Whatcher here for, anyway?' inquired the lad, humble in his abasement.

'I'm here to persoo!'

'Say now, what's your game? Whatcher want?'

'I want you, me lad.'

'Well, say—beat it, please—I want t' be alone.'

'Not much, me lad. I'm Fate, I am; an' when Fate comes up agin' murder, Fate ain't t' be shook off.'

'Murder!' gasped Spike. 'Oh, my God! I —I—ain't'——

The lad sprang to his feet and was running on the instant, but turning to glance back, tripped over some obstacle and fell. Swaying, he rose and stumbled on, but slower now by reason of the pain in his wounded arm. Thus, when at last he came out upon the road, the Old Un was still close behind him.

(Continued on page 661.)

THE MAGIC OF GOLD.

By James Beattie.

IT is curious what strange fancies come to old men, and an idea, whimsical no doubt, has come to me to scribble off some of my vagrant recollections for your journal. I left Scotland in 1861, and came out to southern New Zealand, and here I have been ever since. I spent a month in London waiting until our ship was ready, and it was a wonder-time for me seeing all the famous historical places. The most notable event of that month was the death of the Prince-Consort, which threw London (and I suppose the whole British Empire) into mourning. Now another German—Kaiser Wilhelm, no less—has again thrown Britain and her dominions into mourning; but what a striking contrast between the two! The first mourning was caused by love; the second through hate. In 1861, as showing how friendly and peaceful relations then were, I brought out to New Zealand a small flock of pure-bred merino sheep bought from the stud-flock of the then King of Prussia. (This was before that great and aggressive statesman Bismarck had united the German states into an empire; a work which I sincerely hope this cruel war will undo, or at least render so impotent that small and peaceful nations will be able to dwell in freedom and security in the future.)

It has often been remarked that truth is stranger than fiction, and when I think of some of my early colonial experiences they seem stranger to me than much fiction. The first gold-diggings in Otago had been discovered before I landed; but I was thrown amongst new and greater discoveries when I was quite a 'new chum.' From its foundation by Scottish emigrants in 1848, Otago moved along in a small and homely way until 1861, when Gabriel Read, a wandering prospector in search of rich metals, discovered a payable alluvial goldfield, which completely revolutionised life in Otago. Diggers came pouring in like a flood from Australia, much to the dismay of the old settlers. These new-comers dubbed the former inhabitants 'old identities,' and received in turn the pet name of 'new iniquities.' The old settlers would have stopped the inrush of this wild horde of frenzied goldseekers, but they were powerless, and when prejudice had had time to sink they admitted that the diggers were a great acquisition to a new colony. Prior to this time very little cash was in circulation in Otago, barter having been often resorted to; but now the influx of ready money with the new arrivals greased the wheels of trade, and things boomed. Agriculture, in particular, made great strides after the gold discoveries; and everything else advanced proportionately.

I did not bother the diggings at first, but went inland, and took up the work I was accustomed to—namely, shepherding. I was employed on the Galloway Run, owned by Messrs Shennan Brothers, and, with a mate named Tom Wilson, occupied a hut near the Clutha River. Prospectors were abroad throughout the length and breadth of the land searching for precious minerals, and it was in July 1862 that two of them, named Hartley and Reilly, came to our hut. We ferried them across the river, and they went on a few miles to Dunstan, and made a sensational discovery of gold, which we could have participated in, but we did not know enough in those days to seize the opportunity. Hartley and Reilly in a short time secured eighty-seven pounds weight of gold, and then rushed to Dunedin and applied for and got the Government bonus of two thousand pounds for the discovery of a payable goldfield. The reason of their hurry was that there were other prospectors in the vicinity, hence their haste to be first to claim the reward. It is hard to describe fully the effect of this new discovery; but I witnessed the rush which followed, and it was a wonderful sight. On Saturday we enjoyed our usual sylvan quietness on that remote sheep-run. On the Sabbath morning, a clear frosty morning in August, we could see the diggers coming over the Rough Ridge in one long continuous stream, all heading for the Clutha River, adjoining the Dunstan Range, where Hartley and Reilly had made their great find. The men came in all manner of ways, but as a rule they reminded me of the gipsies in the Old Land. Some came with packhorses, some with bullocks, some even utilised dogs as carriers, while many carried all their belongings on their shoulders in 'swags.' It was a sight to be remembered, and where we abode in solitude on Saturday evening we had the company of thousands of excited goldseekers on Sunday evening. The field discovered by Gabriel Read, and known as Gabriel's Gully, was practically deserted, the few left merely 'shepherding' their claims until authentic reports could be received from their mates on the Dunstan, over one hundred miles away as the crow flies and in a rough and roadless country.

In the meantime conditions were bad on the Dunstan, as several thousand diggers arrived in one week, with nothing to support them except the scanty stores they had carried, which were soon exhausted. The first wagons could not arrive inside a fortnight at the earliest from Dunedin, the only effective source of supply, and the main lot of wagons, drawn by bullocks, which were the principal carriers at that period, would take practically double that

time. On the Galloway Station we quickly secreted our stores for the sustenance of the employees, but we started supplying mutton to the diggers on the field, and the place is known as Muttontown to this day, I believe. Some of the men were driving the sheep in from all around, others were killing them as fast as they could, and others selling them hand over fist. Our first butcher's shop was a bullock-dray with a tarpaulin erected over it, and under this primitive arrangement a roaring trade was carried on. It was the most complete monopoly imaginable, with thousands of eager customers having no other means of supply, and there was no demur to prices fixed at rates which would turn butchers of the present day green with envy. This lasted only a matter of weeks, but it was strange how well it supplied the wants of the diggers in the first days of the rush. I remember the incident of the arrival of the first wagon laden with flour, sugar, &c., and how the provincial government had sent all the available mounted troopers to keep order, and how strenuously they had to labour amongst the madding crowd of starving diggers. They placed themselves round the wagons with firearms ready, and every one who came had to state the number of his party, and the troopers only allowed a few pounds to each. They were surrounded by an anxious, jostling crowd, who emptied the big wagons in a few hours, and many had reluctantly to go empty away until the next wagons arrived. The minimum price for flour was two shillings and sixpence per pound, and everything else was proportionately high; but all were reckoned lucky who got served. On account of the scarcity there was much sickness, especially from drinking Clutha water highly impregnated with mica; but the gold was there and easily got, and that talisman carried the diggers through. Prospectors scoured the country, and found auriferous gullies in various localities, and big rushes took place to the Arrow and Shotover Rivers. The country was almost impassable for wagons, and supplies were got to these new fields from Invercargill *vid* Lake Wakatipu, and then by packhorses in many cases. In these wild, mountainous glens the diggers had many difficulties, and one of the worst of these was lawless men.

The Gold Commissioners lived in distant townships, and diggers had to journey in to get redress for any grievance or injustice, and the law was often tardy. 'Jumping' rich claims was of frequent occurrence where the ground was shallow and easily worked. One gang who were experts at the game plundered many of their weaker neighbours, but met with salutary punishment without the aid of the nearest commissioner. In the course of their successful 'jumping' operations they took forcible possession of a claim held and worked by a party of Maoris. They used them roughly, and the natives retired to their tents and held a brief council of war. They discarded most of their European clothing, and armed themselves with all the weapons at their command, and issued forth to do battle with the invaders of their claim. They then gave a brief *haka*, or war-dance, and, shouting their war-song, charged the claim-jumpers. Such of these as were on the surface fled, but those who were down in the workings could not get clear so readily, and the Maoris chased them off the ground, drubbing them severely. None of them was killed, but some must have had aching frames for days; and the lesson evidently cured them effectually, as there was no more claim-jumping in that district. I left the sheep-run, and followed the gold rushes through Otago and Westland for some years with varying results; but I will leave the story of those rough-and-tumble ups-and-downs to some future occasion.

In conclusion, I think that goldfields exercise great influence in a new country in building up industries; in giving an impetus to agriculture; in bringing good roads and, eventually, railways. The first settlers in Otago expected railways in possibly a hundred years, but through the magic of gold they got them in one quarter of that period. The visible results of the gold discoveries were nowhere more evident than in the growth in size and elegance of the towns, many of which sprang up like mushrooms. In 1862 Dunedin was like a scattered country village with flax hanging over the road-cuttings, where in a few years many fine buildings were erected. It is now one of the beautiful cities of the Dominion and a centre of industrial activity. Although the spur given by the gold-diggings has long since ceased to act, it may be mentioned that amongst the manufactures of Dunedin of special importance in recent years has been the construction of dredges to lift gold from the river-beds where other methods are unavailing. The magic of gold even extended south to Invercargill, which prospered greatly during the boom years, and then had many lean years, but is now a fine and prosperous town by reason of its rich agricultural surroundings.

I said at the beginning of this rambling screed that truth is stranger than fiction, and one of my reasons for thinking so has ever been that I witnessed part of the transformation caused in Otago by the magic of gold.

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

CHAPTER III.

FINDING it impossible thus, single-handed, to keep his house and look after his cattle, Pardon decided to sell all his live-stock except a few yearlings and colts, and so free his time for the better development of the ranch. The parting with his cattle cost him many a pang, albeit for once in his life fortune favoured him, disease in other states having created a scarcity, so that he got top prices and was able to 'salt down,' as the local phrase has it, several hundred dollars—far more ready money than he had ever before possessed. This cattle 'deal'—its cost to him in no slight regrets—its gain in mere gold—John would much have liked to talk over with Mary Patrick, had he not long since divined, though he could not have explained why, that she disliked the subject, and evinced neither interest nor sympathy in his herds and horses. That she was secretly ashamed of his being a cattleman, and winced when her friends or brothers joked about her 'buccaroo,' certainly never crossed his simple mind.

Hiding in his own heart the hurt of his self-imposed sacrifice, and stowing away in an outhouse the angora 'chaps' and picturesque sombrero, poor John reluctantly encased his long legs in the blue overalls of a peaceful rancher, clapped a broad straw hat on his head, and buoying himself up with the reflection that it was 'all for Mary's sake,' set himself to clearing the land and putting it under the plough. Both occupations, accustomed as he was to life in the saddle, with its days and rides of fierce excitement and no little danger—and then the round-up over, of comfortable ease and little to do until the next 'spurt'—Pardon found not only irksome but profoundly dull. All his resolution and his love for Mary were severely tested thus to endure the monotony and toil of dulling an axe, hour after hour, upon stubborn thickets of manzañita and chaparral, or of plodding at foot-pace up and down the furrows of stiff, unbroken ground, guiding the plough and checking his restive horses, as impatient of their uncongenial task as was their master. However, by slow degrees, the rough land began to assume the well-disciplined appearance of a 'farm'—great circles of whitish-gray ashes, through which multitudes of young green things soon eagerly pushed, were all that survived of vast heaps of 'bush,' laboriously dragged together and burnt; several acres of reclaimed land were fostering a grain crop; last but not least, row upon row of tiny bare twigs revealed Pardon's hope of a future orchard. Entirely ignorant of such things himself, yet loth to incur the ridicule of Mary's brothers by asking advice, he furtively noted and chose for his infant orchard the fruit that Mary seemed best to like—figs, apricots, greengages—quite regardless of what kind or variety was best suited to the soil and able to withstand certain treacherous winds that 'drew down' between the hills upon the exposed parts of Pardon's homestead.

Then, between hope and fear that Mary might guess the reason, he set to work to add a new porch to the old house—one so facing as to absorb every ray of sunshine during the short winter months, yet cool and shaded when the torrid heat of summer stifled man and beast. This porch faced the young orchard, Michael O'Keefe's neat ranch, and looked away to the pine-clad hills, which, with their foreground of dense 'bush,' seemed, in John Pardon's fond fancy, safely to cradle that little sector of country from the outside world, but to Mary always gave the impression of dreary isolation. Happily oblivious of this, born and bred as he had been among the vast open spaces of a great cattle country, long inured to the loneliness of camp and cañon, to John Pardon the unlovely old bungalow and the few acres of cultivated land, filched, as it were, from the surrounding wilderness, seemed a goodly heritage enough, meet in time for the making of a home-nest for Mary, 'once the bird is caught,' as he would say to himself with a happy gleam in his eyes. Again and again he pictured Mary seated with her sewing in Sissy's rocking-chair in the new porch—or tending the small garden that he planned should be her special care. No gardener was this buccaroo, so he contented himself with planting honeysuckle (Mary loved honeysuckle) and climbing-roses against the porch, which, however, killed by devoted but misguided attentions, he ruefully beheld grow sickly and brown. 'Never mind,' he would say, when all efforts with pails of water failed to revive them; ''tain't no consequence. *She'll* make the pore little things grow; I sure bain't no hand with *honeysuckles* whatever I may be with *heifers*—best leave 'em to Mary.' As to Mary, if she guessed, she certainly never admitted, even to herself, that all these changes and 'improvements' had for their inspiration her own future place in them. Several local admirers, and one or two from Orangeville (for Mary was not only well liked for herself, but had more sordid attractions as well), had 'proposed' and been dismissed, while the handsome buccaroo still held his peace. Whether or no Mary was piqued by this, who can say? That it helped to steel her own heart against him, and to make her a little careless as to how her easy acceptance of all his devotion might mislead and ultimately wound him, there can be no doubt. Thus

placidly had things pursued their way until, one late afternoon after a prolonged and successful picnic, Pardon and his now famous colts (horses remain 'colts' long and long in that far country of plentiful winter grass and soft roads) were, as usual, fetching Mary and her lightened baskets home. As usual, too, Mary's contributions to the 'spread,' all skilfully prepared and packed by her own plump little hands, had been the most highly praised and completely devoured by the merry party of picnickers—cakes, pies, 'preserves,' dough-nuts. Not one of the girls could rival Polly as a provider of such toothsome things as are beloved of the western soul; and John Pardon's ever-elastic spirits had steadily expanded with the measure of praise bestowed upon his 'girl.' Yet when, having reached the foot of the long wearisome hill, winding steeply up a cañon from the picnic-ground beside a river (now shrunken and vainly clamouring for fresh supplies from the fleckless blue of the 'dry-season' skies), 'Kate' and 'Custer' claimed their prerogative of taking their own time for the long pull before them, Pardon became strangely grave and silent, while Mary, tired by the long day's outing, and her mind absorbed in trying to remember whether Annie M'Coon had told her to beat the whites and yolks of eggs together or separately for 'white mountain cake,' had almost forgotten the existence of the man beside her. Indeed only partially did it rouse her when John, suddenly twisting around the butt of the whip the long lines with which he had been gently slapping the horses, laid his great brown hand, thus freed, over her own small white ones, holding them very close. He did not even look at her, hence the glow in the gray eyes so resolutely fixed in front of him she could not see, or notice how strained were the muscles of his right hand with which he gripped the iron bar of the buggy-seat. 'Mary,' he began, in a voice which the very effort to control made sound flat and unemotional, 'Mary, nobody knows better nor me that it 's askin' a great deal of a girl like you to leave your own comfortable home and your brothers to live in an old shack and run in double-harness with a rough fellow like me. I 'm a poor man, too, Mary; but if you 'll be my wife, I 'll work these big hands o' mine to the bone to help these little soft fingers of yourn, and to make you '—*happy* he had *meant* to say, but, feeling no answering pressure in the hands he held—'as comfortable as I can,' he ended rather lamely. But Mary neither stirred nor made reply, so Pardon went on, while a quick flush spread over his face, as from shame at having unwittingly detected the flaw in his diamond. 'Y' know, I sold them cattle o' mine at a pretty fair price, considerin', and '—trying to infuse a little fun into his voice—'and so I was able to cage a good many o' them purty "gold eagles" (twenty-dollar gold pieces), all for *you*, my girl, if you 'll have 'em. And the old house—y' know, I 've built a nice big porch for you to set in—and the rooms and furniture are all jest as poor ma and little sis left 'em—never used 'em myself—hadn't no heart to somehow.'

Still no response from the woman at his side. Poor Pardon was finding proposing to Polly a far more difficult task than he had reckoned upon. Quietly releasing her hands, and unwinding the lines from the whip-butt, he gave his horses a sharp flick, saying, 'Ged'ap, you good-for-nothin' team o' oxen! Are we to be on the road all night?'

The buckskin horse sprang forward, but 'Kate' merely flattened her ears, swished her long tail across the place that the lash had caught, speedily reducing her mate to his former sleepy gait. No horse more willing than 'Kate'—but not to be imposed upon; right well did she know they had not yet reached the bend of the hill, where, the steepness left behind, they were always put to the trot. There was no impending thunderstorm against which 'twere well to match her speed; doubtless, too, in her own equine fashion, she reflected that the cooler and drier she and 'Custer' took home their sleek hides, the sooner would they be allowed a bountiful supper of crushed barley. No, 'Kate' was not be hurried.

Into the puzzled obscurity of Pardon's brain this display of feminine wilfulness shot a ray of light; it flashed through his mind that all females must be *humoured* a bit! So, dispelling the gloom that had begun to gather on his face, and turning half-gaily towards Mary, he broke out, 'Don't think I want to *hurry* you, girl, if you don't feel just quite ready to hitch up. I 'm willin' to wait, if needs be—I 'll put in next winter tidyin' up the old place a bit more—and then—in the spring—eh, darlin'?' he ended tenderly.

Mary's mind had been working fast, yet she had no answer ready, and Pardon, seeing her still mute and unmoved, and the suspense no longer bearable, exclaimed, 'For God's sake, Mary, say somethin'. You 're breakin' my heart. Don't you know it?'

At that instant a wheel of the buggy, carelessly left to the horses' discretion, jolted violently over a large stone, flinging the two occupants together, and at touch of the girl's soft body, and her hands instinctively catching hold of him, all Pardon's self-control broke down. Crushing her in his arms, and kissing her again and again, he called her all the caressing names that spring to the lips of even the coldest of lovers, pouring out the story of his love and yearning for her since first he saw her at the well beneath the drooping fig-tree.

It was, however, John Pardon's misfortune that he had begun his plea at the wrong end. By prefacing his declaration with a grave review

of all its disadvantages he had unconsciously touched on Mary's weakest point, and conjured up a picture distasteful and repugnant to one who set such store upon creature comforts. The shabby old house, the isolated, poorly-cultivated ranch—to exchange her own easy, pleasant surroundings for a wedded life such as John suggested, was not at all to her mind. And what would her friends say? Fragments of Maggie's letters about the 'furnished flat' in the bustling little town, and of Daisy's superintendent of schools and consequent social prestige, had been racing through her mind during Pardon's slow and halting proposal. Even his allusion to the few hundred dollars he had banked served merely as a reminder of what she most resented —her lover's career as a buccaroo, and of the long years of hard work necessary before, from the rough acres of his dreary ranch, he could win any degree of competence. His passionate appeal, therefore, fell upon an ear already deafened by another voice, and in her self-centred imagination drawbacks which, had she really loved the man, would have appeared mere molehills, were exaggerated into mountains. Disengaging herself from his arms and straightening her hat, she began pettishly smoothing her crumpled dress of dainty flower-strewn muslin, exclaiming, 'Nonsense, John! Don't be foolish. I—I don't *want* to be married.'

Poor Pardon, thus rebuffed, and feeling unaccountably guilty, tried to assist in smoothing her skirt, but detecting a look of annoyance as his hand, moist and blackened by the dusty reins, left a dark smudge on the fair frock, he mumbled contritely, 'I'm no end sorry if I've messed up your purty dress, Mary. Guess I'd best leave it alone.'

Mary, still intent upon her crushed frock, exclaimed, with a touch of impatience in her manner, and avoiding looking at the dejected man beside her, 'Can't you hurry those horses of yours a little, John? It's getting late, and the "boys" (her brothers were still 'the boys' to Mary) will be wanting their supper; *they've* been working all day.'

Mary's speech and ever so slight emphasis on the pronoun '*they*' hurt Pardon to the quick; his face grew set and pale beneath the tan, and jumping lightly over the slow-moving wheel, he went to his horses' heads, saying over his shoulder, 'I reckon I'll just walk up this here steep bit; the colts'll travel fast enough once they hit the level road for home.'

Mary, thus left to her own reflections, began to feel some compunction on behalf of the man who, after all, had devoted his day to her pleasure, and now, after seeing her safe back in her own snug home, must return to his lonely house and solitary meal. So when, the hill-top reached, John gathered up the lines preparatory to jumping into the buggy, as the colts, true to their traditions, broke into a sharp trot, Mary ostentatiously made room for him beside her, turning back the dust-sheet, and under pretext of settling a basket that had jolted forward, said pleasantly, 'There are some of those doughnuts you like so much left over—and some biscuits; you'd better take them home, John; you'll be hungry by the time you get the horses fed and your work done.'

Poor Pardon, feeling that Mary was thus generously forgiving him for having in some unintentional way displeased her, thanked her gratefully, and thereafter, as though no words of love had passed between them, began to chat and joke about the picnic and the 'folks' who had been there. Only 'Kate' and 'Custer,' sensitive to every mood of their owner by his handling of the lines, knew by the unwonted fretting of their bits and frequent flicking of the long whip, that things were not just to Pardon's liking that lovely summer evening. So instead of pulling, as they invariably did, the wrong way at the cross-roads, which diversely led to the Patricks' and Pardon's ranches, to-night they merely cocked their ears and turned their noses towards the narrow, little-used road curving away into the 'bush,' and speeding down the dusty high-road, drew up, unbidden, at the Patricks' gate. Up the neat, flower-bordered path Pardon carried Mary's baskets; then, as their hands met while she gave him the remaining contents in their spotless napkins, he detained her a moment, saying hurriedly, 'Polly, girl, forgive me havin' spoiled your outin', but if you'll give me just a word of hope, and let things go along as they were before, I promise not to bother you—you'll do that much, won't you, Mary?'

Mary, somewhat softened and a little conscience-smitten, and selfishly anxious to retain her lover, readily acquiesced in his wish that the same pleasant footing should abide between them—she nodded, 'Yes,' and Pardon, returning to his impatient horses, drove away, his mind in a turmoil between hope and depression.

For some time thereafter things flowed on in the old way, and John, loyal to his promise not to 'bother' Mary, and still striving to find comfort in his theory as to creatures of the feminine gender needing to be humoured, continued his unselfish devotion to the one woman of his choice. Never a trip to Orangeville but a box of chocolates or fresh dates or some other small offering found their way into the 'jockey-box' for the brown-eyed girl in the village among the hills. Or if Mary herself had 'shopping' to do, John's buggy was unfailingly ready for her use —washed and rubbed till the blue and red paint shone again, the colts as 'slick' as muscles and brush could make them; and John himself, in Sunday clothes and black felt hat, would drive her into 'town,' patiently waiting while Mary lingered over a choice of ribbons or dawdled along the street looking at the shop-windows.

On more than one occasion, however, an outing such as this ending under cover of darkness, Pardon's resolution had broken down, and he had again declared his love, and pled for her acceptance of it. But Mary always contrived to evade the answer for which he longed, sometimes laughing it off, or pleading she was too tired after her shopping to even *think* about 'marriage,' yet careful never so finally to refuse him as to crush his hopes, and set his mind free to seek a wife elsewhere.

Yet the longest lane has a turning, and when another succession of seasons found poor Pardon still a bachelor and the wedding-bells no nearer ringing, he resolved one Sunday evening, when, as was his invariable custom, he was spending it at the Patricks' home, to exact from his sweetheart a decided 'Yes' or 'No.' But the Fates, who apparently delight to thwart by the veriest trifles the best-laid plans of mere man, again intervened to shape his destiny. For Mary's mind, full of a question that had taken possession of it at mass that morning, as to whether, if she made her new dress in the same fashion as that of Annie M'Coon, who was slender, it would make her look 'dumpy,' scarcely listened to what John was striving to bring her to say. Moreover, having squeezed her feet into too small shoes, she was feeling tired, and anxious for John's visit to come to an end. Suddenly he noticed that the girl looked unwontedly pale, and dark shadows were under her eyes. His kind heart and almost quixotic conscience smote him as he thought how completely he had broken his promise to Mary not to 'bother' her, and, turning impulsively, he exclaimed, 'It's God's truth, Mary, that I never meant to make you grieve or fret, and if you don't feel able to say you love me and care to be my wife, it's not for me to keep worritin' the life out o' you. You know now that there isn't in the wide world any woman for me except yourself; that my home, such as it be, is yourn for the takin'. But as I'm a livin' man, I give you my word, girl, I'll not torment you no more with *askin'*. Here's my hand on it'—and he stretched out a hand that in spite of its hard muscles, shook a little—'but only this much let me do. When we say "Good-night" of a Sunday evenin', I'll say to you, "Well, Mary?"—and oh, my little girl, if you can just feel a tiny bit as *I* do, ye don't need to *say* a word—just fly into my arms, and I'll keep you warm and safe so long as the Good Man gives me health and strength.' And Mary Patrick, unequal to the sacrifice of herself, unhesitatingly permitted the sacrifice of John Pardon.

(*Continued on page 666.*)

PREDICTIONS AND PROPHECIES RELATING TO THE KAISER, GERMANY, AND AUSTRIA.

By R. C. WYNDHAM.

THAT visions of future events and the gift of prophecy have been vouchsafed in all times to certain individuals cannot be doubted, for we have the evidence of Holy Writ to confirm this; but very often these predictions are obscure and difficult to unravel until the event foretold actually happens. Then we call to mind the prediction made, perhaps centuries before, and we palliate our unbelief with the example of the Trojans of old and the story of Cassandra.

Daniel's vision of the 'Four Great Empires' happened in the year 606 B.C. Of the Fourth Empire the prophecy says, 'A king of fierce countenance shall arise, understanding dark sentences (lies). His power shall be mighty, and shall prosper and practise, and shall destroy the just people. Through his policy also he shall cause guile to prosper; he shall magnify himself in his heart, and shall destroy many; he shall also stand up against the Prince of Princes, but his power shall be broken.'

The time appointed for the fulfilment of the prophecy was 'Seven Cycles,' and as each cycle represents 360 years, so seven times 360 would equal 2520. As the prophecy was delivered in the year 606 B.C., as before stated, then by subtracting 606 from 2520 we get the number 1914, the year the present war broke out, the greatest war the world has ever seen, as prophesied by the prophet Daniel and St John the Divine, which shall only end with the great 'Armageddon.'

St Peter, in his address on the day of Pentecost, quotes the words of the prophet Joel: 'Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'

Having these examples before us, why should we deny the gift of prophecy in these latter days? We see prophecies and predictions given four and five and even seven hundred years ago being wonderfully fulfilled in our own time.

In a book entitled *Vaticinium Lehninenses*, written by a monk in the thirteenth century, the end of the Hohenzollern dynasty is predicted to happen consequent on the events of the year 1914. Now it is to be noted that the rise of that dynasty began only with Frederick of Hohenzollern, Burgrave of Nuremburg, in the fifteenth century, when the Emperor Sigismund conferred the Mark of Brandenburg upon the said Frederick in 1417. After the death of the

Elector Frederick William in 1688, Prussia became a kingdom, and Prussian militarism began to show itself, but the end of this was foreshown, not a century later, by an old poet, who, in the year 1762, wrote thus: 'The last Emperor of Germany shall be paralysed in the arm, and will mount his horse on the opposite side.' This corresponds exactly with the case of the present Emperor. And the prediction adds, 'His son shall be killed at the gates of Berlin; in that year Poland shall have its own king.'

The celebrated *Prophecies of Strasbourg* and also a Hermit of Aix-la-Chapelle predict the fall of the German Emperor to occur at this same period.

PROPHECIES OF JOHANNES THE MONK, ABOUT 1600 A.D.

1. It will have been thought that the Antichrist has frequently been identified, for all slayers of the Lamb have a resemblance, and all evil-doers are found to be typical of the Great Evil.

2. The veritable Antichrist will be found to be one of the monarchs of his day, a Lutheran. He will invoke the Name of God (the Good Old God), and will claim to be His successor.

3. This Prince of Liars will swear by the Scriptures; he will represent himself as the instrument of the Most High, to chasten the wicked.

4. He will have but one perfect arm, and his innumerable troops will take for their motto, 'God is with us,' and will appear as the legions of hell.

5. For a long time he will agitate by ruse and felony; his spies will overrun the world, and he will be master of great secrets.

6. He will employ philosophers who will attempt to prove that his mission is celestial.

7. A war will cause the mask to be lifted. This war will not be simply against France, but chiefly against another distinguished Power, and in a short time the war will become universal.

8. This war will enlist all the peoples of Christendom; and also Mohammedans, and those from afar. Armies shall arise from the four corners of the earth.

9. The Angels will enlighten the souls of men, and in the third week they will recognise that this is the Antichrist, and that they will all be enslaved if they do not overthrow this despot.

10. The Antichrist will be recognised by many indications; he will go out of his way to massacre priests, monks, women, children, and the aged. He will go forth torch in hand, like the barbarians, and will show no mercy while he blasphemously invokes the Name of God.

11. His pretentious words will resemble those of the Christians, but his actions will be those of Nero and the Roman persecutors. He will have an eagle in his coat of arms, and another eagle will appear in that of his Ally, the other bad monarch.

12. These are Christians, but one of them will die by the malediction of the Pope Benedictus, who will be elected towards the end of the reign of the Antichrist.

13. There will no more be seen any priests, simply to absolve the combatants, for priests and monks will fight as well as other citizens; and further, the Pope Benedictus will have cursed the Antichrist, and it will be proclaimed that those who fight against this despot will find salvation, and dying will straightway be translated to heaven like the martyrs.

14. The Papal Bull which proclaims these things will resound afar, and will give fresh courage to the brave, and carry death to the allies of the Antichrist. The defeat of the Antichrist will demand the death of more men than Rome ever contained.

15. It will need the united efforts of all the Powers, for the Cock, the Leopard, and the White Eagle will not make an end of the Black Eagle if the prayers and wishes of all humane people do not aid them.

16. Humanity has never before known such great peril. The triumph of the Antichrist would be that of the Demon of whom he is the incarnation.

17. It has been said that twenty centuries after the Incarnation of the Word, the Beast will in his turn incarnate, and menace the world with as much of evil as the Divine Incarnation brought of good.

18. In the twentieth century the Antichrist will manifest himself. His army will exceed in numbers anything that has ever been imagined. There will be Christians among his followers, and there will be Mohammedans and savage troops, and there will be Mohammedans and also savage troops among the Defenders of the Lamb.

19. In all Christendom there will not be even a small space that is not red—sky, earth, water—and even the atmosphere will be all red, for blood will flow into all the four elements at the same time.

20. The Black Eagle will hurl himself at the Cock, who will lose many feathers, but will use his spurs heroically. He would speedily be reduced but for the aid rendered him by the Leopard and his claws.

21. The Black Eagle will come from the Lutheran country, and will surprise the Cock, and will invade much of his territory.

22. The White Eagle will come from the northern side, and will surprise the Black Eagle and the other Eagle, and will invade the country of the Antichrist.

23. The Black Eagle will be forced to retreat from the Cock, and the Cock should follow him into the country of the Antichrist, to help the White Eagle.

24. None of the battles which have taken

place hitherto up till now will have been anything equal to those which will take place in the Lutheran country, for the Seven Angels, spoken of by the Divine St John, will now pour out the fires of their vials of wrath on the impious land, which signifies that the Lamb will ordain the complete extermination of the race of the Antichrist.

25. When the Beast sees that it has lost, it will become furious and will work destruction, and for some months the beak of the White Eagle, the talons of the Leopard, and the spurs of the Cock will rend it. Rivers will be forded by means of dead bodies, which will divert the course of the waters. Only the very distinguished, such as Generals and Princes, shall be interred, for the carnage of the war will be heaped together with the victims of plague and hunger.

26. The Antichrist will on several occasions sue for peace, but the Seven Angels will go before the Three Animals and the Defenders of the Lamb, and will proclaim that peace shall only be accorded on condition that the Antichrist be crushed as straw in the thresher.

27. The Three Animals and the Agents of the Lamb cannot stop fighting whilst there remain soldiers of the Antichrist.

28. What makes the decision of the Lamb so implacable is that the Antichrist has pretended to be a Christian, and has blasphemously acted in the Name of God. If then he does not perish, the fruit of the Redemption will be lost, and the gates of hell will have prevailed against the Saviour, and this cannot be.

29. This will be no human war. The Three Animals and the Defenders of the Lamb will exterminate the last army of the Antichrist, but the battlefield will be made a charnel-house as large as a big city. For the dead will have transformed the place, making it a chain of hillocks.

30. The Antichrist will lose his crown, and will die in solitude and in insanity. His empire will be divided into twenty-two states, but none of them shall have either a fort, an army, or a ship.

31. The White Eagle will drive out the Crescent from Europe, where there will remain none but Christians. The White Eagle will then establish himself in Constantinople.

32. Then shall commence an era of peace and prosperity for the world, and there shall be no more war; each nation shall be governed by its own conscience, and will live in justice. Then peace shall reign and happiness shall dawn on the human race.

Such are the extraordinary predictions of Johannes the Monk, uttered over three centuries ago, much of which we see already fulfilled by the present war, but the end has yet to come.

Paragraphs 2 to 8 show clearly the figure of Kaiser William II. as if his name was actually mentioned; especially paragraph 4, where it says, 'He will have but one perfect arm.' It is well known that part of the left arm, as well as the left leg and all the left part of the body of the Kaiser present symptoms of atrophy. In fact, for half an hour after his birth he was thought to have been still-born. Well for the world had it been so.

Again the prediction says, 'His innumerable troops will take for their motto, 'God with us.' What presumptuous arrogance!

Professor Rheinfeld Seehy, lecturer in the university of Berlin, preached on Sunday, December 29, 1915, in the cathedral of that city, before the Kaiser and a crowded audience, exhorting his hearers in the following manner: 'As the Almighty gave His Son to be crucified so that the work of redemption should be completed, so Germany is destined to crucify humanity, to secure its salvation. Humanity must be saved by bloodshed, by fire, and by sword. For Germans this is a holy cause which they must not neglect, unless they commit a crime. Our beloved Emperor for long years laboured to maintain the peace of the world (?), and it is exactly on account of our purity (?) that we have been selected by the Almighty as the instrument to chastise the evil-doers, and to combat with fire and sword the wicked. This is the divine mission of Germany, and it is therefore the duty of every German soldier to burn their houses and destroy them root and branch, by every means in our power, without pity. Pity to the enemy is a crime in the sight of the Almighty. Satan himself has come into the world under the form of a great empire (Britain). *Gott strafe England* ('God punish England') should be the watchword of every German, ay, even in the mouths of babes and sucklings. When this work of destruction is done fire and sword shall not have been in vain. The reign of justice shall be established on earth, and the German Empire shall have created it (?), and will protect it.'

To return to the Prophecies of Johannes the Monk, paragraph 5 says, 'His spies shall overrun the world, and he shall be master of great secrets.' How true this is of the Kaiser and his Government!

Paragraph 10 tells us, 'He will go out of his way to massacre priests, monks, women, children, and the aged. He will go forth torch in hand, and will show no mercy.' Belgium and France can testify to the truth of this.

In paragraph 11 we read, 'His pretentious words will be those of a Christian, but his actions will be those of Nero and the Roman persecutors.' Paragraph 3 bears on this where it says, 'This Prince of Liars will swear by the Scriptures, and he will cause himself to be represented as the instrument of the Most High, to chastise the wicked.' Can words be plainer or point more significantly to the Kaiser?

The example given above of Professor Seehy bears out paragraph 6, but is only one out of thousands. Such a rodomontade of sycophancy, and such expressions of barbarous cruelty make civilisation shudder, and arouse universal anger and contempt.

But the tide has turned, and to-day, instead of their *te deums*, their churches resound with the *de profundis*. Germans would be glad of peace now, many of them on any terms.

Paragraphs 12, 13, and 14 fill us with amazement! Does the present attitude of the Catholics of Canada and the United States of America, headed by Monsignor Bonzano, Delegate Apostolic at Washington, foreshadow the fulfilment of this part of the prediction? Time will tell.

Paragraph 26 says, 'The Antichrist will on several occasions sue for peace.' Has not the Kaiser on several occasions sued for peace both covertly and openly? But peace shall not be accorded until his armies are crushed 'as straw in the thresher.'

How aptly this paragraph fits in with the answer of the Entente to the Peace Note of President Wilson last January!

What shall be said of the vision of the angels at the battle of the Somme, seen by hundreds of hard-headed English soldiers, who cannot be accused of superstition, or of too much credulity in modern miracles? But it has been well said, 'There is more in heaven and earth than we dream of in our philosophy.' What then shall we think of paragraphs 9 and 26?

Another prophet, even earlier than Johannes the Monk, Thomas Joseph Moult, about the year 1500, gives us the following predictions relating not only to Prussia and Austria, but also to Italy and Russia. 'In 1793 there will be the violent death of a Great Queen' (Marie Antoinette, Archduchess of Austria).

'In 1859 there will be a new form of government in a kingdom.' Doubtless this refers to the Independence of Italy, achieved about that time. 'In 1915 a great treachery will be hatched in a European Court.' Would not this refer to the treason hatched in the Russian Court by the false monk Rasputin and others, with the connivance of the German Czarina? 'In 1917 there will be a new form of government in a great empire.' There can be no question of the fulfilment of this, in the events which have just happened in Russia, for mark the difference in the two predictions. That for 1859 speaks of a kingdom, while that of 1917 mentions a great empire.

EXPLANATION OF THE SYMBOLS USED BY THE MONK JOHANNES.

The Black Eagle represents Germany.
The White Eagle represents Russia.
The Other Eagle represents Austria.
The Leopard and his Claws represent England and her Colonial Allies.
The Lamb represents The Spirit of International Justice, Liberty, and Honour, of which Christ, the Lamb, is the Fountain-Head.
The Agents and Defenders of the Lamb represent The Armies of the Entente.
The Antichrist represents The Spirit of Evil animating the Black Eagle and his Allies.

Guile and deceit were to be characteristics of the Antichrist, and it must be admitted that the duplicity and cruelty inherent in the Hohenzollern family, not to speak of Germans in general, are but the ultimate expression of a two-century policy, which, from Frederick II. to the present Kaiser, has constantly exalted force, deceit, and guile, in opposition to justice and honour, denying these principles in international rapport. As far back as 1848 Cavour revealed the cupidity of Prussia for Belgium, and since 1870 the acquisition of that country was for Germans a work to be accomplished. All Germans have looked forward to this, and none but a German could invent the excuse for the invasion—namely, that Britain had intended to make of the country a fortress from which to attack Germany. Conquest has been the aim of every German for long years, more especially since the advent of the present Kaiser to the throne. Many years ago the writer of this article heard a German in London say, 'One-half the trade of London is in the hands of Germans, and I hope to see the other half also.'

Even the two social classes in Germany, which for different reasons should be imbued with the spirit of internationalism—namely, the intellectual section and the populace—are confirmed militants, and the war now raging shows with a fierce light the moral unity of Germany, displaying, in all its hideous nakedness, Teutonic barbarity, surprising even to those who before held what they conceived to be the lowest idea of German humanity. 'Act like Huns,' says the Kaiser to his soldiers, but they had no need of the stimulus. In horror we pass from wonder to wonder, on learning what the German press and the leaders of the German people say and do, and on seeing them, like the foul fiend, gloat over the massacre of feeble women and children, unoffending priests, nuns, and travellers by sea, whether enemies or neutrals, and the wholesale destruction of property, families made desolate, widows and orphans crying to heaven for vengeance. Even when compelled to retire from before the advancing forces of the Allies, the German soldiery, *by order of their commanders*, lay waste the districts they are forced to evacuate, carrying off the inhabitants and their goods and property into worse than slavery. Already in 1870 all the German hordes, the Prussians and Bavarians especially, had inaugurated this system, 'to terrorise the enemy,' as one of their commanders said at the time. In the present war they have gone even beyond this, and have

displayed a vandalism which outvies the vandalism of the ancient barbarians—burning all the houses of the districts from which they have been driven, setting fire to the property they could not carry off, laying waste fields and gardens, uprooting fruitful trees, and rifling churches or levelling them to the ground. But the greatest crime of all is the violation of the tombs and graves of the dead for the sake of the metal and jewellery to be found in them; rifling the dead of their leaden coffins; and robbing the graves of what they could get. Hear the report given by the correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, in the issue of that paper for Thursday, March 29, 1917. 'Looking for the first time at the ruins in the liberated land, the natural comment was that the Germans had left no one unrobbed, except the dead; but these judgments have turned out too favourable to the Boches, who have not only broken open the vaults in the country churchyards to make machine-gun shelters, but pillaged the graves for the zinc and lead linings of the coffins.

'At Champier, near Nesle, the cemetery has been torn up as if by ghouls, coffins broken up, and the remains of the dead scattered about and filth thrown into the graves. The same thing has been done at Margny-aux-Cerises, Laucourt, and Roiglise. It is evident that robbery was the only motive, because only the tombs of the well-to-do were treated in this fashion.'

For generations to come, the very name of German will be odious, and stink in the nostrils of all civilised nations. And let us remember that it is not only in the districts where the war is being carried on that this diabolical work is practised. German spies and German incendiaries are to be found in all lands, fomenting rebellions and wantonly destroying the property of neutrals, and this they call 'legitimate war.' Was it legitimate war to sink the *Lusitania*, and the many ships of neutral nations, as well as those of belligerents; to destroy factories and property in neutral America? Was it legitimate war to murder Miss Cavell, or to shoot Captain Fryatt?

German statesmen hurl invective against the enemy outvying in the coarsest language the lowest of the populace. Generals laud the pillage of conquered cities, and declare openly that the life of a German soldier is worth many cities of the enemy. In this too they are inconsistent, for they hound their soldiers to their death recklessly on the battlefield.

Princes exalt assassination and poets sing of undying hatred and odium. *Gott strafe England* is the burden of the song taught even in the infant schools. The German Chancellery openly professes the secret maxim of lying and deceit, and insults the enemy as a drunken wanton would a rival of her own ignoble calling.

At the very dawn of the nineteenth century, from the execrable Von Clausen to the no less brutal Bismarck, the German leaders of the people have inculcated the principles of the so-called 'absolute war.' 'Leave nothing to the conquered but their eyes to weep,' says Bismarck. And Bethmann-Hollweg says, 'Necessity has no law. What are treaties but scraps of paper?'

Low cunning, lying, and unheard-of cruelty have characterised this war as far as Germany and her Allies are concerned, as history will show. What greater hypocrisy, deceit, and lying could there be than in the excuse given by the Kaiser for the submarine piracy *à outrance*? At best it is a tardy excuse. What of the sinking of so many ships before Kaiser William found his transparent excuse? The obvious fact is the Kaiser, feeling that his powers approach exhaustion, would deceive his own people and make neutrals believe that by a cowardly stab in the back, as it were, or by a shot from behind a hedge, he could force peace on his own terms, and that speedily. Protests against this cowardly warfare—if we can call it warfare—have been sent to him from every nation; but for the minor nations who unfortunately live on the borders of the marauders, and who for the pirates would be a *bonne bouche*, 'discretion is the best part of valour.' Even for these nations this thraldom will cease before long.

O. W. C.

'The rest is silence.'

By Lady Skerrington.

One word, Oh God! Let just one word float backwards,
Across the restless tide,
That stretches to the far, unseen horizon—
A waste of waters wide.

I pace along the shore, and o'er the shingle:
No sound comes back to me
Except the ripples, that are ever breaking,
Of that relentless sea.

With straining eyes I watched his vessel sinking
Far out of sight;
And never have I seen him since, my loved one,
Save in the dreams of night.

Only in fancy can I see him near me,
Smiling in youth serene:
Yet in my dreaming I am ever haunted
By the 'What might have been.'

And in my dreaming I can hear his laughter,
Infectious, blithe, and gay,
Until I find, sometimes, that I am smiling
As in that bygone day.

The little jests, so frivolous and foolish,
Within my heart remain:
Only the voice that gave the jests their value
Sounds to me not again!

Is there no tiniest chink, Oh God, to westward,
In that far, golden gate,
Through which may filter sounds, however faintly,
To those who wait?

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RECOLLECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS.

By C. L. G.

EDITORS may be divided into two classes, those who write and those who edit. The purely editing editor, who confines his energies to giving instructions, revising articles, keeping in touch with the people who count, and generally dominating the situation in his office, is becoming rather a rare bird nowadays. But some of the very greatest of the tribe belonged to this class—Delane in particular, who during the whole tenure of his editorship of the *Times* did not write more than two or three articles. As compared with the product of some leader-writers, his contribution was infinitesimal; but volume is no sure criterion of value, though Vauvenargues tells us that *les meilleurs auteurs parlent trop*. There is a story of the Rev. Thomas Mozley, who for many years wrote leaders for the *Times*, submitting a book to a publisher, who asked him if he had ever published anything before. Mozley replied, 'Two volumes of sermons, and about seven thousand leaders in the *Times*.' But Delane was no *roi fainéant*, as may be learned not only from the biography written by his nephew, but from the very interesting paper of reminiscences contributed a few years ago to the *Cornhill* by Dr Wace, the Dean of Canterbury, who was formerly one of Delane's leader-writers. No one kept a firmer hand on his staff or acted more consistently in accordance with his conception of the duties and responsibilities of an editor. Any irregular intervention he strongly resented, and he occasionally turned the tables with deadly effect on the intervener. Thus it is told that a well-known journalist, who in his earlier days was an occasional contributor to the *Times*, was asked by the head of a firm of brewers if he could procure the insertion of a paragraph describing the festivities held at the coming of age of the brewer's eldest son. The journalist promised to do his best, wrote an account of the celebration, and submitted it to a friend on the staff of the paper. It was set up in type and included in the 'make-up,' but unfortunately at the last moment it caught the eye of Delane. As we have seen, he hardly ever wrote for his paper, but he often supplied piquant headings to items of news, and so the unfortunate paragraph duly appeared under the title, 'Ale Kings at their Revels.' Some highly efficient editors, while showing a remarkable *flair* in the choice of writers and in controlling their pens, have abstained from writing because they could not write. There was one who wrote such an extraordinarily bad hand that it was said to be a deliberate device to conceal his inability to spell. Delane wrote in an admirably trenchant style, as his letters abundantly prove; his abstention was simply due to his belief in the Napoleonic maxim, '*Il faut se borner*.' Other great editors in the past were contributors to their own columns, and of these perhaps the most notable were Russel of the *Scotsman*, and Hutton and Townsend of the *Spectator*, who for many years between them wrote the greater part of the paper. Their partnership was a remarkable instance of the loyal and effective collaboration of two men who differed widely in temperament, and yet, unconsciously no doubt, approximated so closely to each other in expression that even constant readers were often mistaken in the ascription of their articles. Nothing could have been more unlike than their handwritings. Hutton wrote a minute and sketchy hand, while Townsend's characters were large and round, like those of a schoolboy. When he went out to India in the 'forties' to join the staff of the *Friend of India*, Townsend's handwriting was so bad that the compositors registered a formal protest. He consulted his chief, Mr Marshman, who advised him to double the size of his script. He took the advice, acted upon it to the end of his life, and never gave any more trouble to the compositors. As a cure for illegibility the device is worth recording, but nowadays dictation to shorthand writers and the use of the typewriter renders its adoption less needful. The evils of dictation, unless the product is regarded as a rough draft to be rigorously revised and condensed, are too obvious to call for comment. People who dictate are rarely self-critical. But the convenience of being able to read contributions in type-script instead of manuscript is very great. An editor can arrive at a decision in half the time taken in mastering an unfamiliar handwriting. At the same time, the typewriter obliterates the personal note in the look of a contribution. It is impossible not to form a sort of general idea of a contributor from the look of his manuscript. Some handwritings

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are positively repellent, but calligraphy is not always a proof of mental power. Scholars are nearly always recognisable from the influence of writing much Greek, and, to speak broadly, a well-turned-out manuscript is generally worth reading.

The outside contributor is a strange animal. He will sometimes send a contribution four or five times the maximum length of the articles which appear in the paper he approaches. And the nature of the article submitted often shows a complete disregard or ignorance of its views or tendency. Journalists who study these points and have something to say are bound to succeed. No diplomas are needed in journalism. Any editor worth his salt is always on the lookout for talent, and ready to acknowledge and enlist it. There have been editors, as we have seen, who, without being scholarly themselves, have had an unerring instinct in the choice of men who wrote well and could be trusted to maintain the literary quality of the paper at a high level. Others, less self-protective and more negligent, have never troubled themselves about such niceties. I remember as a boy, when Tyndall delivered his famous presidential address at the meeting of the British Association at Belfast and fluttered the clerical dove-cotes, how a clergyman wrote in protest to the Dublin *Daily Express*, and signed himself, using English characters, *Tou gar kai genos esmen*. Unluckily his handwriting was not very clear, and the signature appeared as *Ton gar kai geros soner*. A couple of days later another letter appeared, the writer of which alluded to 'Your correspondent Mr T. G. K. Soner.' Even in these days of anti-classical reaction and tirades against the futility of schoolboys learning Greek, I doubt whether such a blunder would have appeared in a paper of any standing. But editors are not always infallible. It is not so long since a London daily was imposed on by an ingenious contributor, and printed on the 1st of April an article describing in great detail some new mechanical invention, full of 'bosh' technical terminology of the most delicious absurdity; while another journal within the last fifteen years or so published a letter on the habits of a bird at a zoological gardens in South Africa which was boldly described as a 'semi-Bombay duck.'

Later still the charming fantasy which Sir J. G. Frazer (the author of *The Golden Bough*) prefixed to his selection of Addison's Essays was regarded by one reviewer as a record of experiences which had actually taken place. An editor should not be grossly ignorant or credulous, but personally I should be sorry to see the tribe so perfectly equipped by knowledge and scepticism as to be proof against all the arts of the literary hoaxer. They are sometimes illegitimate and cruel, but there are occasions on which they simply minister to mirth. The most perfectly successful and the most riotously ludicrous of these impostures is that related by Mr Eric Parker in his delightful *Eton in the Eighties*, when he describes how for months a group of clever Eton boys supplied the editor of a London magazine with correspondence describing the special games, customs, &c. at Eton. These letters were triumphs of circumstantial absurdity, and, to crown all, the editor was actually invited down to Eton, where some of these bogus customs were enacted for his edification. The history of this hoax is recorded in a little volume unhappily out of print, but the full story remains to be told, and when the name of the editor is disclosed, amusement will give place to wonder and—in some quarters—to intense delight.

My experiences of editors who really edited their contributors' articles have been diversified, but, with one notable exception, they have inspired me with gratitude. I don't suppose I ever wrote anything which did not gain from condensation; and when, in the exercise of editorial functions, I have had to retrench my own work to meet the demands of the make-up —'Please cut out twenty-four lines,' or half a column, or whatever it was—the process, though sometimes painful, has nearly always resulted in improvement. Writers like myself who are not troubled with exuberance of ideas are irresistibly impelled to pad out their scanty stock with irrelevant upholstery. The blue pencil is to them a boon. The exceptional 'editing' editor to whom I have referred above was one of the most brilliant and stimulating journalists of his time, but his method of dealing with contributions was to rewrite them largely in his own trenchant style, and the consequences were occasionally electrifying to the author. As the editor of a weekly journal published in the provinces he had gathered round him a remarkable band of clever young men, several of whom have since achieved marked distinction in the world of letters. My association with his journal was brief and undistinguished. I only wrote two or three papers, one of which was devoted to a somewhat depreciatory estimate of a popular humorist, whose signal abilities I came in later years to hold in high admiration. But when I ventured to criticise certain blemishes in his work, I never expected to find my mild rebukes turned into ferocious censure by the addition of such a phrase—inserted after a quotation from the author under review—as 'It is vomitable, but it pays.' The editor knew no moderation in praise or blame; he made divinities of his idols and cast his pet aversions on to the dunghill. That was my last contribution to his paper, for shortly afterwards he published a savage article on another editor, one of the first and the most generous of my patrons, holding him up to contempt as a literary Stiggins and his paper as an asylum for maudlin sentimentalists,

adding that every one who wrote for it was obliged to adopt the style of the editor. As a matter of fact, the fault of the editor in question was that he did not revise the work of his contributors half enough—*experto credite*—while his castigator carried the process to lengths which I have already illustrated. My subscription to his paper had several months to run, but I wrote to the publisher to say that, in consequence of this article, I requested that no more copies should be sent to me. Soon afterwards I received a very friendly letter from the editor, saying that he was not going to take back a word of what he had written, but that he sincerely regretted the severance of my connection with his paper. I gathered from those who knew him better than I did that he would have respected me far more if I had taken up the cudgels for my friend with equal ferocity to his own. But I made no sign, and was content to be quit once and for all of any further personal association with the most brilliant of the tribe of Bludyer. I never told the other editor, but he heard of my action from a common friend, and wrote me a characteristic and charming letter, expressing his lively regret that I should have given up my connection with the paper that had attacked him. He had read the article, and the passage describing his own paper as a 'hospital for diseased cats' had given him 'the first hearty laugh he had had for many months' —his life was then clouded by grievous domestic anxiety.

One belongs to one's own generation, and can never perhaps fully appreciate the typical representatives of the next; so I may be pardoned for thinking that the editors of thirty and forty years ago were more interesting and remarkable men than their successors. Amalgamations and associations may earn huge dividends for shareholders and bring colossal incomes to their directors, but they do not throw up Bagehots or Delanes, Townsends or Huttons, Greenwoods or Henleys. The days of the independent and despotic editor are past; the competent organiser reigns precariously in his stead, acting as a sort of buffer state between his proprietor (or proprietors) and his staff, or endeavouring to reconcile the conflicting claims of policy and commercialism. The notion of giving an editor an absolutely free hand is incompatible with the principles which govern modern journalism—except in the rare instances where the editor is also proprietor, or, still rarer, where a periodical is organised on a non-commercial basis. Of this Utopian system there is at the moment one conspicuous and admirable example which aims at enlightening and clarifying rather than inflaming public opinion. But to say more about it would be derogatory, for it dispenses with advertisements of all sorts, and has gained in prestige, influence, and independence by this self-denying ordinance. Some editors are responsible to a board, and their position cannot always be a bed of roses. I knew one not many years ago, and on my meeting him shortly after the paper had changed hands he replied somewhat ruefully to my congratulations on his retention in office, 'I used to have one proprietor; now I have *ten*.' But perhaps the most trying position of all is that of the editor who has not complete control, but is, as it were, *primus inter pares* with colleagues who are each in charge of a department. A daily paper was founded on these lines not a thousand years ago. There was a board of directors, with a managing director; there was a managing editor, a political editor, and a literary editor, to say nothing of other persons who exercised editorial functions. The paper was launched at a most favourable opportunity, with ample resources at its back, and it had the further advantage of meeting an unquestioned need by the representation of views which lacked authoritative expression. But it was a huge financial failure, largely, if not entirely, because of the lack of central and coherent control. A friend of mine was offered a post on the staff by one of the editors, but when he went to receive his instructions he found that the engagement had not been officially confirmed by whoever was really responsible; and he used to describe how, after interviews with five different editors, he came away quite uncertain whether he was appointed or not. The tragi-comedy of this failure—for it was not without some tragic disappointments—has been told in print under a thinly veiled disguise, and forms one of the most instructive episodes in the romance of modern journalism. In spite of the efforts of an expert 'newspaper doctor,' who was called in to pull things together, the proprietors were obliged to discontinue publication. Their losses, judged by pre-war standards, were huge, and though they had spent money like water, they were bitterly and unjustly criticised for not carrying on. The plain fact is that if a high-minded millionaire, with the best of intentions, who knows nothing of the newspaper world or of journalism, decides to found, equip, and run a daily paper, and, instead of choosing one strong editor, entrusts the control to half-a-dozen people of more or less conflicting aims, he can make as certain of losing one hundred thousand pounds a year as if he were to turn the money into sovereigns and play ducks and drakes with them from the deck of a liner in the mid-Atlantic.

One of the innovations of modern journalism —though perhaps it would be more correct to call it a revival on an extended scale—which has much to recommend it, is the recognition of verse as a regular feature, and not an intermittent embellishment. In older days the poets' corner was confined for the most part to obscure provincial journals, and was as a rule an unremunerated refuge for the incompetent

amateur. A century and more ago it was otherwise, when Coleridge and others contributed political and patriotic poems to the London daily press. But the practice died out. Certainly it was a very rare occurrence thirty or forty years ago for a poem to appear in a London daily. Poets who desired immediate publication were restricted to the pages of the weeklies or monthlies. Browning's indignant response to a disparaging comment on his wife's *Aurora Leigh*, which occurred in one of Edward FitzGerald's letters, appeared in the *Athenæum*. The mordant lines of Samuel Butler, 'A Psalm of Montreal,' on the discovery of a plaster cast of the Discobolus in a room full of skins, plants, snakes, insects, &c., in the Montreal Museum of Natural History, describing Butler's interview with the old custodian, who was employed in stuffing an owl, first saw the light in the *Spectator;* and, strange to say, Swinburne's 'Faustine' was first published in the same journal. The credit of making serious 'occasional verse' a regular feature in a daily newspaper, and of setting a high standard, probably belongs to the late Mr Harry Cust during his meteoric tenure of the editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette*. Mrs Hinkson ('Katharine Tynan') in her recently published Reminiscences tells us that in one year no fewer than fifty of her poems appeared in the *P.M.G.*, and though she was probably the most frequent as well as one of the most gifted of its poetical contributors, one seldom saw verse in its columns that was not either accomplished or sincere. The practice spread first to other evening papers such as the *Westminster Gazette*, which still keeps it up, and then to the morning press. Poems by laureates had always enjoyed a privileged right of entry to the leading daily, but after Tennyson it cannot be said that they conduced to the prestige of the office. I am thinking now of such poems as those of Mr Kipling, whose splendid homage to France appeared in the *Morning Post* before the war, and the brilliant political satires signed 'I. C.' which adorned the same columns also in ante-bellum days. The war has been responsible for a great efflorescence of verse, by far the best of which has come from the trenches or has been inspired by direct first-hand experience of warfare in its various phases on sea or land or in the air. For months together hardly an issue of the *Times* appeared without a poem, and the very large number of volumes of verse published in the last couple of years seems to indicate that the poetry-reading public has grown with the supply. The daily topical poem, however, had already become a feature of the halfpenny press, thus adding to the essentially miscellaneous character of modern daily journalism, which has swallowed up the society paper and seriously encroached on the preserves of the weekly illustrated periodicals by an ever-growing reliance on the resources of photography. When the *Daily Graphic* was started in 1890 the great bulk of the illustrations were reproductions of pen and pencil drawings, but of late years it has abandoned these methods entirely. The camera is beyond doubt a most valuable auxiliary, but, like all auxiliaries, needs to be employed with discretion. How helpful and illustrative in the best sense it can be is well shown in the pages of the *Manchester Guardian*, the photographs in which, both as regards choice and execution, are by far the best to be found in the daily press. But the notion that the camera never lies has long been exploded. In the hands of the unscrupulous snapshotter the thing becomes a weapon, and very often a poisoned weapon. The instantaneous camera sees differently from the human eye, and its pictures are often grotesque libels, more unflattering even than the most repellent portraits of the most uncompromising realists or impressionists. Again, it is far too often employed as a means of invading privacy or of maliciously lending point to a 'campaign' against some notorious or unpopular personage. The camera, in short, adds a new terror to public life.

War tests everything and everybody, and brings out the best and the worst that is in us. And though the result in the main is encouraging by its splendid disproof of the misgivings of those who held that the fibre of our race had been sapped by luxury and self-indulgence, it cannot be maintained, in view of the predominating influence and the popularity exerted and enjoyed by certain outstanding figures in the world of journalism, that we have reason to be proud of our press as a whole. We find more sanity, moderation, and freedom from personal attacks and bitter recriminations—more, in fact, of what is representative of the best traditions of British journalism and of the spirit of unity and steadfastness—in the leading provincial than in the metropolitan papers. And this is due partly to the more feverish atmosphere of London, but still more to the fact that already, years before the war, the control of the most widely circulated organs had been steadily passing into the hands of men who set enterprise before enlightenment, excitement before instruction, publicity before patriotism, and everything before independence. The development of elementary education had enormously increased the newspaper-reading public, the opportunity was great, and so far as the mere mechanism of the supply and the skill with which the materials were presented went, no one can deny the energy and ability displayed by the organisers of the new journalism. They have shown themselves masters of the art of transport and distribution—of 'getting there first.' It is in their aims and methods as instructors that they have failed utterly in courage, in vision, in illumination. The problem they have set themselves to solve is, 'What does the man in the street like?' The

notion of raising his standard, of giving him something better than what he has been accustomed to, is dismissed as quixotic and uncommercial. Just as it is the craze of the fashionable school of 'educationists' to beguile children into the paths of knowledge by turning every lesson into a game, so it is the aim of the newspaper proprietor to enlarge his circulation by 'brightening' all departments of journalism. No doubt there was much in the older journalism that was ponderous and stodgy, but modern methods have swept away its solidity and sanity along with its tiresome conventions and prolixity. In the desire to be 'merry and bright' at all hazards, highly coloured impressions, in which the personal note is always forced, take the place of precise reports. Everything is dramatised—down to the squalors of police-court cases; judges are encouraged to be facetious and magistrates to be jocular. Yet there are journalists—some of them bred in the new school, others who are survivals of the old—who continue to better their instructions, and, though working for proprietors destitute of any sense of letters, to redeem the vulgarity of their surroundings by the saving grace of style. It is one of the curious and welcome instances of 'man's unconquerable mind' that even a Napoleon of the press cannot altogether sterilise the intellect of his scribes. There is good writing in bad papers, as conversely there is bad writing in good papers. But, tested by the needs of the hour, the provincial papers set an example to their London contemporaries by their larger abstinence from 'grousing' and recrimination, and their more consistent endeavour to promote unity, concord, and concentration. This remark does not apply only to the papers published in the larger centres. Having no interest in or official connection with any paper outside London, I feel perfectly free to express my admiration and respect for those provincial organs which, though hard put to it to keep their ends up against the competition of their sensational and all-pervasive London rivals, have never stooped to their methods, but have chosen the better path of steadily and unfalteringly maintaining the best traditions of British journalism. There are few parts of England where there has been better excuse for depression or the adoption of an alarmist tone than East Anglia, yet there is no paper in the country which has more unswervingly lived up to the precept,

Aequam memento rebus in arduis
Servare mentem,

than the *Eastern Daily Press* of Norwich. There is an unwritten law which debars one newspaper from discussing another; some journals even go to the length of refraining to mention a contemporary by name. It is not a bad rule in so far as it promotes a healthy professional solidarity, but it has its drawbacks when a paper has 'deserved well of the republic' and there is no means of recognising its services. Good papers do not blow their own trumpets or tell us that they are winning the war. The testimony of an obscure outsider may be of little value, but as a journalist of nearly thirty-five years' standing I may claim the right, in virtue of what it has meant for me and mine in the last three years, to salute a newspaper which has been sane and steadfast from the first days of the war; which has never indulged in scapegoat-hunting or uttered the cry, '*Nous sommes trahis;*' which does not advise the appointment of Ministers or crab the appointments when its suggestions are disregarded; in fine, which has no desire to promote that most pernicious consummation, newspaper government, but prefers to face the facts honestly, to discard rumour, to combat dissension, and to drive home the need of fortitude, endurance, and self-denial.

THE DEFINITE OBJECT.

CHAPTER XLVI.—IN WHICH GEOFFREY RAVENSLEE ATTAINS HIS OBJECT.

MRS TRAPES glanced sadly round her cosy housekeeper's room, and sighed regretfully. She was alone, and upon the table ready to hand lay her neat bonnet, her umbrella, and a pair of white cotton gloves; beholding which articles, she set her lips more resolutely, folded her bony arms more tightly, and nodded in grim determination.

'The labourer is worthy of his hire,' she sighed, apparently addressing the bonnet; 'but, if so be the labourer ain't worthy—why, then, the sooner he quits'——

A sound of quick, light feet upon the stair, and a voice that laughed gaily, a laugh so full of happiness that even Mrs Trapes's iron features relaxed and her grim mouth curved in her rare smile. At that moment the door opened and Hermione appeared, a radiant Hermione, who clasped Mrs Trapes in her arms and tangled her up in her long motor-veil, and laughed again.

'Oh, Ann, such a day!' she exclaimed, laying aside her long dust-coat. 'New York is a paradise—when you're rich! No more bargain-days and clawing-matches over the remnant-counter, Ann! Oh, it's wonderful to be able to buy anything I want—anything! Think of it, Ann! Isn't it just a dream of joy? And I've shopped and shopped, and he was so dear and patient! I bought Arthur a complete outfit'——

'Arthur!' said Mrs Trapes, and groaned.

'And you, Ann, you dear thing, I bought you—guess what? But you never could! I

bought you a gold watch, the very best I could find; and he bought you a chain for it, a long one to go round your dear neck, set with diamonds and rubies. I mean the chain is—it's the cutest thing, Ann! You remember you used to dream of a gold chain set with real diamonds, some day? Well, "some day's" to-day, Ann.'

'But—oh, Hermy, I—I'——

'He wants to give it to you himself, because he says you're the best friend he ever had, and —oh, here he is!—You did say so, didn't you, Geoffrey?'

'And I surely mean it,' answered Ravenslee, tossing his driving-gauntlets into a chair; 'though you certainly threw cold water upon my pea-nut barrow, didn't you, Mrs Trapes?'

'Oh, Geoffrey dear, do give her that precious package! I'm dying to see her open it!'

So Ravenslee drew the jeweller's neat parcel from his pocket, and put it into Mrs Trapes's toil-worn hand. For a moment her bony fingers clutched it; then she sighed tremulously, and, placing it on the table, rose and stood staring down at it.

When at last she spoke her voice was harsher than usual. 'Hermy dear—I mean Mrs Ravenslee, mam—I can't—take 'em!'

'But, dear—why not?'

'Because they're coals o' fire.'

'But you must take them, dear; we bought them for you.'

'Which jools, mam, I can in nowise accept.'

'Why, Ann dear, whatever'——

'Which jools, mam, havin' been a dream, must for me so remain, me not bein' faithful in my dooties to you an' Mr Geoffrey. Consequently I begs to tender now my resignation, yieldin' up my post in your service to one better worthy, an' returnin' t' th' place wherefrom I come.'

Here Mrs Trapes put on her bonnet, setting it a little askew in her agitation.

'Th' labourer is worthy of his hire, but if he ain't—so be it!'

Here Mrs Trapes tied her bonnet-strings so tightly and with such resolute hands that she choked.

'Why, Ann dear,' cried Hermione, 'whatever do you mean? As if I could bear to part with you!' Here she untied the bonnet-strings. 'As if I could ever let you go back to Mulligan's!' Here she took off the bonnet. 'As if I could ever forget all your tender love and care for me in the days when things were so hard and so very dark!' Here she tossed the bonnet into a corner.

'My land!' sighed Mrs Trapes, 'me best bonnet'——

'I know, Ann. I made it for you over a year ago, and it's time you had another, anyway! Now open that parcel—this minute!'

But, instead of doing so, Mrs Trapes sank down in the chair beside the table, and bowed her head in her hands. 'Hermy,' said she, 'oh, my lamb, he's gone! You left Arthur in my care, an'—he's gone, an' it's my fault. Went away at five o'clock, an' here it is nigh on to ten—an' him sick! God knows, I've searched for him—tramped to th' ferry an' back; an' th' footmen, they've looked for him, an' so have th' maids—but Arthur's gone—an' it's my fault! So, Hermy—my dear—blame me an' let me go.'

The harsh voice broke, and bowing her head, she sat silent, touching the unopened packet of jewellery with one long, bony finger.

'Why, Ann—dear Ann—you're crying!' Hermione was down on her knees, had clasped that long, bony figure in her arms. 'You mustn't, Ann—you mustn't. I'm sure it wasn't your fault, so don't grieve, dear—there!' and she had drawn the disconsolate gray head down upon her shoulder and pillowed it there.

'But—oh, Hermy, he's gone! An' you told me to—look after him.'

'Ann, if Arthur meant to go, I'm sure you couldn't have prevented him; he isn't a child any longer, dear. There, be comforted—we'll hunt for him in the car.—Won't we, Geoffrey?'

'Of course,' nodded Ravenslee. 'I'll phone the garage right away.'

But as he opened the door he came face to face with Joe, who touched an eyebrow and jerked a thumb over his shoulder. ''Scuse me, sir,' said he, 'but it's that Old Un; covered wi' dust 'e is, sir, an' wants a word wi' you. And, sir, 'e's that mysterious as never was. Shall I let him come in, sir?'

'You try an' keep me out, lad, that's all!' panted the Old Un, ducking under Joe's great arm. 'I'm a better man nor ever you'll be!'

So saying, the Old Un hobbled forward, and, sinking into the nearest arm-chair, fanned himself with his hat, which, like the rest of his garments, bore the dust of travel.

'Greetin's, guv!' said he when he had caught his breath. ''Ere I be—a old man as 'as done more for ye than all th' young uns put t'gether. —Mrs Ravenslee, mam, best respex!'

'And what have you been doing now?' inquired Ravenslee, smiling.

'Well, guv, I been an' got th' murderer for ye; that's all!'

Hermione caught her breath suddenly, and gazed at the fierce, dusty old man with eyes full of growing terror; beholding which, Ravenslee frowned, then laughed lightly, and, seating himself on a corner of the table, swung his leg to and fro.

'So you've found him out, have you, Old Un?'

'Ah, that I have!'

'Are you sure?'

'Ah, quite sure, guv!'

'Well, where is he? Trot him out.'

''E's comin' along—th' Spider's bringin' un.

Ye see, he 's a bit wore out, same as I am; we been trampin' all th' arternoon. Look at me shoes. That 's th' worst o' patent-leather; they shows th' dust.—Joe, me lad, jest give 'em a flick over with yer wipe.'

But at this moment steps were heard slowly approaching, and Hermione uttered an inarticulate cry, then spoke in an agonised whisper: 'Arthur!'

Pallid of cheek and drooping of head, Spike stood in the doorway, his shabby, threadbare clothes dusty and travel-stained, his slender shape encircled by the Spider's long arm. At Hermione's cry he lifted his head and looked up yearningly; his sensitive mouth quivered; his long-lashed eyes swam in sudden tears; he strove to speak, but choked instead.

Then Ravenslee's calm, pleasant voice broke the painful silence. 'Old Un,' said he, rising, 'I understand you are fond of jam. Well, from now on you shall bathe in it if you wish.'

'Spoke like a true sport, guv!'

'Why, you see, you have surely done me a very great service'——

'Meanin' because I found ye th' murderer'——

'Murderer?' exclaimed Ravenslee, staring.

'Why, yes—there 'e is!' and the old man pointed a long finger at the shrinking Spike.

'Old Un,' said Ravenslee, shaking his head, 'don't joke with me.'

'I—I ain't jokin', guv,' cried the Old Un, rising. 'Why—oh, lorgorramighty! you don't mean t' say as this ain't 'im! Why, 'e 's confessed, guv; I 'eard 'im!'

Ravenslee smiled gently, and shook his head again. 'But he has been sick, Old Un; he was hurt, you know, when he saved my life.'

'But, lord, guv, if 'e confessed'——

'He has been sick, Old Un, and when we are sick the wisest of us are apt to say silly things. Even I did, so they tell me.'

'What!' quavered the old man; 'ain't I—ain't I found no murderer for ye arter all, guv?'

'You 've done something much, very much, better, Old Un—you 've found me my brother!'

'Brother!' echoed Spike. 'Brother! Oh Geoff'—— He sighed deeply; and as Ravenslee crossed towards him, he smiled wanly and sank swooning into the supporting arms of the Spider, who, at a word from Hermione, bore the boy upstairs. But scarcely was he laid upon his bed than he opened his heavy eyes. 'Say, Spider,' said he wearily, 'old Geoff, sure, does play square—even to a worm like me—well, I guess! No, don't go yet; I wantcher to hear me try to explain the kind o' dirty dog I been—I guess he won't want t' call me "brother" after that. No, siree; he 'll cut me out same as you have, an' serve me right, too.' Then turning towards where Ravenslee and Hermione stood, he continued: 'Geoff—Hermy dear—ah no, don't touch me; I ain't worth it; I'm too dirty—Spider says so, an' I guess he 's right. Listen. I meant t' go away t'-day an' leave you, because I felt so mean; but th' old man followed me, an' I couldn't run because my arm pained some—ye see, I fell on it. So I let him bring me back, because I guess it 's up t' me t' let you know as I ain't fit t' be your brother, Geoff—or Hermy's.' For a moment Spike paused; then, with an effort, he continued, but kept his face averted: 'Geoff, it was me—in the wood that time! Yes, it was me, an' I had a gun. I—I meant—t' do you in, Geoff'——

Spike's voice failed, and he was silent again, plucking nervously at the sheet; while Hermione's proud head drooped, and her hands clasped and wrung each other in an agony of shame. But to these painfully rigid hands came another hand, big and strong, yet very gentle, at whose soothing touch those agonised fingers grew lax and soft, then clung to that strong hand in sudden, eager passion.

'Poor old Spike!' said Ravenslee, and his tone was as gentle as his touch.

'But—but, Geoff,' stammered the boy, 'I—oh, don't you see, I meant to—kill you?'

'Yes, I understand; you thought I deserved it. Why?'

'Oh, I was crazy, I guess! Bud told me lies—an' I believed him—lies about you an' Hermy. He said—you 'd make Hermy go—the same road—little Maggie Finlay went; so I came t' kill you.'

'Spike, if you believed that, if you really believed that, I don't blame you for trying a shot.'

'But I didn't—I couldn't! When I saw you sittin' there, so unsuspectin', I just couldn't do it. I tried to, but I couldn't. An', somehow, I dropped th' gun, an' then I heard a shot; an' when I looked up I saw you throw out your arms an' fall. My God, I 'll never forget that! Then I saw Bud starin' down at you, an' th' pistol smokin' in his hand. I meant t' do it, but I couldn't; so Bud did it himself. I 'm as bad as him, I reckon; but it was Bud shot you. Soapy saw him, an' knows it was Bud. Ask Soapy. An' now I 've told you all, I guess I ain't fit t' stay here any longer.'

Spike's voice choked upon a sob. He buried his face in the pillow; and so there fell a silence—a strange, tense hush, a pause so unexpected that he looked up and saw that Hermione's head was bowed no longer, but she stood, very proud and tall, gazing upon her husband, and in her eyes was a great and wondrous light; and as she looked on him, so he gazed on her. They had no thought, no eyes, for Spike just then; wherefore he hid his face again.

'I guess this about puts the kybosh on th' brother business!' he sighed miserably; 'an' I, sure, ain't fit t' be th' Spider's pal, I reckon!'

But now the Spider spoke, rather quick and jerkily. 'Say, kid—get on to this! I 'm takin' back—everything I says t' you t'-day. See?

Because—oh, well, I guess you've, sure, woke up at last! So, kid—give us your mitt!'

Eagerly Spike grasped the Spider's big fist, and they shook gravely and very deliberately, looking into each other's eyes the while. Then, still quick and jerkily, the Spider turned and hurried out of the room.

Then Spike turned to Ravenslee. 'Geoff,' he sighed, 'I 'm not goin' to ask you to forgive me yet. I can't. I 'm goin' t' wait an' show you'——

But, as he paused, Ravenslee's hand was upon the lad's drooping shoulder. 'Arthur,' said he, 'from now on—from to-night you are going to be my brother more than ever—a brother we shall both be proud of. What do you say?'

But Spike 's eyes were wet, his mouth quivered, and instead of answering he buried his face in the pillow again.

'Say, Hermy,' he mumbled, 'take him away before I do th' tear-gushin' act! Take him downstairs—give him a drink—light him a cigarette—kiss him! Only take him away before I get mushy. But, say—when I 'm in bed you 'll—you 'll come an'—say good-night like—like you used to, Hermy dear?'

Swiftly she stooped and kissed that curly head. 'I 'll come—oh, I 'll come, boy dear!' she murmured, and left him with Mrs Trapes.

Downstairs the fire glowed, filling the room with shadows, and side by side they stood looking down into the heart of the fire, and were silent a while, and though she was so near he didn't touch her.

'So it wasn't Arthur, after all!' he said at last.

'No,' she answered softly, 'it wasn't Arthur—thank God!'

'Amen!' said he, so fervently that she glanced up at him swiftly, then looked into the fire again; and seeing how the colour deepened in her cheek, he came a little nearer; but still he didn't touch her. Instead, he took out tobacco-pouch and pipe and began to fill it with strangely clumsy fingers, and Hermione saw that his hands were trembling.

'Let me!' she said gently. So he surrendered pipe and pouch, and, watching, saw that her hands trembled also. When at last she had filled the pipe, he took it and laid it on the table.

'Aren't you going to smoke, dear?'

'No, not now. You 'll remember that Arthur also suggested you should'——

'Give you something to drink!' she added, a little breathlessly, and crossed to the tantalus in the corner. 'Will you have brandy-and-soda?'

'Thanks—yes—that will do,' he answered absently; and when she dutifully brought the filled glass, he took it and set it down untasted beside the pipe.

'Why, Geoffrey!' she said in murmurous surprise, 'aren't you thirsty?'

'No, not now. You will probably remember that Arthur also suggested you should'——

'I know!' she breathed; 'but, oh, Geoffrey dear—wait—just a little longer.'

'Why?' he demanded hoarsely.

'Because!' she answered, staring down at her clasped hands.

'Why?'

'Because, my Geoffrey, if—if I let myself—kiss you now, I—shall never be able to—tear myself away, and I must say good-night to Arthur and'——

She paused as a knock sounded on the door, and Mrs Trapes appeared. 'Why, dear land o' my fathers!' she exclaimed, 'ain't you had time t' take off your bonnet yet, Hermy?'

'Goodness me,' exclaimed Hermione, 'I forgot it!' So saying, off it came, and there was the curl above her eyebrow more wantonly alluring than ever.

'An' there 's that blessed b'y,' continued Mrs Trapes, 'a-layin' upstairs yearnin' for you, Hermy, an' him s' pale an' gentle—God bless him! An' it now bein' exackly twenty-two an' a half minutes past 'leven by my beautiful new watch as ticks most musical! Time as you was in bed—both o' you! An' that reminds me, Hermy, I sent your maid t' bed like you told me, an' with my own hands I laid out one o' them lovely noo night-dresses—the one with the short sleeves an' lace as you showed me last night, an'—— Land sakes, she 's gone! Think o' that now—my, my! Mrs Ravenslee 's wonderful quick an' light on her feet, Mr Geoffrey!'

Here Mrs Trapes raised the watch to her ear, and hearkened to its tick again, smiling at Ravenslee's broad back as he turned to reach his glass.

'Them night-dresses,' she sighed, 'as is all fluffs an' frills an' open-work, may be all right when you 're young; but for true comfort give me flannel, every time.'

Here Ravenslee, in the act of sipping his brandy-and-soda, choked. When at last he glanced round, Mrs Trapes was gone.

Then he drew a chair to the fire, and sitting down, took up his pipe and tried to light it, but Hermione's nervous white fingers had packed it too tightly for mortal suction; whereat he sighed, and yielding to the impossible, sat with it in his hand, lost in happy thought, and waiting for the swift, light footsteps he yearned to hear.

The clock in the hall without struck midnight; but long after the mellow chime had died away he sat there waiting. But the great house lay there very still about him, and no sound broke the pervading quiet. Wherefore at last he grew restless, frowned at the dying fire, and his strong fingers clenched themselves fiercely about the pipe they held.

All at once he started, rose to his feet, and turned towards the door, eager-eyed, as a hand knocked softly. Before he could speak it opened, and Mrs Trapes reappeared. She was clad in a long flannel dressing-gown, and as she stood in

the shadows by the door he could vaguely define that she still held the precious watch to her ear.

'It do tick that musical,' she said, 'an' I can't sleep this night till I've tried t' thank ye both for—for all your goodness to a lonely woman. Ah, Mr Geoffrey, I guess th' day as you came seekin' lodgin's at my little flat was a good day for Ann Angelina Trapes—— Why, my land, Mr Geoffrey—ain't Hermy here?'

'No,' answered Ravenslee, a little bitterly—'oh no, I'm quite alone—as usual, Mrs Trapes.'

'Why, now, that's queer!'

'How queer?'

'Because I've jest been into her bedroom, an' there's her things—except that night-dress; but she ain't!'

'Not there? She must be! Did you look in—her bed?'

'Lord, Mr Geoffrey, her bed ain't been tetched!'

'Then where in the world is she?'

'Well,' said Mrs Trapes, consulting her watch again, 'it is now exactly fifteen and three-quarter minutes after midnight, so I guess she's in bed somewhere. But this is a big house, an' there's lots o' bedrooms; so, if I was you, I'd go an' look—till I found her.'

Ravenslee was at the door so swiftly that Mrs Trapes started, and she saw that his eyes were very bright, and the hands he laid on her bony shoulders were quivering.

'Mrs Trapes,' said he, 'I will!'

Then he stooped, very suddenly, and kissed the thin, gray hair above her grim eyebrow, and so was gone.

'Find her?' mused Mrs Trapes, glancing after him up the wide stairs. 'Why, yes, I guess he will sure find her—where she should have been weeks ago. Lord, what a silly, beautiful, lovely thing love is!' and she stood a while smiling down into the fire, and her smile was very tender.

Then she sighed, switched off the lights, and went softly away.

THE END.

BRIDGES AND CANALS IN RUSSIA.

THROUGH Volhynia, the fair fields of which are sown with steel and watered with blood, flows the river Styr. It is approximately the same length as the Thames; but a river of two hundred and fifty miles is a mere brook according to Russian standards, and, like its neighbours, the Stokhod and the Strypa, it acquired fame only when its bridge-heads had been more than once the scene of savage fighting in the present war. It runs quietly past Lutsk, mirroring all that is left of that brickwork skeleton with the railway station, which, when the writer last saw it, suggested a charred cage. Yet in and out of that grimy ruin the trains were running daily, bringing up thousands of men and tons of ammunition for the firing-line, and taking back to well-earned rest in Petrograd or Moscow those who had bled for their country. Lutsk has been taken and retaken more than once; and even after the Austrian guns had been driven out of range the German airmen paid it daily visits with a special eye to its many hospitals. When the Russians entered it, they found it full of souvenirs, such as Hindenburg spoons and Kaiser crockery, left by the enemy in his hurried retreat.

A little farther west, out in what is referred to in the war news as 'the Lutsk salient,' the Styr runs past another ruined hamlet, Rozeische, where several bridges, some of temporary character to replace others destroyed in the fighting, span its quiet waters. From one of these bridges there is a sweeping view up and down stream, but the observer could not remain long undisturbed, for there were few hours of the day or night in which the footway did not tremble under the tramp of troops moving up to the lines or of prisoners coming in from the front, or under the heavy wheels of ammunition-carts going full and returning empty. The troops were in fine fettle, and sang as they swung over the bridge. The prisoners would have sung too, had they dared; for they knew when they were well off, and would not, even if unguarded, have faced about and gone the way they came. Now and again, perhaps, a small batch of surly German officers required closer watching, but the Austrian rank and file were glad to be out of the losing game, and these willing captives worked cheerfully in the neighbouring field hospitals without the need of any sentry to guard them.

The old bridge over the Styr was a comfortable spot at times, but not at all times. It was, in fact, a favourite but elusive target with the German airmen, who, having bombed it all through the summer without scoring a single hit, used always to vent their spleen on the easier mark afforded by a Red Cross camp on the left bank. Even here they achieved little beyond killing a few orderlies and transport horses, and scaring the wounded to the verge of hysteria.

Those summer and autumn days in Volhynia were hardly suited to the contemplative angler's normal day-dreams, but in happier times the Styr must be a paradise for those skilled in catching pike and carp. More than once, leaning over the parapet of the bridge, he watched an old pike dash out from the reeds and take toll of the small fry. Once, indeed, he tried a cast of flies by way of catching a live bait for the pike, but first a shower of shrapnel missed him by a matter of feet, and then, as he was doing

the quarter-mile in record time with an eye to the nearest dug-out, a bomb came whistling just behind him, and sent a gray mare twenty feet across a marsh.

The Styr is full of coarse fish. Unfortunately it was just then also full of Austrians, as the enemy, hoping no doubt to poison its waters, flung his dead in hundreds into the river during the last retreat. This humane design failed of its purpose. The Cossack palate is not fastidious. Whenever a body was actually sighted, rope and grapnel were requisitioned until the 'foreign matter' was removed. For the rest, what the eye did not see, the tongue did not taste, and our Russian friends continued to bathe merrily in the Styr all through the hot August days, and even drank of the waters of Marah without complaining of the vintage.

Quite recently the Imperial Russian Agricultural Society succeeded in obtaining permission from the Government to make a canal between Onega Bay, on the White Sea, and Povyenets, on Lake Onega. This will make a route by which British and American goods can be shipped into the Russian interior, and it will also open up a large new supply of fuel in the north. The great coalfields of Russia are much farther south, and the idea is to utilise the huge peat-deposits that lie between Lake Onega and the White Sea. The river Onega is not connected with the lake, and is only useful in summer, as ice closes it between November and May.

From Lake Onega the peat (and other things) could be sent on to Petrograd *viâ* the river Swir and Lake Ladoga, and also by means of the Marie Canal and the Alexander of Württemberg Canal to the great river system of which the Volga is the centre.

Efforts are also to be made to utilise the vast supplies of anthracite in Russia, a great quantity of which remains untouched for want of means of transport. Much of this lies in the Donetz district, and the completion of the Baltic and Black Sea Canal system which will connect the Western Dwina and the Dnieper will do more than anything to release these hidden supplies. One of the biggest coalfields in Russia also lies in the district through which this canal will pass. Much cannot have been done to this canal since the war started, as its way lies directly through the war zone, but when completed it will prove an inestimable boon to a very large district. A canal is also planned that will connect this one with Petrograd, and by this means there will be a curving route between Petrograd and Riga.

In the south there are also far-reaching plans; the Don and the Volga are to be connected by a canal, and the Don is to be made more navigable by the construction of nine sets of sluices. This will be a very expensive business; but the Don traverses a valuable district, and Rostov, at its mouth, is a growing port, and a distributing centre for a very large area. Rostov is 'on the make,' and has recently obtained permission to build for itself a university.

There are also many projects for Siberia, which is, of course, one of the countries of the future.

Finland has ambitions, and wishes to connect some of its lakes by means of canals, and the Government has been asked to investigate the matter and sanction their construction.

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

CHAPTER IV.

YEAR after year slipped by, as even in so slow-moving a place as Beestop they are bound to do, and with the years came the inevitable changes in the scattered little community. One by one the girls married and went away to their new homes elsewhere; the young men, for the most part, migrated to the small valley towns or large cities along the coast; while in the dreary cemetery more than one mound was added to that upon which John Pardon still faithfully strove to keep the coarse grass clipped and a sweet-brier rose growing. Thus, with the old people taking their long sleep, and the young ones wide awake in the throbbing life of distant cities, more than one of the homesteads, until recently astir and prosperous, was now deserted; and the houses, suffering from the quick decay inevitable in that climate of alternating long rains and longer droughts, looked out of half-shuttered windows behind lop-sided verandas, upon leaning fences and hanging gates. The modern world moved too fast for Beestop, and in the swift-rushing stream of that western life was rapidly becoming a mere backwater. Only at John Pardon's isolated ranch, and that of his friends, the Patricks, things remained much the same. Save for several goodly acres of grass and grain where formerly flourished only the wasteful 'bush,' and for the orchard, which, if its irregular outlines and scarcity of fruit bore silent witness to Pardon's lack of genius as a horticulturist, at least presented in the respective seasons lovely vistas of white and pink blossom or thick, cool green, the lonely rancher's surroundings afforded only a negative witness to the passing of time. In the big, dreary bungalow, the green blinds, now streaked with the faded yellow of many summers, still shut out the sun and imprisoned the close atmosphere of silent, unused rooms. Roses, lilacs, trumpet-creeper, years ago kept trim and disciplined by 'Sissy,' had now run up to un-

gainly heights, with much display of dead wood and sparse blossom; the 'new' porch, whose floor was to have creaked cheerily beneath the gentle rock-rock of Polly Patrick's chair, while long sprays of her favourite honeysuckle should breathe sweet caresses about her brown hair, had long since been boarded up as a shelter for farm utensils, sacks of seed, or 'loppings' from the orchard for winter fires.

If, the while John Pardon's strong arms shifted sacks or stacked wood in the soil-stained porch, there ever rose before his eyes the glowing vision of his early dreams, it was as one's eyes may rest for a moment on the accustomed portrait of a dear, dead face; for in Pardon's great heart hope had been slowly slain, and Mary Patrick, as the central figure in his dream-picture, had become a symbol rather than a possible reality in his life and home. As a rancher Pardon had been only moderately successful; the monotonous work and routine had always been irksome to him, and with the dwindling of his hopes of winning Mary, his ambitions also waned. Satisfied so long as he could keep free of debt, lay by enough for old age, and pay a modest life-insurance in the interest of 'Sissy' and her babies, he drifted into becoming the 'handy man' for all his neighbours—doing their ploughing, lending a hand with the harvest, hauling their wood—always cheery, generous, industrious in an easy-going fashion, but never faring far on the high-road to affluence.

As to the Patricks, with them everything had prospered. The 'uncle' about whom gossip had been eloquent, having died, left, if not the vast fortune with which 'patent paint' was supposed to have endowed him, at least more than enough to relieve his heirs of any anxiety for the future. The two men, now confirmed bachelors, were constantly improving the house—the luxury of a bathroom; a new, up-to-date dairy; finally, a small furnace that kept the whole house during the winter in that parched, subtropical temperature beloved of all their kind. So Mary's comfort-loving soul fairly basked in its congenial environment; while Mary herself grew rounder and rounder, her plump hands more plump, and her complexion, whose fair pallor when she was a girl had been one of her chief attractions, had at length, through ease of life, lack of fresh air, and perhaps too abundant diet of her own richly fried 'cakes' and pastries, grown thick and sallow. Thus from Mary Patrick, while still in the 'thirties,' had fled all semblance and spring of youth, and with it any serious thought of ever rewarding the long-tried faithfulness of her girlhood's lover by marrying him. There had, to be sure, been times in the earlier months following John Pardon's self-imposed compact, when some one would chance to remark that he was 'thin and poor-looking,' or when, his face in repose, she could not but notice weary lines about the kind mouth, and a smitten look in the gray eyes that used to be so merry, that Mary's conscience pricked her remorselessly, and, driven to seek excuse for her own selfish conduct, she even tried to persuade herself that if only John would become a 'good Catholic,' instead of being 'nothing at all,' she might make up her mind to marry him. So it was doubtless with a very real, though unacknowledged, sense of relief, as well as of surprise, that when, in a very tentative manner, she approached John Pardon on the subject of religion, she met with a layer of resistance wholly unsuspected. 'Why, Mary,' he had said, in the same slow, grave voice with which he had prefaced his first proposal—'why, Mary, it strikes me that we're both hittin' out for the same place, though maybe we foller a different trail; and I reckon that the Good Man don't much care *which* it be, so long as we *git thar*. But I couldn't lie to *Him*, no more'n I could to *you*, girl, by pretendin' to believe what I sure don't.'

Such an air of finality accompanied this short speech that Mary knew that in this direction lay no prospect of change, and by degrees she fostered a conviction that to marry John Pardon would be to sacrifice her religion. Nevertheless did she excuse her weak selfishness in not giving the man a final answer, thus freeing him to choose elsewhere, by storing up his own voluntary words that he could never care for any other woman, and by shutting her eyes to the clear light in which a man of such simple, straightforward views as his regarded his pledge to her. Yet it happened one evening that Mary, seeing John, at the close of a heavy day's toil in the harvest-fields, starting for home just as her brothers were coming in for a savoury meal ready for them, felt a sudden stab of compunction; the man looked so strangely wistful as, with an effort to make light of it, he called out, 'Well, I guess I'd better mosey along home and git my supper, and then make a batch of bread—ain't had no time lately, and crackers is dry eatin'.'

'See here, John,' she exclaimed impulsively, 'if you like, I'll make your bread twice a week with ours, and you can fetch it when you're passing. Bread-making ain't a man's work, anyway. So you bring some flour, and I'll do the mixing and baking.'

Such a wave of gratitude flooded the tanned face and gray eyes that Mary felt uncomfortably contrite, while John, seizing her hand, exclaimed, 'God bless you, Polly; if you ain't the best little woman in the world, I'll eat my hat!'

And Mary, hurriedly murmuring, as she had done once before on a memorable occasion, 'Nonsense, John; don't be foolish,' hid her self-accusing face by hastening back to the kitchen, calling back to him, 'Good-night. Don't forget to bring the flour.'

John had gone away in a tumult of emotion and renewed hope; but though Mary's crisp

brown loaves in a faultless towel were unfailingly ready when John called, and many a good thing was added to the parcel from time to time, John Pardon continued to sit down to his lonely board, until the vision of Mary sitting opposite him, and of Mary's step making echoes in his silent kitchen, had faded, together with other fair pictures of the past.

CHAPTER V.

THERE dawned a glorious day late in spring. John Pardon, returning from a several weeks' trip into the 'big timber' country, and fetching along a heavy load of 'shakes' (shingles) for repairing the Patricks' big barn, walked slowly up a long mountain road, beside his straining team, 'Kate' and 'Custer,' long ago passed out of the elastic class of 'colts,' but, as results of good care and abundant feed, still able and willing for road and load. Safe in the jockey-box were stowed some trifling gifts for Mary Patrick—a bark basket of cunning Indian workmanship, some cuttings from a dogwood-tree that she was anxious to try to grow, and a box of very indifferent candy from the one small store in the one small town through which he had passed on his way from the forests. Spring-time, the world over, is the choicest theme of poets, the gladdest time to man and maid; yet surely in no clime or country can the season's grace and beauty be surpassed as set forth among the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountains. There, among the infinite purple depths of cañon and river gorge; on the steep sides of ever-varying hills, where live-oak, pine, and birch cling with desperate roots among the outcrop of quartz and greenstone; through the narrow, sun-misted valleys where bands of cattle, lean from long 'rustling' during the rainy season, eagerly crop the rich growing grass, the Great Artist has surely revelled in the possibilities of His wonderful palette. Through the whole gamut of greens, from the palest sage of the bull-pine's slender needles to the 'invisible green' of twisted and ancient live-oak, the miracle of His paint-brush renews its annual marvels. Here, as far as eye can see, are masses of pinky waxen manzañita-bells, their delicate sweetness making the heavy, rather sickly perfume of the clustering white chaparral vulgar in comparison. There, where the greedy bush has not encroached and the sun dances hotly on steep, grassy slope, a myriad 'poppies' flash the rich gold of their cups like priestly censers, while among the shingle and sand of river 'flats,' lupines of every size and shade, from palest blue to deepest purple, flutter among their silvery leaves. Across a sky of blue so intense that proud Italy herself might feel envious, flash gorgeous blue-jays, or the great crested woodpecker on his annual trek to the mountains, there to waken the vast silences with persistent rat-tat-tat on bough and bole, where rough red bark offers a well-stored larder for his kind, as well as a foothold for the plastic, deftly fashioned feet of bounding gray squirrels.

On such a day of such a spring as this, even John Pardon, somewhat wearily plodding up the long hill, could not but feel and respond to the glad, far-reaching call of all outdoors; he whistled softly, and cheerily chirruped to his horses, as with long whip-lash he idly flicked at the leaves of overhanging boughs. Presently he placed a stone under one of the wagon-wheels to give his team the accustomed 'breather,' and his eye, following the flight of a pair of wood-doves startled from a sunny dust-bath, was arrested by the figure of a woman on the curve of the road winding above him. Dressed in riding-clothes, she seemed to be leisurely gathering flowers and pausing to gaze across the misty cañon; while her horse, a sturdily built dappled gray, browsed on tufts of coarse grass among the crevices of the high rocky bank. Pardon wrinkled up his eyes for a long stare; then, ejaculating in tones of surprise, 'Well, I 'm blest if there bain't a stranger!' kicked away the stone, and uttered such a sharp, 'Ged'ap, you!' to his team, that they rapidly scrambled up the next steep bit, which, bending back and forth like the letter S, brought them to the curve where John had discerned the unknown rider. Screened by a clump of live-oak, and more from curiosity than from necessity to halt again his steaming horses, he once more propped the wheel and stopped to look and listen. Clear and sweet upon the still air came the sound of a woman's voice singing:

'There's sunshine in the heart of me,
My blood sings in the breeze;
The mountains are a part of me,
I 'm fellow to the trees!'

Then the singing stopped, and he heard her say in accents so musical and clear-cut that it sounded to John Pardon like the language of another world, 'Whoa, "Fay"! Whatever do you think you hear? *I* don't hear or see *anything* except a lizard. You are naughty to-day; but wait a few moments more and we 'll go home.' Then again she took up her song, the words of which, wholly unfamiliar as they were to the listener, yet stirred strangely in his heart:

'My golden youth I 'm squandering,
Sun-libertine am I!
A-wandering—a-wandering
Until the day I die.'

As the words died away in a poignantly-sweet, half-melancholy minor key, John Pardon, curiosity and emotion getting the better of courtesy, stepped forward from his shelter, and a picture met his eyes, never to be effaced while memory should last. In the full golden glow of the westering sun—the high rugged bank, gay with flowers, as a background—stood the singer of that strange song. Somewhat above average height, slender as a reed, there was about her

an indescribable something that Pardon, ignorant though he was of the world beyond those western hills and plains, recognised at once as setting her apart from the women of his daily life. Her dress was of the simplest—brown riding-skirt, touched here and there into golden tones by the sunlight; white cotton blouse, with wide collar rolling back from her long, slender neck. Her face was hidden from Pardon's view by the broad brim of a straw hat, tied sharply down on one side by a blue scarf of some thin, shimmering stuff, whose long ends, tied in a loose bow, floated about her shoulder. One hand, covered by a fringed leather gauntlet, held long sprays of lupine; while the other, ungloved, and at that moment grasping the horn of a dainty Mexican saddle, was white and slender, with tiny, multi-coloured flashes as from a jewelled ring. The silver sheen of the horse's long flowing tail and mane added to the vision-like brilliancy of the little group. The girl was about to mount, and with firmly gathered lines strove to hold the horse while her foot sought the stirrup. But the animal, made restive by the scent and sound of the team behind it, and eager to start for home, danced and whirled about the road, which, being too level for a proper take-off, and the bank affording no foothold, baffled the rider's efforts to reach the stirrup. Hastily wrapping the reins round his whip-stock and bidding his horses stand, Pardon hurried to the stranger's assistance.

Lifting his old felt hat with all the grace and ease innate to men of the plains, he said, 'How d'ye do, marm? Your hoss seems kind o' uneasy like. Shall I hold it till you get up?'

'Oh, thank you so much; please do,' came the answer in the same sweet, clear accent that sounded so strangely 'foreign' to Pardon's ears; and as she quickly turned towards him he caught a full view of her face—a face such as he had supposed never existed outside of the Christmas Number of some of the papers sent from the Old Country to his friend and neighbour Michael O'Keefe.

With feelings akin to astonishment, his delighted eyes took in every feature—the pointed, elf-like chin; the sweet red bow of a tiny mouth, above which, like a leaf, curled the short upper lip; then the straight little nose; and a low forehead across which strayed a lock of hair, which to John Pardon's excited fancy looked like spun gold. Forehead and chin were white as milk, while the rich colour of a damask rose flooded her cheeks and set off the clear blue of her large eyes. Pardon, strangely moved by the girl's fair face, but too courteous to stare, instantly took the lines from her hand, covertly noting its white shapeliness and long, slim fingers, on one of which was an old ring with quaint device (incomprehensible to Pardon's uneducated eye) wrought in minute diamonds—not in the least such a ring as he was accustomed to see in jewellers' windows in Orangeville, but in some indefinable way curiously in keeping with the whole subtle personality of the wearer.

'Now, marm, I guess she'll stand,' quoth Pardon; and the girl, gripping anew the flowers and glove in her right hand and the saddle-horn with her left, tried once more to place her foot firmly in the stirrup for the necessary throw of the other across the saddle. But the gray mare continuing to fidget and twist, the girl, with her encumbered hand and long, divided skirt, could not succeed in mounting.

Pardon saw the colour pass in rosy waves over her face with the effort to pull herself up; then, with a short, merry laugh, she turned to him, and, without a shadow of coquetry, but with a pretty appeal in her voice that went straight to the man's heart, said, 'I'm afraid I can't manage it, after all! Would you be so good as to help me up?'

'Sure I will!' exclaimed Pardon heartily. 'You just take the lines, marm—now—there you are!' and tingling with the light pressure of her hand on his shoulder, he settled her foot in the stirrup, giving her skirt a shy but deft little pull into place about the tall, laced boot.

'Thank you so much. You're awfully kind;' then suddenly bending forward, she patted and hugged the smooth neck of her horse, saying to Pardon, half-apologetically, 'I don't know *why* "Fay" is behaving so badly to-day; generally she stands so well that I can mount quite easily if there is even a stone for me to stand on.'

As she spoke she was pulling on her glove and gathering the reins; while Pardon, longing to detain her, made pretence of holding the horse. 'You're some plucky to ride about the country alone, marm. None of *our* women would do it. Bain't you ever scared?'

She looked down at him, surprise and amusement dancing in her eyes, and a happy smile curving her small mouth. 'Dear me, no! There's nothing to be *afraid* of, *is* there? And, you see, I can trust "Fay" anywhere. She used to belong to a buccaroo, and is as sure-footed as a goat. The only thing that really excites her and makes her pull is the jingle of cow-bells.—Can't stand *those*, can you, "Fay"?' she questioned laughingly, and again bent forward to caress the mare, thus rousing in Pardon's breast a perfectly unwarrantable feeling of jealousy.

'Well, she's sure fallen into good hands, marm!' said he, running his eye over the fat sides of the animal, and playfully pinching the soft silver of her nose. 'But, lordy, what a bit! Ain't got even a leather chin-strap! You ought to have a curb for her, marm. I'd be glad to give you mine. It's a real nice one—silver, ye know—a real Mexican bit. Don't use it myself any more—*my* buccarooin' days is over,' he ended, with a smothered sigh and a sudden expression in his face, not unnoticed by the blue eyes regarding him from under the shadowing hat.

'That is very good of you,' she replied warmly;

'but I don't think I could make up my mind to use that sort of bit for "Fay;" and, you know, if she really *wanted* to run away with me, I hardly think I could hold her, no matter how she was bitted;' and half-unconsciously she glanced at her slender arms, showing white between the turned-back cuff of her short sleeve and her gauntlet-cape. 'But now I expect that "Fay" and I had better start for home—and thank you so much for leaving your own horses in order to come to my help. Good-bye!' and in another moment the glancing shoes and silvery tail of the gray mare vanished round the bend of the road, leaving to John Pardon a sudden sense of loss.

Slowly removing his old hat, and meditatively scratching the mass of crisp dark hair, he stood staring in the direction the horse and rider had disappeared. 'Whew-w-w!' at length came a prolonged low whistle from his lips. 'Well, I'll be *durned!*' quoth John Pardon.

(*Continued on page 680.*)

RELICS FROM THE SEA.

By W. A. Atkinson.

Full many a gem, of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear.

IT was, I believe, a distinguished historian and philosopher who, in order to preserve for future generations some memorials of our present civilisation, proposed that a vast chamber should be excavated in some convenient hillside, be filled with examples of all our industrial and artistic products, and then be hermetically sealed up for a century. At the end of that period the chamber should be opened, so that the people of that day might, by viewing the material products of their forefathers, obtain some satisfactory idea of the stage of civilisation which had been reached by their ancestors of a hundred years back. At the same time the newer generations might add examples of their products to the vast subterranean museum, which would then be sealed up again for the benefit of the peoples of succeeding centuries.

Of the feasibility or the profit of such an undertaking it is not necessary to say anything; but it may be remarked that in this matter, as in many others, the seemingly blind forces of nature are accomplishing in a partial and erratic way that which human intellect would like to do in a systematic way, but finds it too vast and difficult to attempt. Since man first went down to the sea in ships, he has had to pay toll for the voyages he has made and for the victories he has won. From the days when the first prehistoric man ventured on the sea in his rude dug-out or coracle, right on to our own days of *Titanics* and *Dreadnoughts*, a varying percentage of the craft, however rude and worthless, however perfect and valuable, has been claimed by the remorseless sea. The ships have gone down with all their contents—perhaps only a few badly made water-jars, or perhaps treasures of art, of science, and of industry which were priceless in their day, but all illustrative of the civilisation then attained—and there they lie at the bottom of the sea, being slowly destroyed or gradually silted up. The absolute destruction must be great; and yet it is almost certain that a proportion will be saved for the edification of future generations. If the flint, bone, and metal weapons of prehistoric man have been preserved for thousands of years, who shall say that the guns, the engines, and the anchors of the *Hawke* or the *Formidable* may not escape destruction, and be revealed to the wondering eyes of a generation to which the titanic struggle in which those ships were struck and sent to the bottom has become a matter of ancient history? If the flesh of the mammoth has been eaten by modern savants; if the lifelike sketches of this animal, made by the men who hunted it, have been preserved for us; if, as geologists demonstrate to us, the footprints of animals long since extinct are recorded on the rocks, and even the ripple-marks of the tide and the rain-marks on the shore are preserved, who dares aver that everything which now sinks to the bottom of the sea is a total loss? It cannot be. The process of preservation is seemingly a blind and haphazard one, and the chances are, apparently, all against it; but in the aggregate it is efficient, like those natural selections which keep in existence species of animals and plants which seem at first sight helpless against the forces opposed to them.

The largest proportion of those things which lie at the bottom of the sea can only be restored to human sight by great geological changes, which will lay bare the ocean depths, and at the same time remodel the continents. But, fortunately for us, it is not necessary to await those changes in every case. In one way and another, chance accidents disclose to us from time to time some of the treasures of the sea, and salvage-work is carried on more boldly and with greater success as new inventions are introduced.

A common occupation of the Kentish 'hovellers,' or boatmen who go to the aid of ships in distress, is to sweep the Downs for lost anchors. It sometimes happens that a ship anchored in the Downs is caught by a storm which rises so quickly that it becomes necessary to leave the anchor in the ground and let the chain-cable run out through the hawse-hole. Both anchor and cable lie at the bottom of the sea, and are lost

for the time. The hovellers, however, when fair weather returns, go out in their boats and sweep the ground. A small weighted rope, about two hundred fathoms long, is dragged along the bottom by boats at each end of the line. If the operation is successful, the rope catches the upturned fluke of the anchor, and the latter is dragged from its holding, and drawn on board with the cable attached to it. The work is often long and tedious, especially when the precise locality of the lost anchor is not known.

These salvage labours frequently result in some curious hauls. Two very old cannon have been obtained in this way at different times. The first of these was discovered in 1775. It was a sort of swivel gun, having a brass barrel and chamber about five feet in length, to the breech of which an iron handle two feet eight inches long was attached for the purpose of turning it on its pivot. An opening was cut into the top of the rear part of the gun, and the chamber, which was a separate piece, was fitted into the gun through this opening. The chamber was loaded, and inserted like a cartridge, when the cannon was to be fired; so that the weapon was an early form of breech-loader. From ornaments and inscriptions upon it, the cannon was thought to be a Portuguese weapon dating from about the year 1370.

The second cannon was drawn up from the Goodwin Sands in 1830, and was very similar in form to the one already described. It was a little smaller, however, and was made entirely of iron. The chamber of the first gun was wanting, but this gun retained its chamber, and also the wedge by which the chamber was secured. The cannon was placed in the museum at Dover. It is believed to be as old as the one previously discovered, if not a little older. How these two guns came to be off the coast of Kent is difficult to explain. The historian of their discovery thinks that they might have belonged to the Spanish Armada, but it is hardly possible that guns so old would have been retained on those vessels.

Guns and shot are very commonly recovered from the sea. In the Tower of London there is a gun and part of another which were obtained from the wreck of the *Mary Rose*, which was sunk off Spithead in 1545. Part of her pump and a couple of bowstaves were also recovered, and are in the same collection. These relics were, I believe, all brought up after the vessel had been about three hundred years under water. No less than twenty-three pieces of cannon were recovered from the wreck of the *Royal George*, which sank in 1782. A gun belonging to H.M.S. *Lutine*, wrecked off the coast of Holland on the 9th of October 1799, is now in the Guildhall Museum in London. *La Lutine* was originally a French vessel, and was captured by Admiral Duncan in 1797. Spasmodic attempts were made to recover her treasure, which consisted mainly of bullion and coins, from the year 1801 onwards, the Dutch Government claiming the wreck. Subsequently one-half of what remained was ceded to the British Lloyd's Association, and in recent years the work of salvage has been vigorously prosecuted. In the operations as far back as 1886 two cannon were obtained, along with three watches, about three thousand coins, and other relics. Stone shot, if not the cannon from which they were fired, have been taken out of the wreck of the *Florida* at Tobermory. This ship belonged to the Spanish Armada, and was blown up by Maclean of Duart in 1588. Explosives have had to be used in the recent salvage operations to break up the hard crust which has formed around the wreck. In or about the year 1840, as recorded in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, some twenty guns and a great number of granite balls were found buried in the sand and clay on the western side of Walney Island, in Furness, at a place only accessible at low water. The cannon were of the old chambered pattern, like those found off the coast of Kent, but the largest is said to have had its 'breech' in the centre, and to have been designed to fire both ways. Various conjectures were made as to the manner in which the guns came to lie in the sands of Walney. There is little doubt that they were relics from some wreck, but to what nationality the ship belonged was not ascertained. The guns were probably transferred to Woolwich.

Some years ago the writer assisted in the identification of a Roman amphora which had been brought up from the Goodwin Sands by a trawler. It measured two feet six inches in height, nearly two feet in diameter, and was calculated to hold sixteen gallons. It had a rounded base and two handles at the neck, each of which was nearly two inches thick. This vessel was brought up in the net of a Hull sailing-trawler, the *Vigilant*, in 1860, and it is now in the Hull Municipal Museum. A relic of this kind is intrinsically of little importance; but when we reflect upon its relatively fragile nature, and take into account the fact that it may have, and indeed almost certainly has, lain three times as long at the bottom of the sea as the oldest of the cannon, its preservation and recovery are matters of unusual interest. I have also the record of one or two Greek amphoræ which are thought to have been dredged from the sea; and Bellarmine jars and other vessels of later date are very commonly brought up in the nets of the trawlers. The museum at Hull possesses one or two of these Bellarmines, one dredged up near the Shetlands, and also a jar, which was probably made in the Levant, but was dredged from the Dogger Bank.

Personal effects of all kinds have been recovered from the sea, often in the oddest associations. Thus the relics from the *Royal George* include a coffee-mill, a silver spoon, a bottle of wine, an old pipe, the butt-end of a musket, and a silk

handkerchief. Many of these things were encrusted with oyster-shells. Some years ago a dredger working in Chesapeake Bay brought up a set of false teeth, to the top of which an oyster was firmly attached. The teeth and the oyster were exhibited, and, so the story goes, no less than three persons put in a claim for the teeth on the plea that they had lost them in Chesapeake Bay. The portrait of Captain Edward E. Williams, the friend of Shelley, who was drowned with the poet in the Gulf of Spezzia in 1822, is one of the frail things recovered from the sea. The portrait was drawn by Williams himself, and it appears to have been little the worse for its immersion in the sea. In sharp contrast with these small and fragile relics is the post-chaise which was brought up from the Goodwins. Its wheels were still attached to their axles, and came up with the vehicle. A stranger haul even than this was that of a cable-repairing steamer, which drew up from the bed of the North Sea a small sailing-vessel along with the damaged cable.

A few years ago some sponge-fishers discovered on the coast of Africa the wreck of an ancient vessel. It lay in nineteen fathoms of water, about three miles north-east of the port of Mahdia. Divers were brought to the spot, and they found that the vessel was a Greek galley laden with treasures of art dating from the earliest years of the Christian era. The treasures consisted chiefly of bronze and marble statues, statuettes, and medallions, a great number of which were subsequently recovered. The works of marble were in many instances injured by the sea-water, though some, which had been deeply buried in the mud, were fairly well preserved. The bronzes, on the other hand, were little the worse for their long immersion. In addition to the actual works of art there were many examples of ordinary furniture and utensils, including beds, chairs, kettles, bowls, and a terra-cotta lamp, which still retained its wick.

The bronze horse on the Pont Neuf at Paris was cast in Tuscany by the order of Marie de Medici, widow of Henry IV., and daughter of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. It was brought to Paris by sea, and the vessel being shipwrecked off the coast of Normandy, the statue fell into the sea, and lay there for a year. It was then recovered, and carried to Paris, where it has since remained. The original statue of Henry IV. was destroyed during the Revolution, but another was erected in its place in 1818.

The east window of the church in Quernmore Park in Lancashire has a curious history. The glass was made in England for a church at Cannes, and was forwarded by sea. The vessel in which it was placed was wrecked near Marseilles, and, as the window was given up as lost, a new one was ordered in England. A Greek merchant bought the wreck and her cargo, and succeeded in recovering the window, which was sold by auction with the remainder of the salvage. The window was purchased by the owner of Quernmore Park, and set up in the church there.

Some of the old railings removed from the front of St Paul's Cathedral about forty years ago were sent to America in the steamship *Delta*. The vessel was wrecked, but the railings were recovered. They were placed round the tomb of John George Howard and his wife in the High Park, Toronto, and the following inscription was recorded on a brass plate:

St Paul's Cathedral for 160 years I did inclose.
O stranger, look with reverence.
Man! man! unstable man!
It was thou who caused the severance.

Captain Washington in his lecture on 'Naval Architecture,' delivered at the time of the Great Exhibition in 1851, gives a list of a series of failures in the attempt to sheathe our ships with lead; and he hints that something might have been learned from a Roman galley of the time of Trajan, which had been recovered from the bottom of the Lake of Riccia, and was found to have been sheathed with lead fastened on with copper nails. How many lessons in naval architecture and gunnery are now being laid down in the ooze at the bottom of the narrow seas for the enlightenment of future generations? Let us hope that those generations may be able to look behind the grim ferocity of it all, and see the underlying arts of peace; for it would be a harsh injustice to us to be judged through all the ages by such memorials only as these.

THE SONG OF MORNING.

I WOKE from sleep at dawning yestermorn,
When waves of glory filled the summer sky,
And birds were singing from the hedge of thorn
Beside a stream of water running by.

Up rose the sun, and upward swelled the song,
It seemed as if all joyous things of earth
With dew-besprinkled flowers, and grasses long,
Gave to the morn the first-fruits of their birth.

The friendly sparrows twittered in the eaves,
And from afar I heard a thrilling note
Uprising from the beech-grove decked with leaves,
And knew the music of that golden throat.

It was the merle, companion of the hours
When winter tore the sweetness from the land,
Who trembling came, fear-driven by the showers,
And took the bounty from an outstretched hand.

Now hope triumphant moves the soul elate,
And love leads forth the song of thankful praise,
Till, wearied singing to his brooding mate,
The songster in the brook his thirst allays.

The daisies ope their petals to the sun,
While Nature breathes her message on the air,
The message of a perfect day begun,
And all the myriad joys awaiting there.

Oh, wearied ones, who stand with death apart,
Here lies the balm of healing in the strife.
Lay down the grief that chills the stricken heart,
And hear the beat of God's abundant life.

GILBERT RAE.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

WITHOUT SANCTION OF ADMIRALTY.

By 'ÆSCULAPIUS.'

I.

'SEVEN o'clock, sir,' said the marine servant, opening up the dead-light. The light, streaming in through the port-hole, converted the particular steel box known as Staff-Surgeon O'Brien's cabin into the semblance of a living-apartment.

'What a glorious morning!' exclaimed O'Brien, thrusting his head out into the brilliant sunshine. 'I shall certainly go fishing to-day,' he said, contemplating with pleasure the calm sparkle of the sea. In between ships at their moorings, he also caught glimpses of the peaty shore suffused with a radiance unusual in that locality. His meditations on the forthcoming joys of angling were rudely interrupted, however, by a gush of blackish water which struck him on the nape of the neck. The *Alcibiades* had coaled on returning to harbour the night before, and her deck-hands, with the prospect of a 'make-and-mend' afternoon before them, were lustily removing all traces of it from the ship's side.

'Confound the swabs!' the staff-surgeon muttered savagely, withdrawing hastily, and jumping off his bunk. 'However, they say coal-dust is good for the scalp,' he consoled himself, as his towel reflected the seamen's efforts. Slipping on a bath-robe, he gathered his shaving-things together, and went up the ladder to the main-deck.

II.

Dense clouds of steam-vapour poured out through the door of the bathroom, which was situated near the wardroom, on the port side.

'Good-morning, sir,' several shadowy figures greeted him on entering. The gorgeousness of their kimonos, picked up anywhere from China to Peru, stood out like rays of the sun trying to penetrate a mist.

'I see the stalls are all taken, as usual,' growled O'Brien, peering into the three bath-cubicles in turn. Lieutenant Fitz-Boodle occupied one, lying in the hot water in an attitude of relaxed beatitude. The navigator, Lieutenant-Commander Barnwell, was crooning away in another.

'Hello, doc.!' said the assistant-paymaster, turning off the spigot in the third. 'I'll be out of it in a minute.'

'I sincerely trust so,' the staff-surgeon replied. 'Fitz-Boodle is hopeless; and as for the pilot, one has to allow him fifteen minutes to practise his songs.'

'At any rate, some organised noise is necessary to drown your infernal moans,' Barnwell retorted.

Rubbing the moisture off the looking-glass, O'Brien began shaving. A couple of officers were utilising the space near him to take an old-fashioned 'tub,' and, of course, they splashed in all directions.

'Bring me my sea-boats, please,' O'Brien asked his servant, who happened to look in with a bath-towel.

This remark apparently had the effect of precipitating open hostilities between the A.P. and Fitz-Boodle. These were led up to in a more or less furtive manner, for the A.P. kept throwing cold water on Fitz-Boodle at intervals across the intervening compartment. Fitz-Boodle's serenity was much disturbed, and the navigator's suffered also when some of the salt water, in its flight, dropped into his mouth while he was in the throes of a treble note. Peace, however, might have been preserved if, at the juncture mentioned, the A.P. had not committed the overt act of directing a moderate-sized spray from the cold douche attachment towards Fitz-Boodle's cubicule. Fitz-Boodle jumped out of his bath in a rage, seized the fire-hose coiled up outside, and, turning on the cock, directed it anywhere. The full force of the stream struck the deck-bathers, who, with a howl, evacuated their shallow metal tubs, and, emptying the soap-suds contents on the deck, used them as shields. Both of these improvised defences, however, were sent flying by the A.P., whose colossal limbs and loose joints were the terror of everybody when he ran amuck. On this occasion he crashed out in order to engage Fitz-Boodle for possession of the hose. The battle was not quite decided, but the cock was turned off, when a signalman came in with the announcement, 'Captain's orders, gentlemen; everybody to note carefully. "Flag to *Alcibiades*. Your daily consumption of fresh water is too high. This must be reduced, even at the risk of your drinking less."'

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Everybody roared at the innuendo, for the *Alcibiades* was a 'wet' ship in other directions. In the way of the navy, however, when a point of discipline is involved, the skylarking ceased, and the staff-surgeon was enabled to complete his shaving, half-drenched as he was. By this time there was no hot water left in the pipes, and he was forced to content himself with sea-water, fresh from tanks which had just been filled. The timidity with which he stepped in was only equalled by the suddenness with which he jumped out. 'It's as cold as a loch in Iceland,' he moaned.

'Never mind, doc.,' the naval instructor, who always took a cold bath himself, assured him; 'it'll tone up your enervated Celtic constitution.'

'My only fear is that the use of salt water leads to that shrivelled-up appearance of which your body is such a notable example,' replied O'Brien, drying himself vigorously.

III.

Returning to his cabin, O'Brien found his under-garments arranged on one chair, and his uniform folded on the other. 'These servants seem to think the essence and quintessence of their art is simply to fold; generally their arms, too, so far as any work is concerned,' he muttered when he came to don his uniform and found it necessary to apply the clothes-brush diligently. He was fastening the strap of his wrist-watch, when there was a knock on his jalousie. 'Come in,' he intimated.

The door was pulled aside, and a messenger appeared. 'Signal, sir,' he said.

The staff-surgeon read the preamble: 'Duties of H.M.S. *Alcibiades*—medical guard and duty steamboat.'

'Confound it!' he muttered under his breath, as he initialled the paper, and realised that his hopes of going fishing on this, one of the few fine days in the year so far as that station was concerned, had been defeated.

IV.

'Porridge, haddock, bacon and eggs, sir,' the corporal of the servants said monotonously, after he had presented the staff-surgeon with that typewritten gist—waggish officers call it jest—of the wireless press news known as the Poldhu.

'Scotch fodder I do not eat,' O'Brien rejoined. 'As for your fish, from the leeward point of view, it's too pathetic for words. Yes, I'll have bacon and eggs. Why we don't send trawlers out and get a supply of fresh fish is more than I can tell,' he grumbled, buttering a roll.

'Coming fishing with me to-day, doc.?' the first-lieutenant asked. That jovial officer had already observed the white St George's cross on a blue background, flying from the topsail-yard halyard, and he knew quite well this was the medical guard flag. He was also aware of what was troubling the staff-surgeon. The latter was compelled to stand by till eight o'clock the following morning, in order to respond to calls for medical assistance coming from craft which had no surgeon on board.

'You go to ——!' O'Brien retorted fiercely.

The chief yeoman of signals came up to him, cap in hand. 'The flag-ship has just signalled as follows: "Send medical officer to see a case in the *Roister Doister*." When shall I say you'll leave, sir?'

'When I've seen my own sick, and that'll be about 9.30,' the staff-surgeon said sternly, as he rolled up his napkin.

V.

'You'll take the staff-surgeon to the *Roister Doister*, and wait for his instructions,' the officer of the watch told the coxswain of the picket-boat.

'Where is she lying, sir?' the coxswain inquired.

'How the mischief am I to know?' retorted Lieutenant Fitz-Boodle, who was keeping the forenoon watch. 'Use your brains as well as your telescope, and you'll probably find her at the lower end of the Sound.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' said the coxswain, signalling the tiny engine-room to go ahead. When the propeller began to revolve, he first of all put his helm over to starboard, in order to clear the stern of the *Alcibiades*, and then described a sort of half-circle. The stem of the picket-boat, rising and falling to the motion of the swell, was pointed toward Buzzard Sound.

Wind and tide are continually swinging war-ships at anchor; it may be the stern, or a turret, or foretop is seen from a different angle, but it gives the frequent observer an ever-changing conception of the personality of any one ship. The fleet, too, was remarkably talkative on this particular morning. Signalmen stood on some point of vantage, generally somewhere near the bridge, with a signal-flag in each hand, which they manipulated dexterously, or perhaps instead the stolid-looking arms of the semaphores. The yard-arms, also, of many of the ships were what shore-going people would call gay with bunting, but to the practised eye of the seaman every flag meant something. Curious lookouts, with eye glued to telescope, would detect the call-sign of their ship being made in the distance. They proceeded to translate the signal which immediately followed, calling out aloud the meaning of it to another signalman who waited, pad and pencil in hand. Any one of those signals might mean anything, from one officer asking another, 'Will you dine with me to-night?' to 'Prepare to leave harbour at once.' Of course, such *enclaire* or non-code signals may only be made in an isolated base, free from all possibility of enemy spies.

Standing upright in the stern-sheets, with his back to the picket-boat's cabin, O'Brien surveyed

all these passing sights with the familiarity of a Londoner walking down Piccadilly. The *Alcibiades* was at present on intimate terms with the aristocracy of this great naval base. When she was not running errands for these frowning battleships, she was billeted with them, so to speak, in Belgravia. The staff-surgeon's picket-boat, too, was just one of hundreds of craft which were plying the roads of the sea at the beck and call of the Dreadnoughts; and if one took the trouble to go up in a seaplane, one could spot definite arteries of traffic, radiating in their direction, along which steamed anything from a commissariat-ship down to the little duty steamboat which carries despatches round the fleet.

O'Brien came this way quite frequently, conveying cases to the hospital-ships. These lay in a bay, separated by a peninsular sort of point from the flotsam and jetsam of ships they were now approaching, which may be regarded as the camp-followers of a mighty fleet.

VI.

The picket-boat came alongside H.M.S. *Prometheus*, which was specially designed for making delicate repairs to submarines not involving docking. The O 2 was tied up to one side, while on the other was the *Roister Doister*, a torpedo-destroyer which had come alongside to have something done to her dynamo.

The staff-surgeon was going up the gangway of the *Prometheus*, when the coxswain of the picket-boat called out to him. 'I've got to shove off, sir,' he said apologetically, looking through his telescope in the direction of the *Alcibiades*; 'the Blue Peter has been hoisted.' This meant that the picket-boat must return forthwith to the *Alcibiades*.

'It's the same old story when Fitz-Boodle's on watch,' O'Brien complained under his breath; 'he's always recalling picket-boats. Very well,' he said aloud to the coxswain; 'I'll make a signal when I want you.'

'Very good, sir,' the coxswain said, and in a few minutes he was off.

'Good-morning, sir,' said the warrant-officer of the watch.

'Hello, Mawworm!' O'Brien responded; 'how's the leg?'

Mawworm changed ships frequently, and in each one he made a point of consulting the surgeon regarding his leg. This, he proudly declared on such occasions, was hit by a Mandarin bullet while he took part in the rush for idols and other curios during the allied occupation of Pekin.

'It gives me a twinge now and then,' answered Mawworm.

'Serves you right, too,' said the staff-surgeon, crossing the deck of the *Prometheus;* 'you ought to have left looting to the Germans.'

'Boys will be boys, sir,' the warrant-officer said jauntily, a reminiscent look coming over his weather-beaten face; 'and who'll say our boys at the front to-day have not earned a good looting expedition on enemy territory?'

'Perhaps you are right,' O'Brien admitted thoughtfully, balancing himself on a couple of planks which connected the *Prometheus* with the destroyer.

VII.

The quartermaster of the *Roister Doister* saluted him. 'I'll tell the captain you're here, sir; the sick officer's in the first-lieutenant's cabin.'

The captain came on deck in a few minutes. He was a young commander, of slight build, brown hair, and the inevitable blue eyes of the sea. 'Sorry to bring you all the way down here, O'Brien, but the surgeon of the *Prometheus* is on leave. You'll be pleased to hear, however, the patient's one of your own cloth, so it'll be a case of Greek meeting Greek.'

'Then he'll be amenable to common-sense medical advice, which is more than can be said of the ordinary N.O.,' retorted O'Brien, following the commander to a hatch abaft the funnels. They let themselves down the ladder on to the deck of the captain's flat, and the commander waved O'Brien into the first-lieutenant's cabin. 'Here's your patient, doc.,' he said; 'he's our surgeon-probationer, Joughins by name. I'll leave you with him, O'Brien. Come and have a "spot" before you leave;' and the captain reascended the ladder.

The young officer lay in his bunk, with his face, which was turned toward the door, slightly flushed, and a certain intense look in his eyes.

'You've got a touch of "flue," my lad,' the staff-surgeon said, after he had examined him; 'but you'll be all right in a few days. When are you sailing?'

'Not till next week, sir; but I can't sail in her,' the surgeon-probationer said in a voice trembling with emotion.

'Why not?' inquired O'Brien.

Joughins covered his face with his handkerchief, and sobbed so that his whole body shook as if he had the ague. 'It's no use, sir,' he finally said. 'I'm a coward. I can't stick the dark nights when we steam along in a ghostly sort of way; and if we're in company, our friends look equally as spooky. The other officers are usually on watch, and I am left to brood and listen to the infernal swish of the sea. One feels it all the more being a non-combatant, where one simply waits for something to happen. That's not all, sir,' the surgeon-probationer said in an awed whisper.

'What else is there?' asked O'Brien.

'Some time ago our Lieutenant Oswald was lost at sea. He had a watch which chimed the hours, and late at night I wake up with the sound of it ringing in my ears, and I seem to

see Oswald, who was hard to rouse, standing over me in a menacing attitude.'

'Was this weird ticker lost with him?'

'No, sir. He had left it lying on his bunk before going on deck to meet his death; otherwise the King of Siam would have been displeased.'

'What the blazes has the King of Siam got to do with it?'

'The King of Siam,' Joughins replied solemnly, 'gave the watch to Oswald when that unfortunate officer was on the China station. Strange to say, he stipulated that if Oswald died before him, it was to be returned to His Royal Highness; and the Admiralty complied with his wishes in this respect.'

'Joughins,' said the staff-surgeon, rising abruptly, 'you're suffering from war-neurasthenia. You'll have to go to hospital for a bit; and after a drop of leave, the best thing for you to do will be to complete your medical course. Meanwhile pull yourself together, and I'll go along with you shortly.'

'Thanks very much, sir,' Joughins replied; 'I feel better already.'

O'Brien went up the ladder, and down the wardroom hatch.

VIII.

The captain was sawing a few inches off the hind-legs of an arm-chair, so as to give it a more comfortable sitting angle, and did not notice the staff-surgeon till the latter was alongside him. 'Well!' he asked jerkily, ordering a couple of cocktails, 'what's wrong with the boy? We don't want to lose him, even if he's a bit mouldy at times.'

'I'm afraid he's a hospital case,' O'Brien replied. 'If you don't mind, I'll send a signal for a boat.'

'Certainly not,' said the captain, walking to the foot of the ladder. 'Quartermaster,' he called out.

'Yes, sir.'

'Bring me a signal-pad.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' said the quartermaster, coming down a moment later with the required form.

The staff-surgeon wrote out the necessary signal: 'Duty Medical Officer to Hospital Ship *Bengal*. H.M.S. *Roister Doister* has one officer for hospital. Please send boat.'

'Make this signal, quartermaster. I suppose you can semaphore it?' the captain asked.

'Not direct, sir; I'll make it to the signal station on the point, and they'll pass it on.'

'I don't care how it is done; but get it off at once.'

The quartermaster signified his appreciation of this fact by a hasty salute. He had no sooner withdrawn than another pair of legs began descending the ladder, and Mawworm, displaying great agility for one whose leg was the object of such tender solicitude on his part, appeared, cap in hand, and addressed the captain. 'The engineer-captain of the *Prometheus* sends his compliments, and will you come over and see him, sir?'

'Thank you, Mawworm.—I'll have to leave you now, O'Brien. Sorry I can't ask you to lunch; but we've nothing on board. I'm cadging these days off the *Prometheus*.'

'That's all right,' O'Brien answered; 'I'm off myself to have a yarn with Rushbrook of O 2.'

'I may see you later, then,' said the captain, following O'Brien up the ladder.

The staff-surgeon hailed one of the submarine's crew, who was cleaning the top of the periscope. 'Is Commander Rushbrook on board?'

'No, sir,' the blue-jacket replied; 'you'll find him in the wardroom of the *Prometheus*.'

(*Continued on page 697.*)

ISRAELITES OF THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMÁ.

THE SAN BLAS TRIBE ON THE PANAMÁ COAST.

By Paul Tyner.

'IN that old world men call the new,' and in the immediate neighbourhood of the great water-way between the oceans which realises the dream of centuries in the greatest of modern engineering achievements, may be found a people set apart by a record and characteristics that give them rare ethnic and historical interest and importance. As yet these people are virtually unknown to the modern world, occupying no place on our political maps or in our histories. Yet it is more than possible that intelligent study will show them to have a value for our present mankind in the making, and one not less to be regarded in its way than the value to commercial progress of the interoceanic canal. They occupy a territory nearly as large as Belgium, in close proximity to what for more than four hundred years has been one of the world's great trade-routes. During all this time, and probably for more than a thousand years before, they have maintained their tribal and territorial integrity.

These people are the San Blas tribe of Indians. They inhabit a section of the eastern end of the Isthmus of Panamá, which is officially included in the province of Colon on the map of the Republic of Panamá, as before November 1903 it was ostensibly a part of the Republic of Colombia, of the Confederation of New Granada, of the

Spanish Viceroyalty of Panamá, of the Viceroyalty of Peru. But, as a matter of fact, neither in this present year of grace nor at any previous time, so far as can be learned, have any of these 'governments' been acknowledged or submitted to by the San Blasians. Within their borders neither the Conquistadores nor their successors have ever exercised sway; across their frontiers the writs of Spanish monarchy or of Hispano-American republic have never run. Numbering only twenty-five thousand in all, they have about five thousand men of fighting age, all of whom incidentally are 'Pacifists,' who believe in 'preparedness,' and who are well armed and as alert as they are valorous. The San Blasians, therefore, seem likely to continue to preserve the independence which they have so long defended and maintained against apparently overwhelming odds, for during the greater part of these four centuries they have seldom been at peace with the Spanish invaders. It is only within the past generation that, having taught the proud Castilians the folly and uselessness of interfering with them, the San Blasians have enjoyed peace and tranquillity.

This remarkable achievement in itself suggests an inquiry. No one questions the marvellous courage and daring of the early Spanish adventurers, their military skill, and the immense superiority they enjoyed in the use of firearms against peoples still in the spear and bow-and-arrow stage. Thanks to a strange commingling of religious fervour and fanaticism with the most utter ruthlessness and rapacity, the Spaniards swept everything before them, and reduced all the tribes and peoples surrounding these San Blasians to the most degrading servitude. The San Blasians alone held their own in fight after fight, day after day and year after year, through four hundred years. What enabled them to do this?

And the answer, I humbly venture to suggest, must be found in the fact that they have lived in accordance with a primal biological law of man's being which, alas! most of us civilisees have flagrantly, if ignorantly, disobeyed. The San Blasians are the one tribe of Indians left in all the Americas who have preserved their ethnic purity of blood, and who have never been conquered. The two things go together. I am not unmindful of the brave and long resistance made to corruption of blood and subjugation by the Mayas of Yucatan and the Mosquitoes of the Nicaraguan coast, as well as by the Navajos and Yaquis of the south-western territory of the United States and the north-western corner of Mexico. But these tribes have been all but extinguished. Clearly the persistence of the San Blasians goes to a deeper cause than the fighting instinct of self-preservation; to a cause deeper even than the primal regard for sexual purity found in primitive peoples everywhere. In the San Blasians there is evidence that this instinct is well buttressed by centuries of religious training and practice—the religious training and practice, as I shall offer reasons for believing, of the people of ancient Israel.

As has been noted, these Indians inhabit a region bordering on the Gulf of San Blas (named after the tribe), and extending east along the coast for some forty miles from the city of Colon, in the province of the same name occupying the north-eastern end of the Isthmus of Panamá. No European settlement has ever been made in their territory. In 1502, when Columbus, on his last voyage, attempted to found not far from the present city of Colon (named in his honour) what would have been the first European settlement on the American mainland, having made all preparations to return to Spain, leaving his brother Bartholomew in charge, these Indians descended on them with such force and fury that the Spaniards were compelled to flee to the ships, and returned with Columbus.

The San Blas coast is famous for producing the finest coco-nuts that come to European and American markets. There is also a considerable production of cacao (the basis of our cocoa and chocolate), vanilla beans, sarsaparilla, mahogany, and a small amount of wild rubber. In all these products the San Blasians trade freely with those Europeans and Americans visiting the islands in the Gulf and settlements along the shore in sailing-vessels, and bringing to them cottons and cutlery, cheap jewellery, and glassware. The San Blasians also frequently carry their own products and wares, in the shape of Panamá hats, baskets, brightly coloured woven shawls, and pottery, by water in cayucas or dug-outs, or overland by mule-back, into Cartagena, Colon, and other towns on the isthmus, occasionally making their way as far as Panamá, and even to Bogotá. They are not adventurous traders, although canny at bargaining, and keenly alive to opportunities for increasing their hoards of silver.

For natives of the tropics, they are remarkably industrious, sober, and thrifty in their habits. They show great amiability and peacefulness in their relations among themselves and with their neighbours—so long as those neighbours refrain from aggression. But in their jealousy for the preservation of their racial purity they are clannish to the last degree. No white man is allowed to remain in a San Blas settlement after dark, and it is said that no white man has ever seen a San Blas woman except through a marine-glass from his vessel offshore. The women are kept as invisible and as closely guarded, when white men are ashore, as are the denizens of Oriental seraglios. All this with no disrespect for the white men, but with unusual respect for their own women, and for untainted motherhood.

The San Blasians speak a Spanish patois, usually interlarded with words and phrases from

the tongue of the Cholus, the predominating native race on the Isthmus so far as numbers are concerned.

Except for a vague tradition among the old chiefs, it is difficult to ascertain much concerning the language originally used by the San Blasians. It was certainly not Cholu, although that dialect may be a corruption of a more ancient speech, that of the Chibchas of Cundinamarca, or the Chichas of Argentina. And the San Blasians are a nobler type physically, mentally, and morally than the Cholus—cause and consequence of their refusal to intermarry with the Spaniards, or the negroes, or indeed with any other of the tribes of the land, so preserving the purity of their blood with an invincible persistency ever since the Spanish 'conquest.' It is the proud boast of these people that no San Blas man has ever begotten, and no San Blas woman has ever borne, a mongrel.

This trait is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that all the other peoples of Central America and of the West Indies cherish no such sentiment. On the Isthmus of Panamá especially, crossing of the races has been so varied and constant that it is generally affirmed that, outside of San Blas, no native of Panamá is of pure blood. Among other people than the San Blasians the colour-line is not drawn either on the country-side or in the social and political life of the cities.

When I first visited the San Blas coast in 1888, I had the good fortune to have for travelling companion the late Dr Ferdinand C. Valentine, an eminent New York surgeon and physician whose forebears were of an old rabbinical family of Jews in Holland, and who was himself a proficient Hebrew scholar. Years before, he had become deeply interested in such study of the ancient peoples of Central America as his own researches at Copán in Honduras, and some association with the archæological work of M. Desiré Charnay in Mexico, and of M. and Mme. le Plongeon in Yucatan, had been able to afford. We were the guests in Cartagena of a brother of Dr Valentine, who was established in that city in charge of the branch of a large New York house engaged in the Central and South American trade. It was in a small sloop belonging to the Valentines that we made the trip from Cartagena along the coast. While his younger brother was busy trading with the natives in San Blas, the chief town, Dr Valentine, as was his wont, strolled about the place in company with the *padre*, visiting the sick and prescribing their treatment. He became interested in the case of a bright young fellow of eighteen suffering from what proved to be tuberculosis of the bone, seriously affecting the left leg. The grandfather of the lad, a very old man, was particularly distressed by his grandson's condition, and while dozing in the midday siesta would mutter and mumble strangely. Fancying that words used in this half-conscious talk bore a striking resemblance to Hebrew, Dr Valentine ventured to try on him certain passages from the original text of the Thorah that for the Israelites have had vital significance through the ages. To his surprise, the old man seemed to understand perfectly and displayed remarkable warmth of feeling, insisting on embracing my friend and even kissing his hands. Dr Valentine's professional interest had been keenly roused by the case of the lad, and he expressed willingness to undertake his treatment, which, he informed the family, might necessitate taking the boy to New York. Consent to this was given, and the young man, whose name was Juan Battista, returned with us to Cartagena, and shortly after to New York. There his case was made the subject of clinical study by physicians, presenting, as it did, certain rare pathological features. After amputation, he recovered his health and spirits. Taken into his benefactor's family and treated with great kindness, he quickly developed a very beautiful and faithful affection for all the members of the household, and especially for the doctor. Spanish was spoken in the family, but, to enhance his usefulness, this young San Blasian made the most of his opportunities to learn English. This suggested to Dr Valentine an experiment. He interested his protégé in the study of Hebrew, taking him to services at the synagogue. I cannot but consider it significant that the boy became much more proficient in Hebrew than in English, a fact for which his natural brightness and alertness would not sufficiently account, as his opportunities for becoming familiar with our speech were certainly the greater.

In talking with this young tribesman, I was much struck by the native and naïve innocence of his mind. He was as clean and sweet as a little child in thought and habit. The jealous screening of the women of his tribe, he told me, was not observed when there were no white men about. It was not that of the Oriental zenana. With their own men it was quite unnecessary. No San Blas man would think of seducing a woman (any woman), any more than he would cut his own throat. Every woman was treated with scrupulous respect. From an early age, indeed from the time of the approach of puberty, both boys and girls were taught to keep their minds and bodies sacredly pure for their future mates. He was looking forward wistfully to marriage with the girl to whom he was betrothed, and with whom his union had been postponed on account of the disease from which he was now happily freed; although he was not certain that the union would be permitted, as it was the custom of the tribe not to permit the mating of diseased, defective, or deformed persons. It would depend upon the decision of the elders; and whatever that decision, he would accept it cheerfully as *best for the tribe*. It happened

but rarely that any reason for forbidding marriage occurred, the people enjoying most unusual immunity from disease in a land where leprosy and tuberculosis were very common.

As to the origin of the people, all he could tell me was that they had always regarded themselves as different from, and in a way superior to, all other peoples, and that they had long ago come from a distant land beyond the seas. With smiling conciliation, he suggested that in that distant land the Jews, and even the British and the Americans, who seemed to him 'very like the Jews,' were kinsfolk of the San Blas tribe. 'But the Spaniards and the French? Huh!' His gesture and tone were expressive as to his conviction that the Latins were indeed 'heathen tribes without the pale.' Then he grew solemnly contemplative, his customary boyish brightness clouding over as he declared, 'Very bad, very wicked, very cruel people—those old Spaniards!'

Yet to this fervid detestation of the Spaniards, as I learned on another occasion, there were two notable exceptions. The San Blas people held in loving and reverent memory Vasco Nuñez de Balboa and the good Bishop Las Casas, the discoverer of the Pacific, and the apostle and emancipator of the Indians. The story treasured among the San Blas folk, as I gleaned it from Juan Battista, is that a remarkably close and firm friendship was formed between Balboa and the San Blas chief of his time. The Spaniard had loyally helped his native ally in driving back and practically exterminating other tribes that had been at war with them for years, and it was this chief who had guided Balboa and his men through the Isthmian jungle to the spot where he at last stood, 'Silent, upon a peak in Darien,' and gazed with a wild surmise on the expanse of the broad Pacific. Balboa fell in love with the favourite daughter of this chief, and they plighted their troth, the Spaniard, who probably had Jewish blood in him, being adopted into the tribe. Pedro Arias Davila, the Governor at San Sebastian, heard of this contemplated alliance, and was infuriated. He had expected to wed his own daughter to Balboa, and indeed there was probably reason to believe that if he had not met the San Blas maiden, Balboa would have become Davila's son-in-law. Summoning his lieutenant to San Sebastian on the pretext of a conference concerning important orders received from Spain, Davila placed him under arrest on his arrival, convicted him of high treason on the trumped-up evidence of enemies that he had planned rebellion against the Spanish Crown to set himself up as Emperor of the American continent. He was promptly beheaded, and the tradition among the San Blas tribe, which my young friend Juan Battista communicated to me, was to the effect that Balboa's dusky betrothed arrived on the scene just in time to witness his execution, and that the event caused her to lose her reason. Davila, further to satiate his fiendish appetite for revenge, a little later captured the girl and subjected her to gross brutality. From that moment it was *guerra al cuchillo* between the San Blasians and the Spaniards. Over the dead body of the unhappy San Blas princess, the old chieftain and his men vowed the tribe unto the remotest generation never again to permit a Spaniard even to see a San Blas woman, and relentlessly and perpetually to resist any and every Spanish attempt to encroach upon their territory or dominate their people.

In the history of the Isthmus, this bitter hostility against the Spaniards stands out in marked contrast to the friendship shown by the San Blas tribe for the British and the Americans, and by most writers the traditional enmity between English and Spanish is accounted sufficient reason for this friendship. While recognition that the English were at war with their own foes played some part in the matter, I do not think it was the only consideration. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at least, all white men looked alike to the remaining tribes of Central and South America, and they made no distinction between Spaniard and Briton. There is now published (thanks to the activity of the British-Israel Society) a volume of testimony concerning the identity of the British race with two of the lost ten tribes of Israel that disappeared at the dispersion in 721 B.C.—that is, with Ephraim and Manasseh. It is known that other of the tribes scattered over the earth, several into northern Africa, so that the claim of the kings of Abyssinia to descent from Solomon may not be entirely unfounded. In north-eastern China, only twenty years ago, a people were discovered who, although they had adopted the Chinese costume and language, held rigidly to the distinguishing religious practices of the Israelites. Why may it not be possible that these San Blasians are descended from one or other of the tribes carried in that early day into captivity in Babylon, and thence dispersed to all quarters of the globe?

Nominally their present religion is Roman Catholic, and, as has been noted, they hold the heroic and devoted missionary Las Casas in special veneration. Their Christianity, however, is of much the same Hebraic type as that of the Puritans and Presbyterians of the British Isles, New England, and Canada.

In this connection it is worth while recurring briefly to events in the history of Panamá illustrating this remarkable friendship of the San Blasians for the British, a friendship which has played a larger part than is generally recognised in the history of the modern world.

It was in 1572 that Francis Drake, sailing from England with letters of marque from Queen Elizabeth to fight the Spaniard, entered the harbour of Nombre de Dios, stealing past the fort in three small pinnaces at night. With a

handful of men he attacked the town, and would have carried off the silver from the king's treasure-house had he not fainted from his wounds and a panic fallen on his followers in consequence, so that they beat a retreat. But the fame of this attack brought the English unexpected allies in the persons of these San Blas tribesmen, who welcomed the arrival of a people at war with their own foes and would-be oppressors. Their chief had a pow-wow with Drake, and, furnishing valuable information as well as guides and fighting-men, joined the English in an attack on a treasure-train of mules crossing the Isthmus. 'Several tons of silver and much gold,' part of the king's fifth of the plunder from Peru, intended for shipment to Spain, were captured. Nor had these strange warriors forgotten Drake when, thirteen years later, and now an English admiral, he sailed the seas with twenty-eight ships of the line, ravaged the shores of the Spanish Main, and exacted large ransoms from the neighbouring settlement of Cartagena, among other cities in the West Indies and Central America. Having in the meantime gained undying lustre and established the sea-power of Britain by his victory over the Spanish Armada, Drake made a third descent on these coasts in 1595, burning and pillaging the cities of Santa Marta and Nombre de Dios. From the latter place he attempted, again with the aid of the San Blasians, an expedition across the Isthmus to sack Panamá. He was beaten back, however, more by the deadly miasma and frightful entanglement of the jungle than by any force the Spaniards were able to bring against him. He sailed then to Puerto Bello, and his ships were about to attack that strongly fortified city, when Sir Francis died in his cabin. He was given a sailor's burial in the mouth of the harbour. And there were no more sincere mourners at the death of the man whose name for twenty years had been a terror to the Spaniards afloat and ashore than were his San Blasian allies. To this day the simple monument that marks the resting-place of one of the greatest of British naval heroes is regarded as a sacred shrine by these simple children of the forest and the shore.

They showed their friendliness for the English again in assisting Henry Morgan (afterwards Sir Henry), the daring buccaneer who, in June 1668, with a fleet of ten small ships attacked and captured Puerto Bello. And they were with him when, three years later, with a handful of British dare-devils, and guided and reinforced by a band of the faithful San Blasians, he crossed the Isthmus and challenged the might of the Spanish Viceroyalty in three hours of fierce fighting, which resulted in his reducing that stronghold, overcoming a force outnumbering his own by more than ten to one, and capturing and sacking Panamá city. In the annals of martial daring this exploit has scarce a parallel. It should not be forgotten that without the aid of the San Blasians it would not have been possible.

But the San Blasians evinced an admiration and affection for the Scots beyond that commanded by the English when, in November 1698, several hundred colonists from Scotland, inspired by that daring dreamer and business genius, William Paterson, who had four years before founded the Bank of England, became their neighbours in the ill-fated colony of Darien, or New Caledonia. Early chronicles tell how the San Blas Indians welcomed the Scots as allies in their own constant warfare with the Spaniards. When the San Blasians came aboard the Scots ships, 'they were treated kindly and there was much drinking,' according to the letter home of one of the colonists. In those days the Scots were much in the habit of wetting a compact of friendship with liberal potations. It is recorded also that the San Blasians were of great assistance to the Scots in building the town of New Edinburgh and the Fort of St Andrew. They bore valiant part in several skirmishes with the Spaniards sent from Panamá and Puerto Bello to drive the Scots from the Isthmus.

So far as I can gather, they regarded the French who came to the Isthmus to build the Canal in 1881 with little more favour than they had extended to the Spaniards; but they seemed to regard the Americans as rightful heirs of the Scots, and their completion of the great waterway as fulfilment of the vision presented to them when their ancestors aided William Paterson to make the first survey for a marine highway between the Atlantic and the Pacific.

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

CHAPTER VI.

HAD the question been put to so habitually frank a soul as was John Pardon why, when delivering his small gifts, late that same spring day, to Mary Patrick, he had refrained from any mention of his rencontre with the stranger girl, he would doubtless have been puzzled to find an answer. Even to her brothers, as together they unloaded the 'shakes' and discussed all details of his trip to and from the 'big timber,' he did not once allude to the incident so stamped upon his mind, or seek to discover who the girl might be. That it was impossible for any item of news in that sparse district to remain long undivulged Pardon well knew—and he could wait.

So it was not until several days later, when

his neighbour, Michael O'Keefe, had come in one evening to have a look at John's paper and smoke a pipe with him, that the latter, stretching himself and smothering a yawn, asked with carefully assumed indifference, 'Say, Mike, have you heard tell of any strangers comin' to settle in this here surroundin' desert o' ourn?'

Michael O'Keefe, a droll little man with a weazened, old-young face, an ancient pot-hat always perched on the back of his head, and small shrewd eyes, much wrinkled at the corners, glanced at Pardon, tilted back his chair, adroitly spat through the open window, and with great deliberation stuffing tobacco into an evil-smelling pipe, quietly remarked, 'She ain't *takin' any*, John!'

Pardon, thus unexpectedly trapped, reddened beneath the tan, but realising from long experience that it was useless to try to bluff his Irish-American friend, dropped his chair with a bang on its forward legs, and said with a sly chuckle, 'Who *says* she bain't? Anyway, *you* bain't in the runnin', Mike, my boy!'

Michael, wholly unmoved, and without the least change of expression on his parchment-like countenance, struck a match, and when his pipe was well going, said in even tones, 'No more nor *you*, John; so don't go an' git no foolishness into that cabbage head o' yourn;' and he settled the superfluous tobacco in the bowl of his pipe with a dirty brown thumb.

'Why, durn ye, Mike,' cried Pardon, now thoroughly roused, 'what are ye drivin' at? And who *is* she, anyway?'

'Steady, boy; don't git heated!' replied Michael calmly. 'I'm only tellin' you she bain't for the likes o' you an' me—no disrespec', John;' and he clapped a hand on his friend's long knee. 'They're from the Old Country—she and her brother,' he went on; 'an' back there her own folks is big bugs—own more land an' houses than this whole durned, sun-baked, bush-grown wilderness put together. My old dad's people used to live in one o' their villages—owned the whole bloomin' village, they did—an' nobody passed 'em without touchin' their hats. Not that, for myself, I holds much with that sort o' kow-towin',' he added, Michael being a dyed-in-the-wool democrat, in the most democratic of countries. 'But,' he continued, 'I reckon they bain't so well off nowadays—"land-poor," as they say back home; and there was a whole boilin' o' boys an' girls. At any rate, old Powell—Sir Thomas, they called him—he's bought that God-forsaken ranch o' Sam Bunker's, an' shipped Bob—that's the youngest son—out here to see if he can earn an honest livin' by the sweat o' his brow. Don't envy the poor young beggar comin' in for any o' Sam Bunker's leavin's. Decant young chap he seems, too. I run acrost him the other day when I was huntin' after that red calf o' mine, and he put up for a talk—leastwise *I* did—*he* didn't say much. but give me a hand right enough with the break in the fence where that bally heifer burst through.'

Michael paused for breath and to pull hard at his smouldering pipe, the while regarding Pardon out of the corner of his eye, as though expecting some comment upon his story. But Pardon, busying himself about the stove, said, with small display of interest in his voice, 'Oh, I see. So the young lady is this—what's his name?—this Powell's wife, eh?'

'Wife!' grunted Michael half-wrathfully. 'Wife *nuthin'*—didn't I tell you she's his sister? What's the use o' my talkin' if you bain't goin' to listen? "*Joy*" he called her—or some such moonshine name as that. Not that it concerns you nor me, John, *what* her name be, as I said before.' Then, getting up stiffly from the hard wooden chair, he said, 'Well, John—reckon I'd better make tracks for home. It's gittin' dark, and I'll be breakin' my neck in one o' them cursed holes in your road;' and he started for the door, cramming down the pot-hat still more tightly on his close-cropped head. 'By the way,' he added, pausing for a moment, 'that thar young Powell said he would be wantin' a lot o' haulin' an' horse-work done, one way an' another, so I told him as how I guessed *you* could take on a job or two, now you've got through with them shakes for Joe Patrick.'

'Sure I can,' replied Pardon heartily, while a cheering though inexplicable feeling that the world wasn't such a bad place, after all, suddenly possessed him. 'Thank ye, Mike,' he called after the queer little figure vanishing in the dusk. 'I'll mosey along up to Bunker's—I should say Powell's—ranch, maybe, day after to-morrer.' Then, as he turned back into the house and prepared for bed, he might have been heard speaking aloud, but for the sole benefit of an old gray cat. 'His *sister*, is she? Lucky feller. But, for myself, I'd rather be somethin' else than a brother to her!' he chuckled. 'And don't her name just suit her? "Joy," Mike said it was—*Miss* Joy, I should say—beggin' her pardon for takin' liberties behind her pretty back. And day after to-morrer, with luck, I'll be seein' her—not, of course, that *that's* anythin' to a poor old scrub of a bachelor like me. As good as married, too, though the weddin'-bells be long in ringin'!' and so saying, he rolled himself in the untidy heap of blankets tossed about his bed, in the depths of which he was soon wandering in the mazes of a dream, wherein rainbows and golden hair and Michael O'Keefe's red calf were hopelessly entangled.

The 'day after to-morrer' found John Pardon early astir, and, his breakfast of the inevitable beans and coffee disposed of, busy with a toilet of unwonted care. First there was a tremendous din of washing in the back-porch, where the energy of his ablutions, in a shallow tin pan, scattered cold drops hither and thither, sending

the old cat and her kittens flying in every direction. Then, having rattled the kitchen-window shade up to the top with such gusto that the very cord whirled round and round the roller, Pardon sorted from among the knives in the table-drawer his old razor, stropped it thoroughly on his boot-top, and speedily smothered his chin in a foam of lather. Between crisp-sounding scrapes of the razor-blade, he addressed remarks to the old cat, who at the sound of his voice paused in the very middle of moistening a spotless white paw with a rough red tongue, and looked up at him, with an only semi-diverted expression in her oblique green eyes. '"Sally," old girl, we're goin' to make a *call* to-day—strictly on business, you know. We don't expec' to *see* no one 'ceptin' the young British feller, *do* we, "Sal"?' 'Sally,' finding the conversation wholly devoid of mice and kindred subjects, continued her tongue to the tip of her paw, and then applied the 'sponge' vigorously to an already immaculate ear. 'What are *you* dressin' up for, "Sally"? Maybe she don't *like* cats; so I mustn't pack you along on my saddle. Gee! but it's a fine mornin',' he exclaimed, laying down his razor, and in such gay spirits that he playfully flung some of the hairy lather on to 'Sally's' extended tail. 'Use Pears' soap, "Sally"!' he laughed; then, as the old cat disgustedly licked off the white foam, 'Don't like the taste, eh? Come along, then. You shall have a bit of cheese—fine day this, "Sally"—let's all be happy.' Having hacked off a savoury peace-offering for the offended 'Sally,' he resumed his toilet, stopping a moment before the cupboard to survey his wardrobe. Resisting the temptation to wear a black coat and starched collar, unalterably decreed for Sundays and for the occasions when he drove Mary Patrick to Orangeville, he took out a new dark-blue flannel shirt, a pair of clean dark overalls, and his second-best black felt hat. Also he fingered longingly a large tie of red-and-black satin stripes that Sissy had sent him one Christmas; but a tie savoured too much of a social call *versus* a strictly business one, so Pardon resigned himself to merely buttoning the neck-band of his shirt, generally left flapping for greater comfort. Then, followed closely by 'Sally' in hopes of a mouse-hunt in the hay, he went to the barn, and astonished old 'Brady' by such a grooming as he had not experienced for years. The heavy Mexican saddle, richly carved and inlaid, that had been Pardon's chief pride in the days when he loped many a mile in the wake of a bunch of cattle, was carefully dusted and polished, the bit and stirrups rubbed till they shone, and a few moments later, under a radiant blue sky, man and horse were rapidly moving in the direction of the long-neglected Bunker's ranch, now taken over by young Powell. Less than a half-hour's ride found them emerging from a circle of densely bushed hills, in a hollow of which, like a broad-lipped cup, lay the ranch whose unpruned orchards and vine-terraces, and the dilapidated bungalow, were now mercifully and beautifully veiled by the fresh green of spring, and a perfect smother of fruit-blossom and lilac.

John Pardon screened his eyes with his hand, so intently scanning the sun-bathed hollow that it was only when 'Brady' suddenly pricked his ears and turned his head that he noticed the figure of a woman emerging from a small path within a few yards of him.

It was Joy, and at sight of her John Pardon's heart gave a great bound. Pulling his horse up short, he swept his hat off, as the girl, startled by the sudden rush and bark of two big dogs that accompanied her, stopped to look.

'Good-mornin', marm,' cried Pardon, his eyes the while noting how the sunshine gleamed in the gold of her soft hair, how blue as the sky were the eyes that looked up at him, how the rich colour mantled her sweet face.

Then, recognising him, she stepped forward with a bright, frank smile. 'How do you do?' she said. 'You see we got home quite safely—for it *was* you, was it not, who so kindly came to my rescue on Cañon Hill the other day?'

'Yes, marm,' replied Pardon. 'Pleased to meet you again. My name is John Pardon, and you are Miss Powell, I reckon. I've come to see your brother, if he's anywhere 'round; for my neighbour, Michael O'Keefe, told me as he was wantin' some haulin' done—— But excuse me, marm, for keepin' you standin' in the blazin' sun.'

Joy glanced at the blue sun-bonnet dangling from her arm, the other filled with big boughs of waxen-belled manzañita. 'Oh, thank you. That doesn't matter; I never *can* keep anything on my head!' she added with a little laugh. 'Won't you come down and see my brother? He is propping some of the poor old plum-trees behind the bungalow. What a nice horse!' she broke off abruptly, running her long white fingers caressingly over 'Brady's' nose.

Pardon would have liked to dismount and walk beside her, but some instinct prompted him otherwise; and there was an indescribable something about the carriage of the girl's head, and the way she spoke and moved, which caused a tiny shadow to fall across Pardon's gay spirits. In spite of himself he could not but recall his friend Michael's half-joking words, 'Don't go an' git no foolishness into that cabbage-head o' yourn;' so, settling himself in his stirrups and lightly spurring his horse, he raised his hat as though the interview with Miss Powell were ended, and rode down the hill, leaving the girl to follow, if so minded. Joy, however, taking a short cut, was at the bungalow gate before him.

'You can tie your horse here,' she said, as Pardon swung out of the saddle. 'Oh—I see—

he, like my "Fay," is a thorough Western horse, and doesn't *need* to be tied,' she added brightly when Pardon flung down the lines, leaving the animal to stand.

'Him a good old horsy, bain't you, "Brady"?' he said in a crooning fashion. 'Carried me hundreds of miles, marm, when he wasn't nothin' but a colt—the pair of us, for the matter of that. We 're gettin' old now; ain't that so, "Brady"?' He turned to meet Joy's blue eyes looking straight into his own.

'*You—old!*' she exclaimed mirthfully; then, 'Please come up to the veranda,' she said, 'and I will call my brother.'

Pardon followed her up the rickety old steps, and, seating himself, saw her flit like a bird through the open door, the dogs bounding and tumbling after her. From where he sat he could just catch a glimpse of a long, low room, unlike —quite unlike—any of the houses with which he was familiar. A thought which puzzled and yet pleased him was that the room seemed to be a reflex of Joy herself—flowers everywhere—books everywhere—sunshine—open doors and open windows—a few pieces of quite plain furniture—a rifle, a shot-gun, pipes, fishing-rods —all sorts of masculine belongings—and yet upon it all the unmistakable stamp of a woman's touch. The slight shadow, already fallen across the lonely man's spirits, deepened, while back into the gray eyes crept the smitten look of one who has too long waited.

Presently the sound of voices and the heavy gambol of dogs were heard, as Miss Powell, followed by her brother, returned. Instantly Pardon rose and went forward to meet them, his big frame towering above the slender six feet of the younger man, his large, roughened hand outstretched towards the small, shapely one, unhardened by manual toil.

'How d'ye do, stranger?' he said pleasantly, at the same time quickly running his eye appreciatively over his new acquaintance, much as he might have done over a young horse; and Bob Powell met his look with one equally frank and kindly.

Pardon at once detected not only a strong resemblance in colouring and manner between the brother and sister, but also the hall-marks of good breeding, which even the ill-fitting working-clothes that young Powell wore could not conceal. Greetings over, Powell offered cigarettes and a match, and asking Pardon to take a comfortable chair, perched himself upon the veranda-railing. Joy went inside, where Pardon caught glimpses of her as she fetched water to fill a huge brown jar in which to put her burden of manzañita, and then busied herself about the house.

An hour or more slipped quickly by while the young man unfolded his many plans and hopes for 'bringing up' the ranch, Pardon joyfully undertaking to do any amount of work for him with his team or his hands. It being agreed that he should begin on the morrow, he rose to go; but Joy just then appeared with a plate of toothsome cakes and two tall moist glasses, on the top of which bobbed thinly cut slices of lemon.

One she proffered Pardon, and as she handed the other to her brother, Pardon heard his solicitous aside, 'Aren't you going to have some too, Joy?'

'I've just had a glass of milk, Bob,' she replied, and the look of happy understanding that passed between the two made the Westerner's heart warm to these strangers who had come into his life from so far afield, bravely facing exile and unaccustomed toil.

They all parted as friends, even the dogs demonstrating their approval by doing their best to tangle Pardon's long legs on the veranda-steps. Then, mounting his horse and cheerily calling out, 'So-long!' he prodded 'Brady's' well-covered ribs, and loped away towards home. He hated to leave his new friends, but to-morrow would soon come.

(*Continued on page 698.*)

GERMAN BRIGANDAGE IN CHINA.

THE REHEARSAL.

By Sir GEORGE SCOTT, K.C.I.E.,
British Commissioner, Burma-China Boundary Commission (1898-1900).

THE breaking of China with Germany on the ground of savage practices is the shrewdest blow the Boches have had. At the time of the Boxer rising the Chinese were fond of saying that they were fighting eight nations, and that of all of them the Germans were the true devils. They have a harmless outside appearance, like the bread-substitutes and soap-substitutes and leather-substitutes they produce in such abundance; but the real fact is that they themselves are man-substitutes. They are neither men nor women; they are ghouls.

There is reason to believe that the Boche contingent was sent out to China more for an exercise in the theory and practice of the war-book *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege* than to avenge the death of Von Ketteler. That irascible person was almost as completely forgotten before the campaign was over as the Archduke Franz Ferdinand is now. The Kaiser sent the troops

out with instructions to behave like Huns, and they carried out his orders so completely that they proved his knowledge of Boche nature. For that reason they are still proud of the name of Huns, and resent being called Boche or Fritz, as the French and the British soldier label them. The one name suggests Von Eulenberg depravity, and the other assumes that the bulk of the race are waiters. There is truth enough in both assertions to make them feel uncomfortable.

They arrived much too late to have any share in the punishment of the Boxers. The Peking legations were relieved in the middle of August, and the Boche force did not land in Tien-tsin till the latter part of October. They made a brave show for their fellow-countrymen as they went in *Parade Schritt* up the main street; but others were more critical. The Japanese member of the Tien-tsin International Commission remarked, 'They compare favourably with the —— Chinese.' An Afridi *subadar* said, with a glint in his steel-blue eyes, 'What fun it would be to have them in the passes!' However, they went on to Peking to carry out the All-Highest's orders.

As soon as the Germans landed, the Russians left. They were not prepared to stay under the orders of Field-Marshal von Waldersee. So the Boches took over the Russian quarter, which was the greater part of the Forbidden City, with the palace of the old Buddha, the empress dowager, as headquarters.

The Boches wanted to go out forthwith to punish the Chinese. It was the Kaiser's *hukm*, and they were *jo-hukm* ('master order') *wallahs*. But it was only then that they realised that German organisation had flaws; that man-substitutes did not fulfil theoretical standards. There were no horses for anybody, and there were no transport animals for the munition and commissariat train. These had to be got from Australia and elsewhere; for the war-book did not countenance the use of rickshas, which the Japanese offered with a bland smile and a fleer of half-closed eyes.

Consequently it was well into the winter before the Boches were ready to start. The 'dear Allies' told them there were no Boxers within hundreds of miles; but they did not care about Boxers. They had their orders. As a matter of form, the Allies were invited to join in the 'campaign.' The Allies, with one accord, declined. They had already broken up the Boxer bands, and driven them away as far as was convenient and necessary.

So the Boches went out by themselves. They marched north, not so much because they thought there were Boxers there as because none of the international troops had gone in that direction. They fired on wretched villagers who came out to see the troops pass. They held up caravans, and helped themselves to whatever took their fancy. When they came to a walled town they announced that they would bombard it unless it paid a war-ransom. At first they fired a few shells, just to show that they were in earnest and to hurry up the payment, and justify the accounts of 'storming' sent home. When they got the ransom they as often as not proceeded to billet themselves on the town, in flat contradiction of the promise that payment would free the place of them. This was the opportunity for private enterprise. The officers conveyed jade, lacquer, silks, porcelain, furs. The men stole whatever took their fancy. They commandeered labour whenever they wanted it, and a great deal was wanted to carry the plunder. They paid for it with scraps of paper or with the butts of their rifles. There is no need to say what they did with the women. In a very short time no women waited for their arrival. The Kaiser had given his orders, and they were carried out on historical Hun principles. A great many men died of exposure and excess. Blizzards from central Asia are very trying, and Chinese 'wines' are usually about 80 per cent pure alcohol. The victims were returned as casualties to guarantee triumphal head-lines in the German papers. There was, as a matter of fact, no fighting at all. The whole thing was mere brigandage according to plan, *Kriegsbrauch* plan, and there seemed no reason why it should not go on indefinitely. It was good practice for the man-substitute, and it was reasonably profitable for some.

Before very long, however, it ceased to pay. The Chinese began to evacuate their towns whenever the Boches got near them. There were no more war-ransoms to be got, and what there was left to steal was hardly worth the lifting. Moreover, there were no more coolies to be seized. Finally, the general in command, Yorck von Falkenberg, on a particularly cold night, unwisely slept with a coke brazier in his room, and was found dead in the morning. Von Waldersee, who, for a Boche, was quite a creditable semblance of a human being, ordered the column back to Peking, and it was announced in the Berlin papers that the Boxers had been bloodily strafed.

While their comrades had been out on house-breaking and robbery with violence, the garrison in Peking had not been idle. There was not much left to steal. There had been too many enterprising people, with a spiritual home in Germany, in action before them. But there was plenty of room for Hunnish perversity. There was a marble bridge close to the empress dowager's palace, with a beautifully carved balustrade. Boches set to work to destroy this with as much zeal as if it had been Rheims Cathedral. It was so thoroughly done, and the bridge was so close to headquarters, that it seemed as if formal fatigue-parties had been set to the work. Only a little farther off was a temple with a magnificent library of carved wood printing-blocks of some of the most famous

Chinese classics. The lettering was strikingly well cut, and the blocks would have appealed to most people, if it were only as curios. But to the Boches they only suggested fuel, and when it was found that, since they were of black wood, they were of little use for this purpose, the man-substitutes proceeded to scatter them over the neighbourhood and stamp upon them.

This, however, seemed too impersonal a way of strafing the Chinese Boxers or others, so further measures were adopted. It was ordained that no Chinese should be out after dark without a lantern, and, if they went in parties, family or otherwise, each person was to carry his own lantern. It was not to be of any haphazard ordinary pattern, but of one approved by the *Kommandantur*, and generally supposed to have been specially designed by the All-Highest himself. These lanterns were only to be had at places specially appointed by the Boche staff—quarterguards and such-like genial establishments. The price demanded seemed to the Chinaman extravagant; but in addition a fee was charged for admission, and another for leave to go out again. This seemed sufficient for the staff, especially as lanterns from other adjacent quarters of the city, Japanese, Italian, or British, were ruled *unregelmässig*—in contravention of the sealed pattern, and therefore liable to confiscation; but it did not satisfy the 'other ranks.' With true Boche humour, they devised means of carrying out the imperial Hun's instructions. When a patrol met a Chinaman with his lantern, he proceeded to inspect it to see if it were of the prescribed pattern. Then he blew the light out. No Chinaman carries matches. Consequently the next patrol the unfortunate man met arrested him for going without a light, and he was taken to the guard-room, fined, and flogged. Still more humorous Boches would hang the lantern on a telegraph-pole, where the Chinaman, in wadded coat and felt shoes, could not get at it. There he remained till the next man on the beat arrested him for unseemly levity, or for being drunk, with the result of a night in the lock-up and a thrashing in the morning, besides rifled pockets.

Sanitation is not the strong point of the Chinaman. Most people in north China spend their mornings defecating on their neighbour's door-step. This was an annoyance to the Allies in all quarters of the city, but it enraged the 'Kultur'd' Boches. To stop the practice, they adopted the method used in making cats house-clean. The first person who came along, male or female, was seized, and made to realise the objectionable character of the offence in a way that it is not necessary to particularise. The Chinese are a docile race. They are almost as obedient to authority as the Boche *Unmenschen* themselves; but they resented this violently. An expectant assistant-magistrate, of the fifth grade, who was handled in this fashion went straight home and hanged himself after making a speech to the neighbourhood. The quarter-commandant treated this as *Majestäts Beleidigung*—confiscated the house, and turned the wife and family out into the street.

After this, the shameless carrying off of the astrological instruments from the Great Wall of the Tartar city created little surprise among the Chinese. It was no doubt suggested by the Kaiser, and it seems to show that the doings of the Crown-Prince in the Château de Baye reveal a hereditary taint. The Allied generals protested, one of them from the Great Republic, with sabre-cuts of Saxon speech. But it was quite in vain, and the instruments which the Jesuits had fashioned for the Hwang-ti in the sixteenth century now stand in the Thiergarten in Berlin. They may well be shipped back to Peking again when the Boche thieves' kitchens are being cleaned out.

The High General Staff had no chance of seizing objects of art and decorative interest in Peking. Before ever they arrived Peking was policed and restored to order. Shops were opened, and curios were being sold to visitors and officers of the Allied forces. But there were no shops in the German quarter, partly because the greater part of it covered the Forbidden City, and partly because the population found it well to get as far away as possible from the Boches. Hectoring officers tried to get what they fancied at prices fixed by themselves; but this was found to lead to unpleasantness when appeal was made to the police of the Powers other than Germany. It was necessary, however, to punish the Chinese systematically; so an order was issued that the Chinese Government was to pay two pounds sterling a day maintenance allowance to every German officer. The officers of the other Powers made no such rule. The Germans, partly from natural instinct, and partly perhaps as a concession to what they considered absurd prejudice, decided that the whole of the money was to be spent day by day, and that it was to be spent entirely on drink. It was said that some of them succeeded in getting through forty shillings' worth of liquor without assistance; but most of them were not so seasoned, and required guests to help them. King-pegs, in the shape of champagne and brandy, were the favourite drink; but there were some who poured libations to Bismarck in the form of champagne and stout. Guests were not easily got, for the German officer then, as now, was about as genial as a mandrill. But senior officers could not always refuse; some field-officers went because drink elsewhere was scarce; and subalterns found pulling the Boche's leg an irresistible attraction.

It was after one of these orgies, when much liquor had been drunk to the toast '*An den Tag*,' in which sundry unsuspecting but bemused British subalterns joined, that the mess-house

caught fire. It was an incombustible asbestos house, presented to the field-marshal by an enterprising Boche firm; but it was made in Germany, and therefore it was reduced to ashes. The plunder of a great part of the Forbidden City, and much other ill-gotten booty, disappeared in the flames. The chief of the Boche staff was also burnt to death. It was announced that he rushed into the burning building to try to save a pet dog. The story was accepted with polite sympathy, which was accentuated when the dog was found wandering about the neighbourhood next day. Quite a considerable cellar of wine perished with the mess-house, and the cost of this was debited to the Chinese Government.

The mess-house was part of the group of buildings which went to make up the palace of the old Buddha, the empress dowager. Fortunately for Chinese artistic feelings, the Boche staff did not think of rebuilding it in the style of German art. But if they were spared here, they were not spared in the town outside. It was decided to put up a monument to the murdered ambassador, to be a permanent warning of the sanctity of foreign representatives. Here again the Kaiser naturally had a part. He started with the initial idea of the *paifang* for the sake of local colour. A *paifang* is a sort of triumphal arch set up by the Chinese to commemorate people who have lived to a great age; widows who have refused to marry again, and have remained unwed for many years; and occasionally to officials who have attained to great dignities and have been a credit to the place of their birth. These *paifangs* very often stand out in the open country, and are always picturesque and sometimes strikingly artistic. William II. grafted the idea on to recollections of the arch of Hadrian and such-like, and with the atmosphere of the *Sieges-Allee* before him, evolved a huge monstrosity as a memory and a warning to the Chinese Empire.

At the spot in the Hatamên Street where Von Ketteler was shot, a huge pit was dug in the ground. Something like a shipload of cement was poured into it to make a foundation, and then the building began. It was rapidly finished, for labour was commandeered, and everything and everybody were left to be paid by the Chinese Government. The memorial uprears itself over the low one-storied houses of the neighbourhood like the 'Tower Bridge' east of Loos. It suggests the entrance of a Channel tunnel, or the gateway of a *Kadaververwertungs Anstalt*. It would be an appropriate doorway to the *Sieges-Allee*, and if the Chinese get their astronomical models back they might offer it for that purpose. It is the sort of thing the Hermes of Praxiteles might have become after a twenty-years' course of forty *schoppen* a day of Bavarian *schwartz-bier*. It is colossal; it is hideous; it is characteristically Boche; it is out of place anywhere but in Germany. It is a warning of what might have been seen in Louvain, and elsewhere in Belgium and north-east France, if the time-table of 1914 had come off.

The Boxer campaign was a rehearsal for the Great War, with the *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege* as a text-book, interleaved for notes. Europe has only just escaped. It will be her own fault if the Boches are left capable of doing anything of the kind again. German sailors bombard villages and girls' schools from the sea and the air; German soldiers steal, ravish, and fell fruit-trees; German graybeards set wolf-hounds at prisoners, and give orders with the boot and the rifle-butt; German women wrench bandages off wounded men. They are neither brute nor human; they are ghouls.

SAUCE FOR THE GOOSE.

'IT'S no use talking, my dear,' said Mr Ampleford, registered chemist of Carronchester, to his wife, who was sorting medicine-bottles behind the prescribing-counter. 'My mind is made up. I have nothing to say to Mr Troop. I want to have nothing more to do with him; and I'm certainly not going to invite him to my house.'

'But, Robert, what have you against the young man?' asked Mrs Ampleford mildly.

'I've the greatest possible objection to him. I said, the greatest possible objection,' said Mr Ampleford, who was one of those people who think they strengthen their remarks by repeating them. 'I consider him a disgrace to our profession, and if I hear of his paying any further attentions to our daughter, I shall take strong steps to—ah—discourage them.'

'But he's such a nice, gentlemanly young man; and I believe he's getting on very nicely in business.'

'Oh, very nicely—very nicely indeed!' snorted Mr Ampleford sarcastically. 'As to his methods of getting on, the less said the better. I said, the better. Are you aware that in the last fortnight he has stolen two of my best customers?'

'Stolen? What do you mean?'

'It's the only word for it. Mrs Young deals with him now, because he sells hair-lotion at store prices; and Lady Sinclair told Walkden that Mr Troop had developed her snap-shots for her so perfectly sweetly that she wouldn't *dream* of going anywhere else for anything. Yah! Two people who have been coming to me for years!'

'Perhaps Mr Troop didn't know'—— began Mrs Ampleford.

'Nonsense! He knew perfectly well. Store prices, indeed! Photographs! It's not legitimate business. I don't mind fair, honest competition,' complained the chemist, who minded it a great deal, 'but this sort of thing is contemptible. He sells books too—and razors—— Certainly, sir,' he broke off to attend a customer who was rapping impatiently at the outer counter; 'I can recommend these tortoise-shell combs at half-a-crown. Quite the best quality. . . . No, sir; I'm sorry I have nothing cheaper. . . . Good-night, sir.—Did you hear that, Julia? He'll go over to Troop now, who'll sell him a shilling piece of imitation rubbish, and make fourpence on it. . . . Disgusting!'

'I don't see any harm in that, dear, if he doesn't pretend it's real.'

'It's not respectable, Julia; it disgraces the whole profession. Have you heard he's opened a new branch at Ravensea?'

'Mabel said something about it,' admitted Mrs Ampleford.

'She did—did she? She seems to know a great deal too much about Mr Troop's doings—a great deal too much. Does she happen to know how he attends to it? Are you aware he is compelled by law to have every prescription containing a scheduled poison made up by a qualified chemist, and he has only an unqualified assistant there and a boy here? How is it done, Julia? That's what I want to know.'

'Perhaps he makes them up himself.'

'Rubbish! The man can't be in two places at once. But our association has its eye on him. I said, we have our eye on him. The man's a quack, and the sooner he's exposed and driven out of the place the better.'

'I'm sure it will break Mabel's heart,' protested Mrs Ampleford.

'Enough, Julia! I have nothing further to say—nothing whatever. I'm surprised that a daughter of mine could condescend to notice such a whipper-snapper. I wouldn't have thought it—I wouldn't indeed.' And Mr Ampleford stumped indignantly towards the door to put up the shutters and close the shop for the night.

II.

'Don't let's go that way,' said Jack Troop to Miss Mabel Ampleford on the Tuesday following the last conversation, as the two came out from the choir practice, and his companion turned into the High Street.

'But it's the shortest, Jack dear,' objected Mabel.

'I know—that's why,' said he, and motioned towards a street at right angles that led out to the quiet, moonlit fields surrounding Carronchester.

Mabel laughed and obeyed the gentle pressure of his arm, and for a while the pair walked on in that silence which is full of the intense heart intimacy of two lovers, a silence in which a touch of the hand or a glance of the eye speaks far more eloquently than words. Mabel was the first to break it.

'Father wouldn't dream of it, dear,' said she. 'Mother told me; he was perfectly awful.'

'Sorry to hear it,' said Troop. 'What was his objection?'

'He doesn't like you, Jack.'

'Very bad taste on his part,' said Troop gravely. 'Any particular reason?'

'Mother says he's jealous because you've taken some of his customers away from him.'

'But, my dear girl, I can't help people coming to me if they want to. I didn't fish for them.'

'I know, dear; but that doesn't help us any.'

'I suppose not.'

'And, what's worse, Jack darling, I'm afraid he's going to do something against you at the association—get you stopped from practising or something.'

'He can't do that just by asking for it, little woman. I dare say some of the members would be glad to see the last of me; but they can't make me put up the shutters just because I've a bigger turnover than they have.'

'Yes; but dad says you can't attend properly to two businesses, and you must let your assistant make up prescriptions.'

'Oh! I see.' Mr Troop looked thoughtful and pulled reflectively at his moustache. 'Tell me, sweetheart, can you remember exactly what your mother told you?'

'She says dad is going to have you watched, and have a prescription made up in your shop while you're away at Ravensea. Would that be very dreadful?'

'Might be a bit awkward if it came off. I'll think it over. . . . But, hang it all, Mabel darling!—there's nobody looking—don't you think—— Just one!'

When you give back what you get, it is hardly fair to count it against you; otherwise the one kiss might have been reckoned up as a dozen before the pair came again within sight of the streets and said a hurried good-bye at the gate of Mr Ampleford's private residence.

III.

At 10 A.M. on the next Thursday Jack Troop left Carronchester Central Station on the slow train for Ravensea. At 10.1 A.M. Mr Ampleford stepped out of the waiting-room and made his way to the exit with a satisfied smile, as if the world went well with him. From 10.23 to 10.37 he might have been seen talking to a small boy at the corner of Hamerton Street, just out of sight of Troop's shop. At 10.40 the small boy entered Troop's shop. From 10.40 to 11.14 Mr Ampleford continued to wait in the rain at the corner of Hamerton Street. At 11.14 the small boy returned with an eight-ounce bottle wrapped up with the neatness peculiar to chemists, and handed it to Mr

Ampleford. At 11.28 Mr Ampleford deposited the bottle in the custody of the secretary of the Loamshire Chemists' Association, and returned home.

IV.

The heavy wetting gave Mr Ampleford a severe cold, and he was treating it with a mustard foot-bath on the following Saturday evening when his wife came into the back-parlour and told him Mr Troop wanted to see him.

'How dare he want to see me?' snorted Mr Ampleford. 'I won't have anything to do with him. Send him away at once.'

'He says it's a matter of the utmost importance.'

'Oh, he does—does he? I suppose he's got wind of the fix he's in, and thinks he'll get out by eating humble-pie. . . . Well, I'll see him. . . . Do him good to take him down a peg or two. Show him in.'

'Good-evening, Mr Ampleford!' said the fresh, hearty voice of Jack Troop a moment later when Mrs Ampleford ushered him into the room and withdrew, leaving the two men together. 'Sorry to hear you're knocked up. You ought to try Ampleford's Kofkure—capital thing! I use it myself.'

'I dare say, young man—I said, I dare say,' grunted Mr Ampleford, by no means certain that the praise of his proprietary remedy was quite sincere. 'You didn't come here to tell me that, I'm sure. What do you want to see me about?'

'Well, the meeting of the association is on Monday, and as I'm personally interested in some of the business, I'd like to talk it over.'

'So you've heard of that, have you? But it's no use appealing to me. I've a public duty to perform, and I'm going to do it.'

'Heard about what?' asked Troop.

'Don't play the clever fool with me, young man! You know as well as I do that a prescription containing a scheduled poison was made up in your shop last Thursday while you were away at Ravensea. I saw you catching the ten train myself; the first train back doesn't get in till past twelve; and I had the bottle in my hands before a quarter past eleven. I've witnesses for all the facts, and they'll be there at the meeting.'

'But, sir'——

'No, sir; I can't listen to you. I've no personal feeling in the matter. None whatever. But this sort of thing is a disgrace to the profession, and it's got to be put down. I said, it's got to be put down.'

'I'm delighted to hear it,' said Troop unexpectedly. 'I was afraid you'd take a personal view of it and be prejudiced against me. Now I can go ahead with a clear conscience.'

'What do you mean, sir?'

'It's like this, Mr Ampleford. I'd just got on the train last Thursday, when I remembered I'd an important 'scrip for Dr Stevenson that I'd forgotten to make up. So, instead of going to Ravensea, I dropped out again at the Upper Town station. And I'm afraid I did wrong.'

'I don't understand you, sir.'

'Well, your place was so handy that I thought I'd call in and get you to make it up for me; but unfortunately you were out, and I'm afraid I got your unqualified assistant to make it up instead. Assistants are so careless! He must have forgotten there were poisons in it, and that he would compromise you.'

'Do you mean to tell me you got a bottle made up here while I was out?'

'Don't blame your assistant,' said Troop tenderly. 'I told him how urgent it was; I was barely able to get back to my own place in time to make up your prescription.'

'You were back in your own place!'

'At ten to eleven. I came up the laneway behind the shop. I could see you waiting at Hamerton Street. . . . I hope you didn't get very wet.'

'And you're going to bring up an accident like this—a pure accident—against me at the association?'

'Exactly. That's why I'm so glad you don't take a personal view of it. It's just a public duty.'

There was a minute or two of hostile silence, during which Mr Ampleford shuffled his feet in the hot water and opened his mouth to gasp once or twice, but no remarks seemed to occur to him. He was not popular with the association, and he knew it; anything that could be used against him would be used. It might mean ruin.

Then Troop spoke again. 'Of course, if I had the honour to be your son-in-law, I dare say I could forget my duty to the public.'

It was the only way out. 'You'll find Mabel upstairs,' said Mr Ampleford.

A FATHER'S SONG:

TO A LITTLE TODDLER.

Oho, My Little Toddler,
I hear your eager feet
Scampering over mother's floor,
With childish joy complete.

Oho, My Little Toddler,
Too soon the years will show
Footpaths seldom are as smooth
As those on which you go.

Yet, O, My Little Toddler,
I would not have you barred
From all the great adventure
Of finding roads so hard.

Still, O, My Little Toddler,
If lost you e'er should be,
May some one show the pathway
When you are far from me!

OWEN E. MCGILLICUDDY.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, *Yesterday.*

NO better time may be given than this autumn season to record some experiences of a very unfamiliar kind in the chief wheat-market of the world, which is the Board of Trade in Chicago, or 'The Pit,' as it is more familiarly known the world over. If in days gone by this Pit seemed to stand for something most wonderful in its enormous power of control of what is perhaps the chief resource of the world, and in the throbbing romance of its high financial speculations, it is more than wonderful now as the market of the grain which is precious to us all as never before. This noisy spot in the middle of that amazing, roaring city of Illinois is indeed as the very heart of production and of food. It may be that in the mysterious workings of the financial world and as a consequence of the less mysterious decrees of war-time Governments, the wings of the Chicago Board of Trade are somewhat clipped, its enterprises moderated. Our minds would revolt at the idea of a financier, or group of such, making a corner and controlling the wheat of the world in times like these. But even without such a power, the Pit still remains the foremost wheat-market, a financial and commercial institution to which no other can properly be compared, and its consequence is heightened by the war. It was but the other day that one read in the daily paper, beneath startling headings in large type, that there was a 'slump' in wheat, and there had been an excited market in Chicago. It is difficult for some of us, having what can best be termed unfinancial minds, to imagine how there can be a slump in wheat at a time like this, a 'slump' meaning that it is being rejected by the buyers, that its holders wish to be rid of it, that its price depreciates, that it is, so to speak, a drug in the market. But this is merely one of the curious results that occur when money in millions and its marvellous properties of power, which can be exerted by the great financiers like alchemists, work upon some plain and simple world commodity. You may then produce the contradictory situation that there is a glut of a thing in the market and those financial seers are willing almost to give it away if you will take it in million measures, and yet starvation, or something approaching it, is abroad in the world for want of that very thing. Or the points of the situation may be reversed. When the world is hungry, Chicago may perversely complain that it suffers from an embarrassment of wheat; but when peace has been long established, when the husbandmen are at the soil again with a will, and the vast lands of Canada and Australia and all the world besides are giving of their golden best, the Pit may grumble that there is not an ear of wheat to be had, and the price for a day may soar accordingly. So there is no ordinary relation between the prices of a day at the Board of Trade and the facts of production—which is not the same as supply—as we know them; yet let it be said that these Chicago figures are truly not the mere result of gambling operations only, as some might hastily suppose, and they have an absolute, if devious, relation to the production and the supply. These prices are the changing results of action and reaction upon each other of a vast number of mighty and intricate forces in all parts of the world, from a farmer in Arkansas to a speculator in Europe, or it may be even in China. In the Pit you see all these forces brought together and to some extent handled. The ends of threads from every nerve-centre of the wheat world are gathered at the Board of Trade in Chicago. Here within the limits of a large hall you have the wheat of the world presented to you in figures; and, from minute to minute almost, you may see it growing at every centre, for there are telegraphed and cabled reports from all of them with the latest figures of production and price. These arrive every few minutes, ticked off on the enormous instruments in the great hall, and are marked on the huge slates that reach almost from ceiling to floor. And all around are excited men buying the crops of the world in terms of millions and millions again. It is not an experience, once seen, ever to be forgotten; if he who witnesses it has but a little imagination, it is one which must excite him at every after-remembrance.

* * *

Now, because the men are fighting instead of labouring in the fields, and destroying in place of producing in the workshops, the

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hunger spectre comes to grin sardonically on a misguided world. We read of strange things in the food-supply, as, for example, that at Stuttgart the authorities have fixed upon one egg per fortnight per person as the food ration for a time. Again, there are ominous tidings from many parts that the wheat crops compare but ill with those of last year; weather and circumstances seem to have been against them. This now is the supreme moment of the glorious miracle of nature, full achievement of the golden production has been again accomplished, the harvest moon has waned, and in the chapels and the churches there are wisps of corn upon the walls, bunches of fruit with them, and the people give thanks, and praise with thanks, for the great blessing of the harvest safely gathered in. It must appear to those who think that of all manifestations of sincerity in churches this must surely be among the most sincere. The summer has gone; there is a coolness in the air, and the long nights are deepening about us. The coppery leaves are fluttering from the boughs and leaving them nearly bare. A certain quietness and repose, with a sense of pathos enwrapt, seems to be settling down upon the face of Nature. It is an emotional moment, and we feel that in very truth the earth and the Power of the earth have been good to us—surely better than we merit. We indeed have been destroying, but the earth, unheeding, has wrought nobly on her way, and puts us to a pitiable shame. When the great fact of the harvest is presented to an ungodly man he must bow his head. Here is majestic evidence; here is something beyond a meagre philosophy. Here is wonder in infinity, grace and goodness beyond all thought, truly beyond all deserving. With the world crashing in war, should we not in finer humbleness and sincerity than ever before make our steps towards the temples, and with full hearts sing such a song as the harvest hymn translated by Jane Campbell?—

> We thank Thee then, O Father,
> For all things bright and good,
> The seed-time and the harvest,
> Our life, our health, our food.

* * *

Sometimes there is a sharp and certain sense in incongruities, and at a moment like this one's fancy may wander to that Board of Trade, or Corn Exchange, or Pit, in far Chicago, and remember that wild, fascinating scene of dealing and speculation daily enacted there as once we saw it. It is a rare experience. Few visitors to Chicago are permitted it, and I had special influence and kind favour to thank for it. I had been anxious for it from the time I had read the wonderful, realistic, enthralling novel of the late Frank Norris called *The Pit*, in which the full romance is so magnificently expressed. Many of you must have been impressed with that great story of hot humanity in the utmost, maddest financial fever. The tenth chapter is one of the finest in modern fiction; the tragedy of Jadwin is overwhelming. To those who have not seen, or cannot imagine clearly, such writing may seem but a tumult of exaggerating words, but in the Pit one autumn morning it was very real to me. A kind friend with whom I was staying at a country club had by exertion arranged the matter. 'Be at my office at 9.15 sharp,' he said. 'The Pit opens at half-past, and you should see a session through. You will see the food of the nations bought and sold, speculated in as futures, immense fortunes made and lost perhaps; in a way that to you may seem almost unthinkable—the most wonderful, terrible, awe-inspiring place of its kind on earth. That is what they say of it, but I am too much accustomed, perhaps.' He was one of the great dealers in the Pit. In the morning we strode together in the quick Chicago way down La Salle Street to the great building that seals the end of it. We swung through the big doors and turned towards a winding staircase on the right. Then a peculiar nervousness came upon me as a weirdness of distant man-made noise was heard, and I realised it was the Jadwins who were making it, that they were fighting each other again with the food of the world. The market was just opening; the roaring had begun. I thought it was like the noise of an army or a mob in the wings of a theatre multiplied by an American million. The sound increased at each step we made. At the top of the staircase we passed through open doors into an immense hall with a roof of coloured glass and great windows with gorgeous panels. Here was all the most amazing machinery for the lightning transaction of most gigantic business, and it was being worked at its utmost speed, while swarming around were hundreds of men, yelling, screeching, gesticulating. They seemed wild in their frenzy of speculative activity. These were Jadwins. To lend special importance to the occasion, in the west the corn was being harvested, and the crops were regarded as being among the finest ever known, while stories were coming in from Europe that wet had spoiled the eastern grain. It appeared that Chicago and its western supply might have to feed rather more of the world in the ensuing season than had been its recent share.

* * *

The Pit measures, perhaps, fifty yards each way. Really there are within it four little Pits, or special centres of business. There is the Wheat Pit, near to me on the left, and that, of course, is the chief. Beyond it is the Corn Pit; then on the right of that is the Provisions Pit; and near to me again on that side of the great hall is the Oats Pit. What constitutes or marks the Pit is a wooden octagon of three shallow tiers; that is to say, there are three steps from

the floor arranged in a great wooden octagon, and three down again on the inner side to an enclosure which is smeared with a thin covering of sawdust. The dealers, many of whom are in their shirt-sleeves, arrange themselves on the steps of this octagon, leaving the enclosure open, so that they may view each other all round. Then by shouting at each other, and by making simple and well-understood signs, they buy and sell the produce of the earth. Some of it is real, so to speak, and some is merely speculative; men buy or sell in the hope of selling again or buying at a profit without ever a thought of doing real business with the wheat itself, with which they are not concerned, or they do this for clients. I shall not attempt here to describe the scene. You should read Frank Norris and set imagination then to its own full range. In the casino at Monte Carlo one sees what a fearful spell—exceeding anything one had imagined as possible in human nature—can be exercised upon men and women by money and the passion for obtaining it; but really such a scene seems thin and poor compared with that of the Pit at Chicago. And it is different; for at Chicago it is, after all, business working a vast effect upon the world and dealing in real things, mighty things. Again, it is different in that at Chicago the speculator in his passion exhibits far less restraint. Years of experience have not dulled the senses of these operators for excitement; they seem to run the full gamut of passion each morning between half-past nine and a quarter past one, when the session closes for the day. It has become a habit with them, and sometimes it appears that they develop excitement upon a slender excuse; but when a hundred men or more are calling their offers or their wants at once, and are desirous of attracting attention, screaming becomes necessary, and then screeching in strange notes, roaring in a full volume, and finally, perhaps, some form of acrobatic performance. With all of this it is difficult to restrain excitement, and it seems that no form of effort on the part of any dealer would be regarded as unreasonable or would attract special attention. If a man who figuratively was handling miles and miles of western wheat were moved to stand upon his head, and in such attitude attempt to whistle 'The Star-Spangled Banner,' this might be regarded as a normal and even business-like proceeding. As I watched the Pit at its desperate work, I observed one man on the top step of the octagon suddenly turn his back to the enclosure, and for many seconds, while apparently in a tense state of emotion, attempt what I can only term—saying it respectfully—a form of Highland jig. Then he shook his clenched fists, and made a series of wild contortions upon his features such as would have convinced most strangers that he was in an unfortunate state of mind and hardly safe.

What a maelstrom it is! The noise is so deafening as, million by million of bushels, the wheat of the world is bargained with, that transaction by voice is really not done at all. A process of finger signs has been invented. It is well understood, is official and binding. Trading, be it explained, is always done in so many thousands of bushels. When wheat is being sold at ninety cents, a dealer gains the glance of another on the opposite side of the Pit having fifty thousand bushels to sell. Plain signs are not everything in this business; after watching it for an hour or two, studying glances, expressions, grimaces, and all else, I reached the conclusion that by intimacy, long experience, practice, and necessity, some kind of telepathy is established between these people, and that they half-understand their mutual requirements at the first look. The rest is by way of confirmation and a settling of the bargain. The man who would buy the fifty thousand signals by look, and then by finger signs that he will take the '50 wheat' at 90. But there is a hitch; the market is moving. The man with the fifty thousand bushels holds up his right hand with the forefinger extended horizontally, which means that he wants 90⅛ cents. The buyer motions acceptance and makes the signal back. Each man carries a printed card about with him, having his name or that of his firm upon it, with columns for figures, all printed in blue on one side for 'Bought,' and in red on the other for 'Sold.' And so here Milton writes down on his card that he 'Sold 50 at Shelley,' and Shelley, the buyer, pencils upon his, 'Bought 50 at Milton.' At the close of the morning they meet and confirm the bargain. Shelley may have sold his fifty thousand bushels to Pope in the meantime, and Pope to some other trader, and what the end of that fifty thousand may be no man may know as yet. Those finger signs are curious. They are sure; honour among these gentlemen of the Pit is very high, and disputes are unknown. If they were possible, the machinery would break down, the market in wheat would become chaotic, and the golden heads might wither in the west because of the collapse of the Pit; for, when you think of corners and the gambling and all the rest of it, and fancy that the world and wheat might be better without this traffic, do not forget that the market holds the fabric in a piece, that it controls each movement, and that it, and it alone, makes possible the sale and the distribution of the wheat. When the hand is held horizontally the clenched fist indicates the price in even cents, and then each finger held out represents an added eighth of a cent up to four-eighths; the extended hand with the fingers close together means three-quarters; with them all wide open it means five-eighths cent; and so on. The whole hand displayed vertically is a sign that twenty-five thousand bushels are to be dealt in, each finger counting for five thou-

sand; whether it is a case of buying or selling is indicated by a slight motion of the hand to or from the trader who makes the signal. This is just a trifle of the arrangements; the general mechanism of the Pit is almost as wonderful as its babel. It is marvellously fitted. Here it seems that we are in the most intimate connection with the world. There are innumerable long-distance telephones, and a dealer speaks to New York, nine hundred miles away, with as little concern as if he were calling his clerk in the next room. These things, particularly connections, are done in America with less waste of time and convenience than here. Then the cable companies offer their facilities at every hand for sending messages all over the world. The Pits for wheat and corn are connected by a high bridge on which are telegraph operators. Just below them, in seats overlooking the main pits, are reporters who indicate to them the prices that rule from moment to moment, and these figures are instantly flashed all over America and to other places that are interested. Wires connect the bridge with the reporting-boxes at the Pits for provisions and oats, and notes of prices are continually being transmitted to the bridge in small cases. On the left of the wheat and corn pits the trading for grain produced and sold for cash is carried on. There are samples at hand of all the carloads that are coming along. This, then, is a place for matter-of-fact realists; here is the veritable corn. But now we see it, we find its market is a dull affair; it is so easy to buy what you see and to sell when you have, just so much and not a sackful more. The other is the grander business; it is better for the spectator and the student of human possibilities to watch men hold their fingers up for a hundred thousand bushels, and be inspired, if they wish it, by the friezes on the walls showing the stock grazing and the wheat-fields producing in their plenty out in the ripening west.

* * *

There is another great hall beyond this one; it is a kind of temple. It is a rest-room provided with many chairs all set to face a platform, where a diligent officer is continually engaged in writing enormous figures with chalk on a Brobdingnagian slate, which measures, as I guessed it, about fifty feet by ten. What he is writing is the prices as they come in from all parts of the world. It seems to be that the quotations for the September, December, and May deliveries from New York, St Louis, and Kansas are those which matter most. Winnipeg also is closely watched. Seeing their place in the grand scheme of the Pit, I came to have an enormous respect for districts of which I had hardly ever heard. There is Duluth; how it looms in this tremendous affair! You may not have heard of Duluth, but it has more to do with your bread in peace and war than I could hope to explain. The whole world is examined closely every day for the state of its crops and its stocks, for it matters everything if it is found that the supply at some remote place in the Old World, for example, is running low and its wheat prospects are poor. They know then for certain that there must be buyers there, and the prices move accordingly. When the earth has been examined, calculations are made and chalked on the giant slate as to the available supply of wheat for bread, and how it compares with the same period in other years. These figures are considered by the traders, they reckon the demand, they see from a fresh-made map on the walls the state of the weather all over America at that very moment, and they make their plans accordingly. On the board are marked new and official statistics of every kind having reference to the food markets of the world. Unceasingly there is a loud, harsh clack! clack! clack! of a great Morse telegraphic indicator overhead, yielding messages from the distant world to the man who receives them here. He takes them, and with the huge piece of chalk in his hand he skips acrobatically from one end of his platform to the other and alters the figures as messages from the west, from London, from Paris, Odessa, and everywhere, acquaint him with the new prices that have just taken the place of others.

* * *

It is a marvellous drama. For a full session I watched it in a state of thrill, guided and assisted by a friendly trader who bought and sold his hundreds of thousands of bushels at intervals as his son came in with commissions. In the Pit I was the forbidden thing, a stranger, and at first there were the same signs of hostility and rough play threatened as when one who is not a member seeks to enter the Stock Exchange in London. But the old hand at travelling in America knows how to deal with situations such as this. Firmness, confidence, defiance, and a plain suggestion that though Americans may be magnificently smart, they are not yet kings of the earth—with a friendly smile after the defiance—and the matter is completely adjusted. Later no extra firmness was sufficient to prevent a part of the Pit from struggling against itself to entertain the stranger; it led the way to new wonders in secluded refreshment-halls. And afterwards, in the room of the secretary, with Lincoln looking from a great portrait on the walls, Mr John C. F. Merrill, the chief officer of the Board, completed a wondrous story. He told me how in a single year Chicago had handled 500,000,000 bushels of grain, nearly 300,000 tons of hay, 16,000,000 head of live-stock, 270,000,000 pounds of butter, 90,000,000 pounds of cheese, and so on, with 2,500,000,000 pounds of cured and other meats received and shipped. Mr Secretary Merrill, moreover, was pleased to deliver to me a lecture presenting the ethics of speculation in a new way, and a

convincing way. I saw the necessity of Chicago and the Board of Trade, and wondered more. What a wide separation between this din of the Pit where the traffic in precious wheat goes on and the little village church where thanks are given at the harvest festivals now!

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

CHAPTER VII.

FOLLOWED upon that spring morning an unforgettable summer in the life of John Pardon. Toiling week after week at the Powells' ranch, he worked early and late; yet did each evening find him returning to his lonely home, filled with happy thoughts and in buoyant spirits. Years seemed to slide off his shoulders. He grew stouter, took to whistling again about the house, and to teasing old 'Sally,' until she, too, renewed her youth and waxed playful. Side by side with Bob Powell he built fences, repaired roofs, dug ditches, while the young Britisher's fair skin waxed daily browner, and the shapely hands callous with rough work. Always ready to do his full share and more of the dirtiest, hardest job, Bob quickly won not only the respect but the sincere devotion of the big Westerner, evidenced by the quiet way in which he contrived to spare the younger man's shoulders many a heavy burden. Never a word of complaint escaped Bob Powell's lips, and Pardon, having gradually learned from chance remarks that up till the time he and Joy left their home in the Old Country they had lived in the lap of luxury and ease, tacitly wondered and admired.

And through all the busy days of toil flitted, like one of the golden orioles which wove their nests in the tops of the swaying poplars, Bob's sister Joy, busy as a bee among her flowers and poultry, singing, playing with the dogs, always ready with cool lemonade or juicy fruit for the two men labouring in the hot sun, and constantly filling John Pardon's pockets or the wagon's jockey-box with some welcome addition to his simple meals. Sunday evenings still, as for many years past, found him, dressed in his best, sitting beside Mary Patrick, chatting pleasantly of the same old things in the same old way, though of his busy weeks at the Powells' ranch he said but little.

'John, you 're looking lots stouter!' exclaimed Mary on one of these evenings, when, after several attempts to smother a yawn, Pardon pleaded that he 'must pull out early to-morrer mornin', so had better hit out for home pretty soon.'

'Guess hard work agrees with you,' she commented, the while regarding him in a half-questioning manner.

John laughed; then, suddenly growing grave as he rose to go, he put the oft-repeated query. 'Well, Mary?' he asked quietly; then, carried away by a rush of conflicting emotions, he seized both her hands, crying out, 'Mary, for God's sake, how long do you expect a man to wait, and to eat his heart out livin' alone? I swore I wouldn't bother you—and, so help me. I don't mean to break my promise—but, Mary, it 's awful lonesome in the old house—and'—— He broke off, looking down appealingly into the woman's face.

Now, although her woman's quick instinct warned her that this was a critical moment in the lives of them both, it also caused her to sense that though John Pardon spoke passionately, it was no longer for *herself* but for his *own* self he was pleading. Besides, he looked, as she had said, stout and well—seemed to be in excellent spirits. Why, then, need he worry *her?*

All this flashed through her mind, made selfish and narrow by persistently shutting her eyes to the wrong she had done her lover; so, freeing her hands, she replied decisively and with ill-concealed petulance, 'Oh John! *You* eating your heart out! Why, you 're as fat and flourishing as one of Joe's turkeys. And as for being *lonesome*,' she continued rather breathlessly and with a sudden flash in her dark eyes, 'you are always at Powells' nowadays. I guess Miss Powell feeds you well.'

'Yes,' answered Pardon quietly, taking up his hat—'yes, Mary, she sure does. Well, good-night, Mary. See you Sunday. So-long!' then turned his steps homeward with a wild tumult of thoughts in his sorely tried heart.

Throughout the hot summer months work at the Powells' ranch continued incessantly, the while the friendly but never obtrusive man of the Far West became almost a part of the small family, whose surroundings and antecedents in the Old Country had been so antipodal to his own. Yet for him this self-same easy footing in their home was fraught with a wholly unsuspected danger, in his relations with the fair young English girl. Quite unwittingly, even to himself, Joy Powell became the very light of his circumscribed, disappointed life—literally the 'joy' of his heart, and although they were thrown together solely by the accident of 'the trivial round, the common task,' Pardon thus gained an intimate knowledge of the girl's character, and that which began as admiration ripened into absolute worship. Only on the rare occasions when, their fingers meeting as he took from her hand some too heavy burden, he felt a sudden thrill and the hot blood rushing to his face, was Pardon himself actively aware of the new passion

that in his maturer years was threatening to uproot the love of his youth; yet even at such times was his emotion instantly checked by the quiet unconsciousness of the girl herself. For across the mind of Joy Powell, inured from childhood to the almost impassable barriers of class distinctions, there never flitted the bare possibility that this plain man of the Western world could or would fall in love with her; and if not across her own mind, still less that of her brother. Between themselves they spoke of him with increasing warmth and thorough liking, while good breeding and quick intuition led to a frank acceptance of his friendship, neither word nor look emphasising the wide difference between them, of which, nevertheless, Pardon himself was fully conscious.

Yet sometimes, when, the day's work ended, Pardon, after a cheery, 'Well, so-long, Bobby' (for he never made pretence of addressing him as Mr Powell, and the young man himself, understanding, felt no resentment), and 'Good-night, Miss Joy; you 've sure bu'st the linin' o' my pockets *this* time!' set out for his lonely home, the girl would stand watching his tall figure, with its easy, graceful swing, disappearing through the bush, and, turning to her brother, would say, 'Poor John Pardon! How miserable it does seem for him to go back to that big, empty house, and no one to welcome him!' to which Bob would reply laconically, 'Must be beastly; but I suppose he 's got used to it.'

However, there came an evening when the shutter was to be lifted ever so little from the happy unconsciousness of the English girl. There was a brilliant moon, and Bob Powell having decided that some timbers had better be hauled the next day, saddled their horses, and he and Joy loped away through the sweet night-air to see Pardon and arrange for him to bring his team on the morrow. It was their first visit, and at the sound of the horses' hoofs fast approaching Pardon's heart beat faster.

In a moment he was standing bareheaded at his gate, longing to help Joy to dismount, but forcing himself to leave that to Bob, and calling out, 'How d 'ye do, folks? Just step right in. Glad to see ye!'

'Oh,' said Joy, 'you were sitting on the veranda. Mayn't we sit there too? It 's too glorious a night to go indoors.'

'Sure!' said Pardon; but to his eager offer to fetch chairs Joy again demurred, perching herself beside Bob on the veranda-steps; and while the men rolled their cigarettes her blue eyes glanced here and there, taking in her surroundings. 'What a nice old house it is! And such a wide veranda—and, oh Bob, do see what a lovely orchard Pardon has! And the view over those fields to the hills! It must be beautiful in the sunlight—isn't it, Pardon? I 'm sure you must love it all,' she continued, turning a glowing face towards him.

'Yes, Miss Joy,' he replied, 'it ain't a bad old shack—specially *night-times*, when you can't see where the paint 's off!' and he laughed. 'But,' he added, in a tone whose forced cheerfulness did not deceive the sensitive ear of the listener, 'what 's the use o' havin' a purty cage if you ain't got no little bird to sing in it?' Then, fearful of having thus exposed the thoughts stirring so loudly in his heart, he jerked his chair backward into the shadows, though not before Joy Powell had detected a look in his eyes that sent the colour flying to her cheeks and made the slender fingers tighten over the back of old 'Sally,' who, without apology, had taken possession of the unwonted luxury of a woman's lap.

Thereafter, while the men discussed the next day's work, Joy sat very quiet, gently smoothing the old cat, and now and again glancing at the dark silhouette of John Pardon; whilst he, from under the protecting shadows, feasted his eyes upon the girl's fair face and beautiful hair, among whose soft strands the silvery moonbeams shone.

'Tired, Joy?' queried Bob, on their way home, as the girl, unwontedly silent, loped her gray mare beside him.

'No, Bob; but I do feel dreadfully sorry for John Pardon; he seems so awfully alone in the world.'

'Yes,' assented Bob; 'but, you know, it 's only half-a-minute to Michael O'Keefe's ranch, and they spend most of their evenings together, so it 's not so bad for him as it seems.'

'Oh yes; I had forgotten O'Keefe,' said Joy, touching up 'Fay.'

(*Continued on page 710.*)

JOY-RIDERS AT THE FRONT.

By MARSHALL NORMAN.

OVERHEAD the sun shines in a cloudless sky. Its heat parches the wheat in the fields; the scarlet poppies droop their heads despairingly. Its rays scintillate from the white ridges that scar the cornfields. The effect is that of irregular rolling waves breaking into foam on a sandy shore. Not a sound disturbs the quiet of the afternoon. All nature is somewhat under the welter of the insufferable heat. The air dances and shimmers over the beautiful white ridges.

But for the stagnant whisper of decay, it is a pretty picture. No human is visible in the landscape. But behind and below the sparkling

ridges is a subterranean city. Above is a country of the dead. Below is a tortuous township of the quick. The beauty of the ridges hides the ugliness of war; but the scarlet of the poppies senses the trailing smear of blood.

Into the sullen quiet comes a distant, droning noise. It comes from the blue of the heavens; its vibrations dance with the shimmering air. From the trenches a hundred thousand men gaze heavenward. There is a compelling fascination in that low-toned drone. Up yonder, silhouetted against the blue of the sky, an aeroplane is flying eastward. The white wings glint and flash in the sunlight. They might be fashioned of silver gauze. The aeroplane seems evanescent, ethereal, utterly removed from the sordidness of trench warfare.

Suddenly from beyond the opposite rise comes a short, loud-mouthed bang. It is followed by others, ever faster and more insistent. A little white cloud opens out beside the white-winged aeroplane. A faint 'boom' punctuates the endless drone of the tireless engine. A little cluster of tiny puffs surrounds the white-winged wonder in the heavens—some near, some far off. But still the shimmering aeroplane pursues its unwavering purpose amid the growing puffs that tell of hate and death.

Yonder, say the men of the under-world, is Romance, the Glory of War, the *joie de vivre!* Yonder is Life. Here is but stagnation and Death.

The shining aeroplane flies onward to its accompaniment of the droning engine. The white puffs have grown and expanded, and all but disappeared in the blue of the heavens. Swish! patter, patter! the lead and iron that rose towards the shining wonder overhead fall back with hissing menace amongst the beings of the under-world—the Children of the Trenches. Here is but stagnation and Death.

. . . . . .

The aeroplane stands on the edge of the aerodrome—a thing of beauty. A bevy of mechanics flutter round it: riggers retting the wings and empennage with practised eyes; fitters testing the valve clearances with the pride of the mechanical lover; an armourer fitting the observer's gun on its mounting and placing the drums of ammunition in their boxes.

The pilot and the observer come down the cinder-track to the aerodrome. The pilot glances at his wrist-watch, and speaks to his companion; for our service aeroplanes run (or fly) to time. They button up their leather coats, strap their fur-lined helmets, and pull on their great gloves; their feet and legs are encased in monstrous sheepskin thigh boots. Their appearance is grotesque. They look like the bloated shadows of men that a candle sometimes silhouettes upon a wall. Yet no one appears to notice that; it is far too commonplace.

They climb into their seats—the pilot in front, and the observer behind. The latter tests his gun-mounting, and glances round to see that everything—ammunition-drums, verey pistol and flares, and revolver—is in its proper place. The pilot loads his gun, then wriggles himself down comfortably in his seat. He tries the controls, and looks quickly over his instruments. Then he glances up.

A watchful 'Ack Emma' is awaiting this moment. 'Switch off, petrol on, suck in, sir!' he calls from his position in front of the propeller.

The pilot grunts to himself, and seems somewhat restless in his movements. The sound of a pump is heard, then the clicking of levers. 'Suck in!' he replies.

Round goes the propeller, while the excess petrol dribbles out on the ground from a pipe beneath the engine. The propeller stops. The Ack Emma wipes his oily hands on his overalls. He scrapes his feet on the ground to make sure of his foothold. He strikes a somewhat graceful attitude, with his hands resting on the trailing edge of the propeller. 'Contact, sir!' he calls.

A momentary pause, then a click.

'Contact!' from the pilot.

The Ack Emma balances on one foot, then swings lustily on to the other. Round goes the propeller, and the engine tremors into life. For half-a-minute she runs steadily. The pilot's head is inside the cockpit. He watches his revolving-counter, glances at his pulsator-glass, and listens to the hum of the engine. He moves a lever and turns a tap. The engine roars full-throated. The aeroplane quivers with the pride of it. But the chocks under the wheels, the Ack Emmas on the wing-tips, and the grim-faced individual hanging on to the tail in the full blast of the slip-stream check its impetuous desire.

The roar changes to a gentle hum. The pilot waggles a hand above his head. The chocks are withdrawn. The suffering individual on the tail crawls from inside the elevator control-wires, and retrieves his cap from the cornfield. The pilot adjusts his goggles comfortably over his eyes.

The engine hums a little louder, and the aeroplane taxies out into the aerodrome. From the rear, as she rolls over the uneven ground, she looks like a huge butterfly. At the end of the drome she turns into the wind. The engine roars full-throated. The aeroplane, unchecked, gathers speed; her tail rises slightly; she rushes along the ground . . . and is in the air. For a moment she flies close to earth; then, gathering confidence, she soars upward and onward, climbing fast. The Ack Emmas gaze after her fondly. It was their care, their expression seems to say, that enabled her to do it.

The aeroplane circles twice round the aerodrome, the drone of the engine growing fainter as she gains height. A last sweep round, and she is off, heading east towards 'the lines.'

On the ground the heat was suffocating. The pilot and the observer left the ground with their pores running sweat under their huge flying-kit. But up here, at eight thousand feet, it is cold. As the pilot glances out from behind his cunning little wind-screen between the traversing arms of the machine-gun, the blast of cold air meets his face and penetrates the leather and fur that appear so invulnerable on the ground. The observer, poor devil! is always in that terrific hurricane that hurtles backward from the propeller. It is his birthright. He has no place for a wind-screen, and no time to shelter behind one if he had. Once across the line, he must look out for Huns, be ready to use his gun at a second's notice, watch where he is going, and take the photographs when they reach the pin-point.

Below them the country is spread out like a map but for one small difference. It appears saucer-shaped. The rim of the horizon rises to meet the sky, and where they meet there is a light haze. Overhead the sky is ethereally blue. Occasionally a light, trailing wisp of vapour drifts past—from the ground it is a fleecy cloudlet—scarcely obscuring their vision downward. As it passes, the machine lifts suddenly, and as suddenly falls again. A cloud 'bump' is a curious phenomenon.

Straight down the country is beautifully clear—roads, canals, rivers, lakes, and forests stand out distinctly. In between and all around there are little towns and villages that look absurdly close together. On the left the sea hangs dull and leaden, fringed by a sparkle of sandy foreshore. Blighty is over there somewhere, hidden in the haze of heat. Almost underneath is a perfect picture—a tiny, circular town; it is splendidly laid out in clearly defined lines; it looks clean and healthy; and round it, completely encircling it in loving embrace, run a river and a canal. Its beauty lies in its artistry of outline and its kaleidoscopic harmony of colour—the blue-gray of the town set in the silver of the enfolding water amid the greens and browns of the surrounding country. It is like a jewel of great price.

But on ahead a great smear lies across the land like the trailing slime of a giant slug. Dirty brown it looks; not the healthy brown of a pleasant land. It is the deadened brown of disease, the blotch of death. It is the living weal of war. And even from the air—where earthly tragedy seems so remote, where sordidness is ofttimes witched to charming beauty, and ugliness lies hid beneath a veil of rising smoke—it looks what it is, an open sore.

And towards it the aeroplane floats, rising and falling rhythmically, slowly, to the song of the engine. For an aeroplane seen from another machine in the air is quite unlike its appearance from the ground. It has a motion akin to that of a small yacht riding at anchor in an oily swell. An aeroplane seen from the ground may be a thing of beauty and of wonder. It is thrice so seen from the air.

The pilot glances at his altimeter; the pointer reads ten thousand feet. His watchful glance takes in the meaning of his many indicators; his ear reads the music that his engine sings. All must be well, now that they are about to cross the lines.

The dirty brown smear is hardly behind them; but things seem to move so slowly from that height that it may be three or four miles back.

'Woof! . . . woof! woof! woof!'

The sound of the bursting 'Archie' reaches him through the song of the engine; but he keeps almost straight on, for it is wide of its mark. Again and again the same sound comes to his ears like the unhealthy cough of a missing engine. He smiles quietly to himself.

'Crack—rack—rack—r-r—rack!'

The pilot rapidly moves his controls. The aeroplane heels up and swerves. Up, steady, then swoop to the other side. The pilot's face is fierce below its mask.

'"Archie" was ruddy good that time,' he mutters to himself.

He had smelt the reek of the smoke-fumes in his nostrils, heard the whine of metal hissing through the air. He saw a rent in his planes.

Again it comes, the hideous, horrible, sudden 'crack!' that 'Archie' mouths when he bursts close. The wuff of it forces the tail up, the nose goes down, and at the same instant the aeroplane has swerved and side-slipped. 'Archie' has got their height. They must go lower. Down they dive.

Nine thousand feet! warns the altimeter.

The pilot straightens out again. He glances hurriedly down to earth. There is the place they want. Good! He lifts the mouthpiece and calls down to the observer, 'How are the photos?'

'Got six still to go,' comes the muffled answer in his ear.

The bus turns in a quiet circle over the places they want to photograph. 'Archie' has stopped. The pilot looks around him, scanning the sky suspiciously. He can see nothing. Suddenly he hears the muffled whisper in his ear again: 'Finished. Turn for home.'

He turns and heads her westward; and as she banks on the turn, he sees ahead, and just below, the cause of 'Archie's' cessation—a Hun scout climbing up under their tail. He had been coming up, sitting on his tail, in such a position that the observer, intent on his pin-points, could not see him. He had very nearly got them 'sitting.' The pilot takes it all in automatically. He sticks his nose down in a dive, and shouts down the mouthpiece to the observer, 'Hun below!'

His engine off, he is diving fast; and suddenly,

as the Hun comes into his sights, his machine-gun goes 'poop-oop-oop!' The Hun swerves in a graceful Immelmann turn at the sound of the bullets cracking past his ears. But the observer has been waiting for just such a chance. As the Hun turns over, the sharp staccato of the observer's gun breaks out. He cannot miss—the range is too close. The tracers fly dead into his 'guts.' The Hun slips, dives; then goes spinning down in that terrifying, turning dive. Splinters fly out from his machine. Faster and faster he falls. The observer's gun stops. A wing folds back in the Hun machine, and seems to check its fall. Then it spins round slowly, drifting down like a handful of crumpled paper.

The observer looks round and scans the sky. Nothing above. He looks below. For a few seconds he sees nothing; then he spots three machines coming up fast. He grabs the telephone. 'Put your nose down and go like stink. Three Huns coming up.'

The engine roars once more. The pilot pushes a wheel forward. The air-speed indicator-pointer moves round the dial ninety, one hundred, one hundred and ten miles per hour. He glances at the altimeter. Seven thousand feet.

'Woof—oof—oof—woof!'

The line 'Archie.' Thank Heaven! there are the trenches. He puts his nose down a little steeper—one hundred and fifteen, one hundred and twenty miles an hour. He is going too fast for 'Archie.' 'Archie' can never touch him at this rate. The Huns have dropped out of the chase. The photos are safe. The 'woofs' of the 'Archie' become fainter, and die away.

The muffled whisper sounds in his ear again: 'It's all right now; you can flatten out.'

He cuts off the supply of petrol to the engine, and slowly winds back a wheel. The rush of air diminishes; the aeroplane is gliding sedately back to the aerodrome at a steady sixty miles per hour.

WITHOUT SANCTION OF ADMIRALTY.

IX.

BY this time it was 11.45, and the wardroom servants were laying the cloth for lunch, that meal being served at twelve o'clock in the navy. Rushbrook was having a bitters with a group of naval officers. 'Hurrah!' he cried when the staff-surgeon tapped him on the shoulder. 'Have something, O'Brien, and stay for lunch.'

'Right-o. When did you get back from the Baltic?'

'A few weeks ago; we've just finished our refit. O'Brien, this is Macmurdo, who's with me. Crawley'—indicating a staff-paymaster—'has just come home from the Adriatic, and been appointed to the *Prometheus*. Sedley here lost his seaplane yesterday, and nearly his life, so please overlook his personal appearance.'

This was a bit of a gibe on the commander's part, for Sedley's uniform was quite spotless. His legs, however, were appallingly small for his colossal body, and the wholesale 'pulling' of them, which his messmates had indulged in ever since he was a cadet at Osborne, eventually had led to his changing over to the Royal Naval Air Service.

By the time they sat down to lunch they were talking 'shop' and service personalities, and prancing from subject to subject in the way of naval officers.

'We're going for a spin on the surface in half-an-hour, doc.,' Rushbrook said. 'Why don't you come along?'

'I've got to take a case to the hospital-ship; otherwise I should be delighted.'

A signalman came up. 'Staff-Surgeon O'Brien, sir?'

'Yes; what is it?'

'A signal has come through, sir,' he said: '"No hospital-boat available until 4 P.M. unless case is exceptionally urgent." Any reply, sir?'

'Not at the moment,' said O'Brien.

'Why can't you bring him along in the submarine, doc.?' Rushbrook chimed in. 'I'm going in that direction. Is it a cot case?'

'No; he can walk all right. It isn't exactly a physical infirmity that's troubling him.'

'Well, then, you'd better come,' the commander urged; 'he'd be a jolly sight more comfortable with me than in a hospital-boat, from what I know of them.'

O'Brien hesitated. 'It would scarcely be in accordance with Admiralty orders.'

'I'll take any risk going in that direction,' the commander assured him, ordering a couple of glasses of port.

'Good,' the staff-surgeon said. 'Getting into trouble has been the specialty of my life. Well, here's to you, Rushbrook,' he murmured, raising his glass.

'Cheer-o,' replied the commander. 'We'll start at once, then; so you might see if your patient is ready.'

O'Brien found Joughins in the wardroom. 'We've changed our plans a bit, Joughins,' he said. 'A hospital-boat isn't available at present, but we're taking passage in O 2. Wrap yourself up carefully, and don't feel nervous; we're not going to submerge.'

'Oh, I'm not a bit afraid at this time of day, sir. In my saner moments,' said Joughins, who had had a couple of years at the university, and

was inclined to be poetical, 'I quite realise my trouble is but a fantasy of the night.'

X.

They were soon aboard the submarine, entering by way of the fore-hatch. Many of the crew remained on deck, where Lieutenant Macmurdo, R.N.R., was in charge. The weather was changing rapidly, and, in view of the approaching rain, Macmurdo ordered his men to go below for their oilskins. He then had all the hatch-lids closed except the conning-tower one.

Rushbrook, O'Brien, and Joughins sat in the amidships compartment, which contained a settee and a small leather arm-chair. The commander's cabin opened into it from the starboard side, while ranged along the other were chart-cupboards and lockers. There was scarcely any motion; they merely felt the throb of the Diesel engine. Rushbrook showed them some recent improvements. There was the speed-indicator, or log, for instance, which pointed to ten knots. Joughins was very keen to look through the periscope, but unfortunately a fog was rolling up, and he could not get a clear view of the O 2's surroundings.

On deck Lieutenant Macmurdo laboured under the same difficulty, and cursed a climate that made such an abrupt change in the weather possible. As he came under the lee of Borodino Point he was about to call the captain on deck, when a dark object, coming at great speed, loomed up on his starboard bow. Before he could alter course to avoid collision, the destroyer crashed into the O 2, hurling her aside, and causing her to vibrate from stem to stern. The submarine dipped at an acute angle as the water poured in, and Macmurdo, seeing the boat was sinking by the head, and not having time to go below, pushed the lid of the conning-tower down.

'Close the for'ard water-tight door,' the commander ordered within.

A couple of seamen carried out his orders. At the same time Rushbrook pulled the emergency-lever that released the O 2's heavy, but detachable, keel, in the hope that the added buoyancy would make the boat come to the surface again. The weight of the water shipped, however, was too much for the submarine, for she continued to dive, till she grounded on the bottom in ten fathoms of water. Unfortunately the sluice of the voice-pipe communicating with the for'ard compartment could not be shut, and water poured aft. It took some time to stop a flow that had such pressure behind it. By this time sea-water had penetrated into the battery-tank situated under the deck, and as it came into contact with the cells containing sulphuric acid, chemical combination took place. Hydrochloric acid gas was formed freely, and the occupants of O 2 began coughing and choking, and water commenced to stream from their irritated eyes.

'Respirators!' yelled O'Brien, in agony.

Rushbrook pointed to a locker. The staff-surgeon pulled out the sausage-shaped things, and helped officers and men to put them on, finally adjusting one on himself. Then they donned protecting-goggles. Naturally they could not speak to each other under such circumstances.

The commander got pad and pencil. 'I'm sorry, doc., getting you into this mess,' he wrote.

O'Brien replied in similar fashion: 'Don't worry about me. My only concern is our friend the patient.'

XI.

With death rapping on the sides of the submarine, and a fairly strong representative within in the shape of poisonous gas, these men sat there in acute possession of all their faculties. Standing up against the incongruous picture they made in their anti-gas dress, and the intricate mechanism of the submarine, were a few homely reminders such as mess dishes, a wine-glass, a pipe, or a small print or photograph tacked on a locker. Such awful situations, where it is a toss-up whether or not annihilation occurs, often steady the nerves of men, provided the tension is not kept up too long. Some of this lethal nonchalance was infused even into Joughins, who was about to be invalided out of the service owing to nerve-frailty. At the moment, he picked up a copy of the *Sketch*, and mechanically turned over pages which he saw through the yellow glare of his goggles. How flippant and futile seemed many of the items! There was perhaps Lady Flamboyant walking in the Park, or little Miss Smirks, the latest revue star. Apart from an odd reflection or two of this nature, the trio experienced few of the feelings one is supposed to have on like occasions, such as the events of one's past life passing before the mind's eye in a sort of strident and insistent panorama. It may be the many golden opportunities he had lost flashed over Staff-Surgeon O'Brien's brain, but the predominating feeling that throbbed and exulted within the breast of officer and man alike was an instinctive one, the heritage of countless years of animal evolution, development, and strife against adverse conditions tending to obliterate life—the desire to live, not for any particular purpose, but merely for the sake of living.

XII.

Rushbrook took up the indispensable signal-pad, and began writing briskly. 'The only way of escape is by conning-tower. Three of you will enter at a time, and I'll let compressed air in till the upper lid is forced open. Two of you 'll allow yourselves to be borne to the surface by the uprushing air. The third man will pull the lid down again, so as to prepare the way for the next lot; and the process will be repeated until you are all ejected.'

Goggles and respirators were now discarded for life-saving helmets containing a chemical 'purifier' of respired air. O'Brien, Joughins, and an engine-room artificer named Rogers were the first to enter the conning-tower. As soon as the lid was closed behind them Rushbrook opened the valves which retained air in iron bottles under great pressure. The sensation of being in a hermetically sealed chamber where air was being accumulated till its pressure was sufficient to overcome that of the sea at such a depth was intolerable. At least Joughins and O'Brien found it so. The life within them, which is normally a diffusible and impalpable affair, seemed to be compressed by some gigantic force till it became concentrated into a tight lump within their chest, tugging at its moorings, and endeavouring to leave the body. Rogers, on the other hand, did not appear to suffer much discomfort. He was a contortionist, and very thin, and possibly incapable of further compression. Hugging the side of the conning-tower, he stood by to close the lid after its 'pop' allowed the staff-surgeon and his patient to escape. This event happened quite suddenly, just like steam blowing off through a safety-valve; and, indeed, the action was similar. Joughins and O'Brien were instantly shot out, and found themselves being lifted up with a mighty gurgle. As they ascended, and the pressure became less, the viable force again expanded, and this time it felt as if all the pores of the body were being stretched and torn asunder so that empty spaces might once more be occupied. Up, up, they came, cerebrating agonised thoughts as quickly as films form impressions in a cinema-machine. When the two helmets bobbed to the surface, several picket-boats were on the scene of the disaster, and they were both hauled on board. So condensed were the impressions of those few seconds that when their helmets were removed they seemed to have come back to a world they had left a very long time ago. Seamen cast their great-coats upon them, and they lay there, thinking of the others who had yet to arrive. Rogers was the first, and he was secured with difficulty, turning over and over in the sea. The others followed in rapid succession, till everybody was up except the commander.

Fifteen minutes had elapsed since the last man had been taken on board, and still there was no sign of Rushbrook. A hospital-boat came up. 'I have orders from the flagship to take all survivors at once to the *Bengal*,' the skipper said.

'If I go, there 'll be no one to look after the commander,' the staff-surgeon objected.

'A surgeon is being sent by the flagship, sir,' said a gunner who was in charge of a diving-party; 'and, if I 'm not mistaken, here he comes,' indicating a picket-boat with brass funnels which was bearing down on them.

'Hold on a minute, skipper,' O'Brien said to the captain of the hospital-boat.

'Ay, ay, sir,' the latter responded.

The surgeon saluted O'Brien.

'Will you see these people off to the *Bengal*, Ingleby?' the staff-surgeon said to him. 'One is a surgeon-probationer, and he 'll tell you all about it.'

'Certainly, sir,' said the young surgeon, jumping across to the hospital-boat.

At the same time the men on board the diving-craft began heaving round the wheel of the air-supplying machine, and one of the divers descended to investigate the wreck.

XIII.

Some one had to be left behind in the O 2 in the uncomfortable position of having a conning-tower full of sea-water intervening between him and the opening through which the others had effected their escape. That man was the commander, for the *modus operandi* of the thing depended on his doing this. There was, however, a possible means of making his exit in another direction, which Rushbrook had already thought out. He was about to put his plan into execution, when an overwhelming feeling of poignant regret at having to leave his snug surroundings assailed him, and he paused on the very threshold, so to speak, of the chamber which had been his home for so long. There was still enough current in the batteries to keep the electric lights burning, and apart from the discomfort of wearing a respirator, and a sort of acrid taste in his mouth from the hydrochloric acid gas that had escaped the neutralising medium, there was nothing, except perhaps the deadly stillness, to suggest that he was not resting on the bed of the Baltic, in perfect security, as he had done many a time. There were no voices to break the silence; he did not hear the snores of his men slumbering in their bunks, for submersion seems to relax the soft palate and infuse a noise into one's sleepy breathing. The peacefulness of the scene was, in fact, more than soothing; it had a somnific suggestion about it that made him sit down on the settee and wonder whether it was worth while attempting to escape. For what would he live? There would be a court of inquiry into the accident, and his every action would be scrutinised. If he was not reprimanded, at least the tag of one disaster would cling to him for a long time. Now that he thought of it, too, it had been a strenuous effort ever since war began, and he felt tired and weary, and had not the heart to go on.

In this mood he went into his cabin, and his eye wandered over all the accessories that mean home to a naval officer, and then his gaze finally rested on *her* photograph. Here was one more reason for not living; the pain of her recollection would be obliterated, and yet the perverseness of his nature was manifested in his having kept her features

before him. She was a dark-haired girl, and when she originally smiled on his advances, his adaptability for feeling and doing things seemed to be as expansile and his view of life as mellow as a gold-beater's leaf. Later on she had declared herself frightened at his excess of feeling for her; and finally she decided she must have as a husband one whose career was such that she could depend on his presence. He wondered what she would say when she heard; probably 'How dreadful, poor chap!' over a cup of tea, and then she would pass on to some trivial subject. Yet Rushbrook kissed her picture before quitting the cabin.

XIV.

By this time the current in the damaged batteries began to give out, and Rushbrook, sitting down on the settee once more, watched it grow dimmer and dimmer, till even the glow died out. Then a new light seemed to appear, and he became aware of a persistent flashing, which kindled some chords of memory within him. 'Good heavens!' he thought, 'that can't be the lights;' and a shudder passed through him as the thing seemed to visualise in his mind the letters of his own name, 'Rushbrook, Rushbrook, Rushbrook.' He saw them being formed before him, and yet they were not real letters. His system, which had been recoiling from the continued strain, was elastic enough still to respond to the human wand which was endeavouring to touch him. It dawned on him that this was no phantasmagoria of a diseased imagination, but a diver outside the submarine flashing a signal to him down the periscope, in Morse code. 'Rushbrook, Rushbrook, Rushbrook,' it kept saying. Overcoming the inertia which had been leading him to his doom, he groped his way into his cabin again, and found the torchlight which he always kept under his pillow. With this he secured a hammer from the engine-room, and began tapping a reply on the side of the submarine, near the conning-tower.

'Rushbrook,' the diver flashed.

'Yes,' the commander tapped.

'Are you all right?'

'Yes.'

'Come out through engine-room hatch. I'll stand by to help you,' the commander made out.

'Right-o,' he answered. 'Why, that was my original scheme,' Rushbrook thought. 'What the deuce came over me?' The last half-hour seemed like a dream to him now, and, without delaying further, he went into the little engine-room, and closed the water-tight door behind him. After discarding his respirator, he opened the Kingston valve, letting the sea come in from below, and this, welling up, compressed the air as the chamber shrank in size. When the sea had reached his armpits, the pressure had become positive enough for him to work the geared wheel that opened the hatch-cover. The commander then felt himself being forced up; his head and arms were already through the opening, when a mishap occurred. The outrushing air, insinuating itself into the body-attachment of the helmet, so inflated him that he was unable to get out. He was becoming weak and limp, and consciousness seemed to be fading away, when he felt himself being pulled violently out by the diver; and the next thing he knew, a nursing-sister was bending over him on board a naval hospital-ship.

XV.

O'Brien, who was standing alongside the cot, put his finger to his lips, enjoining silence. 'You've had a narrow squeak, Rushbrook,' he said, 'and you'll have to be quiet for a few days.'

This admonition, however, was of little avail when Rushbrook's eyes met those of the nursing-sister. 'Vera!' he exclaimed, throwing his arms round her neck and kissing her violently.

'Forgive me for having followed you into the navy after treating you so badly.'

O'Brien left them softly. He met Macmurdo in the alleyway. 'Glad to see you're safe, sir,' the latter said.

'Thanks, Macmurdo,' replied O'Brien; 'I'd forgotten your crowd. Any casualties?'

'No, sir; they're down in the men's ward, waiting for their clothes to dry, and, incidentally, for instructions from the flagship regarding their disposal.'

'Good,' O'Brien said. 'I need a bit of drying myself.'

'They'll do that for you in the evaporating-room. If you like, you may use the cabin they gave me, and an orderly will look after you.'

'Thanks very much. Perhaps you'll also be so kind as to have them make a signal to the *Alcibiades* for a boat to take me back.'

'Right-o.'

The fleet-surgeon of the *Bengal* looked in to see if O'Brien was comfortable. He found him tucked up in bed. 'You're looking none the worse for your experience,' he said. 'They're bringing you in a cup of tea; and, by the way, a special effort is being made to dry your gear quickly. I've chipped in a collar, and one of my surgeons will lend you a cap. I know you'll want to return to your ship spick-and-span as usual.'

'I'm very much obliged, sir,' O'Brien said. 'Now that I think of it, could you tell me anything about young Joughins, the surgeon-probationer? I haven't seen anything of him since coming on board. How is he?'

'Gone,' answered the fleet-surgeon.

'Gone! Where?'

'Back to his ship.'

'The *Roister Doister*?'

'Some funny name of that sort.'

'Well, I'm blessed! The rascal! Why, I was sending him in.'

'We're somewhat cramped for space,' the fleet-surgeon said; 'and as he stoutly declared he was all right now, and wanted to go back to his ship, we let him have his way. Great shock, as you know, often works wonders in such cases,' the P.M.O. concluded.

'The staff-surgeon's boat is here from the *Alcibiades*,' a sick-berth steward announced.

A few minutes later an orderly came along with his clothes, and it did not take O'Brien long to get into them. He was a bit wobbly at first, but a stiff whisky-and-soda put him right, and when he went over the ship's side into the picket-boat he showed no signs of the strenuous afternoon he had experienced.

Lieutenant Deans, R.N.R., was on watch in the *Alcibiades* when he came alongside. By this time it was dusk. Deans had, of course, heard of the accident by means of intercepted signals, but he had not the slightest idea the staff-surgeon was involved in it.

'Had a good day, sir?' he asked as O'Brien came on to the quarter-deck.

'Fine,' said the staff-surgeon, going below.

THE END.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

APPLIANCE FOR ASSISTING THOSE LEARNING TO SWIM.

ALTHOUGH most boys and girls who have the opportunity learn to swim quickly enough, there is a certain nervous minority to whom the acquirement of the art is very difficult. To such the swimming-board invented by Mr William H. Roberts of Newburyport, Massachusetts, and described in a recent number of the *Popular Science Monthly*, should be a great help, as it gives the user confidence, while allowing free play to the arms and legs. The appliance consists of two pieces of board attached to each other at a wide angle. In using it the learner straddles the middle part, where the boards are joined together. This portion is made narrow, so as not to interfere with the legs, and the learner lies face down on the front board, while the back one inclines upwards at the rear. The position is the natural one for swimming, and the buoyancy of the boards is sufficient to remove any fear of sinking.

NEW SOURCE OF RAW MATERIAL FOR MAKING MARGARINE.

Margarine is now used in such large quantities by those who can and those who cannot afford to buy butter that it has become a necessity of every-day life. Every source of raw material for the manufacture of this valuable commodity should, therefore, be developed with a view to keeping the price within reasonable limits. Hitherto margarine has been produced largely from coco-nut and palm-kernel oils; but according to a recent article in the *Scientific American* by Mr C. W. Mell, a powerful rival to these raw materials is to be found in the nuts of the cohune-palm of Central and South America. In appearance this tree resembles a bunch of huge ostrich-feathers, the branches being in the form of leaves measuring thirty to sixty feet in length, which bend over in graceful curves. The nuts hang in large clusters from near the bases of the leaves, and are covered by an outer fibrous layer which forms the pericarp. A hard shell about three-tenths of an inch thick surrounds a kernel measuring two to three inches in length, and about one and a half inches in diameter. Until recently some difficulty has been experienced in cracking the shells of these nuts, but machines have now been devised which give satisfactory results. About a quart of oil is obtained from one hundred nuts, and an average tree produces one thousand nuts a year. Mr Mell estimates that in British Honduras there are twenty-five cohune-palms to the acre, in which case the colony should be capable of producing 275,000 tons of oil annually; while Guatemala and Spanish Honduras are each credited with a still larger number of trees. Cohune-nut oil is said to be superior to that produced from coco-nuts, and to be worth more in the open market.

FERRO-CONCRETE RAILWAY-SLEEPERS.

The uses of concrete, reinforced with steel bars embedded therein, and known as ferro-concrete, appear to be well-nigh inexhaustible, one of the latest being for railway-sleepers. These, though externally the same size as wood sleepers, are made hollow. Their sides are one and a half inches thick, except where the rails rest on them, at which points the thickness is increased to two inches, and added strength and resiliency are given by oak filling-pieces. Each sleeper contains thirty-two pounds of steel rods, and weighs about three hundredweights. Tests are being made on these sleepers at Riverside, California, where they are laid down along a stretch of railway.

FISH FOUND BY THE SOUND OF THEIR SWIMMING.

The presence of large shoals of mackerel, herring, cod, and other sea fish is seldom announced by any indications on the surface of the sea, and hitherto the best places at which to shoot the nets have been chosen according to

the experienced judgment of the fishermen concerned. Recently, however, an instrument has been devised by a Norwegian whereby the passing of large numbers of fish in the vicinity of a fishing-boat may be heard, and the nets shot accordingly. The device consists of a microphone fixed under-water, which multiplies the rushing sound made by shoals of fish when swimming, so that it can be heard through a telephone-receiver in the fishing-boat. This sound is discernible at considerable distances, and the instrument indicates from which quarter it comes, so that the boat can be steered in the necessary direction.

ANTHRAX INFECTION IN SHAVING-BRUSHES.

One would hardly expect to find danger lurking in shaving-brushes, yet such is the case. According to a report by Dr Coutts and others, which has been recently issued by the Local Government Board, the instances of anthrax infection traceable to shaving-brushes numbered sixty-five in the past two years (nineteen civilians and forty-six soldiers). An investigation into several of these cases revealed the fact that the infected shaving-brushes, although purchased at different shops, were all made in the same factory. Further inquiries proved that some of the horsehair used was imported from China as 'goat's hair,' which is not compulsorily disinfected, as is foreign horsehair. Other cases discovered involved other factories, and infection was also traced to brushes made in Japan, the United States, and Canada. Measures for preventing infection from this source in future are being considered by the Board.

HINDU MAGIC SQUARE.

The progress report for the year 1915–16 of the superintendent of Hindu and Buddhist Monuments contains the following interesting description of a Hindu magic square: 'On the occasion of my inspection of the monuments of Dudhai, Jhansi District, I found at one end of, and on the underside of, a fallen lintel in the shrine known locally as the Chota Surang, a so-called magic square.

7	12	1	14
2	13	8	11
16	3	10	5
9	6	15	4

'When the lintel was in position the square was hidden by the supporting column. The temple may be assigned with some certainty to the first half of the eleventh century A.D. Mathematically it is interesting as possessing the following properties: (1) the sum of each row, of each column, and of each diagonal is 34; (2) the sum of all the numbers in each sub-square of four numbers, wherever it may be taken, is also 34.'

LIFE-SAVING SUIT WHICH KEEPS OCCUPANT DRY AND WARM.

'It's an ill wind that blows nobody good.' Even the German submarine campaign is no exception to this rule, as a rich harvest of profit is being reaped by the inventors and makers of life-saving apparatus at sea, owing to the greatly increased risks sailors and passengers in ships are subjected to. Those who go to sea now must be prepared for immersion at any time, with only a few minutes in which to prepare for it, as, when a vessel is torpedoed, she may sink before the boats can be launched, or a rough sea may prevent the carrying out of this operation even if the ship floats long enough. Hitherto life-belts have been largely depended upon in such cases; but in winter, although they will support the wearer for any length of time, death from exposure is likely to supervene unless rescue is effected quickly. A recently invented life-saving appliance, known as the 'ever-warm safety-suit,' goes far towards removing this danger. It is made of rubber, and is put on over the clothes, bands at the neck and the wrists keeping out the water entirely. The upper part is padded with a special composition possessing great buoyancy; so that even if the suit were punctured, the occupant would be in no danger of sinking. In this suit a person who has to take to the water is kept dry and warm, and a pocket is provided for holding food and drink. Under such conditions a healthy man or woman should be able to stand a long immersion without suffering any ill effects. Although this suit has been on the market for only a few months, large numbers have been purchased by passengers about to make sea voyages, and they are often worn all the time that the vessels are in the danger zone.

AIMING A BOMB FROM AN AEROPLANE.

If a bomb be dropped from an aeroplane when it is, say, ten thousand feet up, and is travelling at a speed of one hundred miles an hour, the bomb will strike the ground at a considerable distance ahead of the point vertically beneath that at which it is released, the exact spot varying with the shape of the bomb, its relative weight compared with its size, and the direction and force of the wind. In view of the long distances travelled by bombs dropped from fast aeroplanes when at great heights, it is easy to understand how difficult is the problem of hitting any particular object, assuming that the airman simply throws out bombs to the best of his judgment. Up to the time of writing, the German air-raiders have flown at great heights, and it was a foregone conclusion that

they would use some form of instrument to tell them when a bomb should be released with a view to hitting a railway station or other important building. One of the 'Gotha' aeroplanes was captured by the French in February, and an interesting description of this machine is given in a recent number of *La Nature*. The aiming instrument carried is a very ingenious contrivance, the main feature of which is a telescope hung on gimbals and pointing downwards through the floor of the bomber's compartment. It is most important that this instrument should be truly vertical during sighting, and this object is attained by a form of spirit-level, in which a bubble comes into the centre of a glass disc when the telescope is correctly set. An image of this bubble can be seen by the bomber when he is looking through the telescope, and this enables him to keep it correctly pointed regardless of the irregular motion of the aeroplane. Such an instrument by itself would, of course, be useless for the purpose in view, as the observer would see only objects exactly under the machine. Just below the telescope, therefore, is fixed a prism, which acts on the principle of the prismatic field-glass; but instead of deflecting the image at right angles, it can be set to show an object at any desired angle ahead of the aeroplane. Now, certain angles correspond with certain distances at certain heights. We will suppose, for instance, that the aeroplane is flying at a height of ten thousand feet, and that the bomb must be released half a mile in rear of the object in order to hit it. The angle corresponding to this distance at such a height is roughly fifteen degrees. The bomber, therefore, sets his prism at this angle, and the pilot keeps his machine at the correct height, and points it towards the object being aimed at. When this object comes into the centre of the view seen through the telescope, the bomber releases his bomb, which should then score a hit, provided the weather is calm. Naturally the flight of a bomb is affected by wind to some extent, and as its force in all probability does not remain constant, but varies in the different layers of air through which the bomb passes, the correction necessary for this factor can only be roughly estimated. Hence bombs can only be aimed with anything like absolute accuracy in still weather.

NEW RESCUE BREATHING APPARATUS FOR MINES.

A recent number of *Engineering* contains a very interesting description, and comments thereon, of a breathing apparatus for mines and other places where poisonous gases are to be met with, the article being based upon a report lately issued under the authority of the United States Mining Bureau. The apparatus described is of the type in which the noxious gases exhaled are absorbed, while oxygen is added as fast as it is consumed. Some idea of the importance of using effective apparatus may be gathered from the fact that even 5 per cent. of carbon dioxide in the air breathed produces a feeling of suffocation, and gives the wearer a conviction that the tubes are blocked up, 'a belief so terrifying and unfortunate that even one trained and experienced cannot resist the temptation to tear off the apparatus even in the midst of deadly gases.' Carbon dioxide is the chief poisonous constituent in exhaled breath; consequently, unless the apparatus is very carefully devised, the above percentage may easily be reached. A still more deadly gas is carbon monoxide, against which the apparatus is especially designed to protect the wearer, as this gas is generally encountered in mines where rescue-work has to be undertaken. Being odourless, and having no irritating effect upon the lungs, no warning of its presence is conveyed to the victim. The mouthpiece of the apparatus is very carefully designed to render impossible the breathing in of air from outside. At each side of the mouthpiece is a valve so arranged that when inhalation takes place, air is taken from the purified and oxygenated supply, while the spent air breathed out is discharged through another tube into the absorption apparatus. In this the carbon dioxide is taken up by sodium hydroxide cast in plates upon wire gauze, the quantity being enough to absorb about sixty cubic inches a minute, or more than is exhaled during violent exercise. Oxygen is added by ingenious appliances which vary the supply to suit the rate of breathing. The entire apparatus is carried on the back, and consists of two oxygen cylinders, a breathing-bag for the recuperated air, breathing-bellows whereby the supply of oxygen is regulated, and the various tubes and valves needed for distribution and safety. No helmet is used, but goggles are worn to protect the eyes. Similar apparatus is employed by the London Fire Brigade.

GERMAN PRE-WAR PREDOMINANCE IN THE ARTIFICIAL DYE INDUSTRY.

In an address to the Société des Amis de l'Université de Paris, recently reviewed in *Nature*, Professor Auger gave some very interesting facts in connection with the production of dyes and the German share in this industry before the war. Up to nearly the end of the eighteenth century only natural dyes were in use; but the development of modern chemistry during the first half of the nineteenth century added a number of new substances suitable for dyeing. Since that time thousands of synthetic dyes have been produced, and the industry has been captured by the Germans. Incidentally this development provided, ready made, a number of poison gases and liquids for the nefarious methods of fighting introduced by the Huns. Mention is made of the adoption of red trousers by the French army to encourage the cultivation

of madder, and the supersession of this dye by an alizarin dye purchased from a German company. Speaking of the employment of chemists by German firms for the discovery of new dyes, Professor Auger says that the employers did not impose the crippling task of obtaining immediately profitable results, a far-sighted policy which enabled them to become masters of all industries dependent upon chemical synthesis. Having acquired a practical monopoly of the substances needed for producing dyes, the Germans allowed, and even encouraged, the establishment of foreign factories for the production of the actual colours, this being a comparatively simple process. In this connection, examples are quoted of factories in France and England which imported the intermediate dye-making materials from Germany. It is satisfactory to note, however, that both of these concerns have discovered, and are now carrying on, the complete synthetic processes, and that their production of dyes is now on a larger scale than when the materials were supplied by German manufacturers.

INCOME-TAX ON TREASURY BILLS.

The following income-tax note is very valuable to all who hold British or other Treasury bills. Eminent English counsel has advised that the 'discount' is not taxable income of the investor except when it forms part of the profits of a business. This means that if a private investor has paid, say, £950 to the British Treasury for a £1000 bill with one year's currency, the £50 is not income liable to income-tax, and does not require to be set down as part of his income either in the year when the investment is made or in the year in which it matures. If this is sound its importance is obvious, for not only is it £50 free of tax, but the omission of the £50 from the statement of income may so reduce the total income as to entitle the investor to exemption of all his income (which is improbable), or to (1) an abatement when otherwise he would be entitled to none; or to a larger abatement, say £120 instead of £100; (2) the 'children' allowance by bringing the total income down to £700 or less; (3) a lower rate of tax; (4) the special war-service abatement by bringing the total income down to £300 or less; (5) escape from super-tax. It is expected that the case will go to the law-courts as a matter of course, as the amount involved, especially as regards certain companies, is very large indeed. If the immunity view be sustained in the courts there will no doubt be amending legislation, but probably not so as to touch the past, and 'the past' in this sense may include the present tax-year to April 1918. This prospect makes it all the more important to protect one's self this year if at all. The course of prudence is to hold one's hand with the tax in it, or to pay under an arrangement in writing that, if a case be taken and if it be decided against the Crown, the payer's position will be restored in all respects. We advise no one meantime to suppress the existence of this source of profit or income in any tax document, though a protest may be added that it is not taxable income. It is interesting to note that, even though the Crown were to lose the tax and were not to change the law by legislation, the Exchequer's loss in future would not be total, and might possibly be very little. These securities would then have a special value added by their income-tax immunity, with the result that the Government would be able to borrow on these bills at rates more favourable to the nation, and thus what was lost in tax would be largely saved in discount.

MEATLESS MENUS.

A *chef* of the highest standing and an eminent scientist form an admirable combination for the production of a series of menus in which the dishes shall be both appetisingly cooked and ideally suitable for the proper nourishment of the body. Such a combination has been at work in the preparation of a recently published volume, entitled *Meatless Menus*, by M. Alfred Arm, Chef de Cuisine, North British Station Hotel, Edinburgh, and Dr Laurie, Professor of Chemistry to the Royal Academy of Arts. The book has been drawn up on novel lines. It begins with a number of attractive meatless menus, carefully planned so as to secure not only that the nourishment provided shall be sufficient, but also that the various kinds of foods shall be in the proper proportion for the due maintenance of health. A meal perfect from the scientific point of view is thus provided for in each menu. The menus also contain reference numbers to the various recipes, where full instructions are given for the preparation of many dainty dishes and appetising and nourishing sauces familiar enough on the Continent, but rare in this country. Many of the recipes, which number over three hundred, are original; all have been tried in the fire of actual experience.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

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SEVENTH SERIES

FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

By ASHMORE RUSSAN.

CHAPTER I.

And soon from field, from mine, from mart,
The Home-bound legions mustered fast;
The Mother had spurned the Judas part,
True to her pledge, as in the past;
Stern-lipped, she held to the holy right—
Undaunted, turned on the Hunnish might;
Held poltroon peace at its shameful worth,
And called us all from the ends of the earth.

DON ANDRÉS—by which name he was known in the part of Mexico whither, by a series of chances, he had drifted—otherwise ex-Private Andrew Martin, once of the British army, was officially dead so far as England was concerned—dead with a big D—dead beyond likelihood of resuscitation—almost as dead as a door-nail. It could not be said that he was in the habit of bragging about the escapade—the mildest term—which had eventuated in his official demise; nevertheless, it was no secret amongst the few compatriots who, also mostly by chance, had become *finqueíros* and *hacendádos*, otherwise farmers and estate-owners, in his neighbourhood.

Often they had heard the story, told not in a spirit of boastfulness, as already testified, but with a concentrated bitterness and scornful contempt for the military service of his country, which were a measure of his own great disillusionment.

A boy of twenty, Andrew Martin had enlisted in the Midshires, with the long-cherished idea of seeing the world, and escaping from the terrible torpor of his native village of Ditchington. Also, he thought his heart was broken. Jessie Osborn was the name of the faithless damsel. In a prospective wild whirl of adventures in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and several other places freely promised by the tale-pitching recruiting-sergeant, regardless as to whether some of the places were on or off the map, he hoped to realise his youthful aspirations and forget the unfortunate and abrupt termination of his 'lad's love.' But, to his bitter disappointment, the whole period of his service was spent at Aldershot, Colchester, and other garrison towns in England. Drafts left for Egypt, India, South Africa, the Antipodes, the Near and Far Easts, wherever a battalion of the Midshires might chance to be; but his luck was not in. Many times he asked to be included; but it was his fate to stay at home, perforce, and eat his heart out.

In consequence he grew sick of army life and contemptuous of discipline, which led to numerous spells of 'C.B.' and worse. Classed as a 'bad soldier,' his officers made his life a misery. A route-march, which took his battalion to the sea, gave him his chance. A shelf of rocks, generally above water, lay a few hundred yards from the beach near which the camp had been pitched. To obtain a suit of civilian clothes was not easy, but he contrived it. Two boats were necessary, and those he borrowed without a 'by your leave.' Rowing out to the rocks one evening after sunset, and towing the second boat which contained the civilian clothes hidden under a heap of seaweed, he made the second boat fast in a cleft of the rocks, and rowed back.

Next morning he got away alone to bathe, undressed, folded up his uniform neatly, left it on the sands, and swam out to the rocks, where he dressed, and presently put to sea; that is, he drifted into the Bristol Channel on the outgoing tide. A tramp-steamer, bound for the West Indies, picked him up, and his adventures began.

His uniform was duly discovered, and the official record of his death by drowning eventually appeared in the regimental archives. His people kept the adjutant's letter and the War Office notification. They mourned for a space; but as they all believed that Andrew was bound to come to a bad end, this tended to assuage their grief. It was said, however, that Jessie Osborn cried a good deal.

In Jamaica the ex-soldier picked up a working knowledge of sugar-planting; in Trinidad, of the cultivation of cocoa; in the state of Vera Cruz, Mexico, he learned coffee-planting and the Spanish language; in Cuba, tobacco-planting. Finally he drifted down to south Mexico, to the Guatemalan border, where he became administrator of the Bella Vista coffee *finca*, on the foot-hills of Mount Tacana. By this time he had become something of a citizen of the world, and being a good-looking, smart, soldierly fellow, he made friends. But Jessie Osborn had no successor.

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Only those whose fate or fortune it has been to reside in foreign countries—as distinct from the Colonies—for long spells know what Home means to these wanderers, so often outcasts—how frequently it is upon their lips. But the ex-British soldier had no pleasant recollections to discourse upon.

'I've no use for that palaver,' he would say. 'I don't want to see the Old Country again. It's a rotten place, run by a rotten lot of old women, lawyers, and army officers—damn them! I wouldn't go if I had six months' leave, my passage paid, and a thousand dollars to spend—not I.'

That sort of talk was listened to avidly in the Club Alemania—the only club in the nearest town of size, Tapachula, which Don Andrés frequently visited with half-a-score of German and other planters, his neighbours from the hills. The Germans knew he was a deserter from the British army; they made it their business to know everything about every *verdammlich Englander* in their part of the country, and, as indicated, he had made no secret of it; so their conversation before him was less reserved than it otherwise might have been. Consequently he had gathered many months before July 1914 that war was imminent. Like most other Englishmen in Mexico—one might say every other Englishman—he would have known as many years before what was preparing, had he been there. But his chief enlightenment came from Heinrich Henkel, the biggest braggart and bully in the whole of the German colony, which is saying a great deal.

'You say you don't vant to England to go, Don Andrés,' he remarked one day. 'Vould five tousand dollars Americano a year tempt you, mit a first-class passage dere—und back ven you comes?'

'It might. It's two years' pay. What would you want me to do?' asked the ex-soldier.

Henkel lowered his square, closely cropped head, having first glanced over both shoulders. 'Vell, you in der British army vas. Dere's sometings der Kaiser vants to know. You vas der fery man der information to get.'

'Thanks. Where do I get the five thousand dollars?' asked the ex-soldier dryly.

Again Henkel glanced over his shoulders. 'I gives you an order on der Deutsche Bank in New York,' he whispered. 'I vill pay your fare to New York any vays you vant to go. I am der commandant of der Sharman army in sout' Mexico—I you confidential tells.'

'The dickens you are!' rejoined the ex-soldier. 'Didn't know the Germans had an army in Mexico.'

It was in the Club Alemania, and several Britishers were about. Henkel appeared to be very fearful of being overheard. 'Vell, not an army,' he whispered; 'but efery Sharman in Mexico, in Guatemala, and Central America a soldier is, and vat to do vhen der day comes vill know. Der Kaiser vants dis country, Don Andrés, and all dose who help great reward vill haf.'

The ex-soldier laughed. 'Don't you wish you may get it?' he said; adding, 'I'll have to think it over. I'll let you know in a day or two. Five thousand dollars are worth thinking about.'

Not a word did he utter in the club of the extraordinary proposition; but when riding homewards with Christy, an English neighbour and old resident in the district, he told him about it.

'It's nothing new to me,' Christy rejoined. 'I've known what was intended ever since the Boer War. Get one of those fellows drunk, and he'll tell you in your own house that they mean to have Mexico, and turn every American and Britisher out of it. They mean, too, to have Guatemala, Honduras, San Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil, and the best part of the Argentine; also Peru, Chili, Ecuador, Venezuela, and all the rest of South America, except Patagonia. I've never heard they wanted that. It's not sufficiently in the sun, I reckon. The fellows who come here are not emigrants strictly. They're mostly soldiers, sent here by their Government to get a grip on the country. They don't own the properties they manage—not often, anyway. You're rather a new-comer, or you'd know how they go to work. Get 'em drunk, I say, and you'll soon learn.'

'Do you say none of those fellows own their *fincas?*' asked the ex-soldier, much interested.

'Well, Baron Hammerstein owns his, and so does Henkel,' Christy rejoined. 'I've gathered that the baron's a Prussian general, and Henkel is a colonel, an *ober* something or other. Suppose you're a Mexican planter, and want money for development. It's much the same if you're a Spaniard or an Englishman. You want money. Well, you can get it—practically any amount of it—from Hamburg, on a hard-and-fast mortgage. Your produce all goes to Hamburg for sale, of course, and you have to take the price the produce-merchant says it realises, and pay from 8 to 10 per cent. interest on the money lent you.

'Well, bad seasons come in cycles—two or three together, either poor crops or low prices. That's about the only thing you can be certain sure of in coffee-planting. Second bad year you can't pay your interest, or repay the principal, or the part of it that has fallen due. You're in default, and you're foreclosed on *pronto*, and out comes one of these swashbuckling bounders to kick you off your *finca* and run your show. And you'll find his Government'll interfere *pronto* if you make a fuss; and the Mexican Government'll send soldiers to keep you in order and see you do no damage. Why? I'll tell you why. The money lent on mortgage is German

Government money, mostly. The real mortgagee is the Reichsbank. The produce-merchant you send your coffee to may have an interest, but he 's backed by the Reichsbank. Lord! Why, the German Government has been playing the same game for more than twenty years pretty well all over the world, but particularly here and in Central and South America. There 's plenty of German Government money in the British Colonies also—Australia, New Zealand, Jamaica, Trinidad. Oh, it 's a great game!'

'So it seems,' returned the ex-soldier. 'What do you think Henkel really wants me to do?'

'Go to England as a spy,' said Christy promptly. 'You 'd be a great catch. A deserter from the British army, with an almighty grouch against it, and everything connected with it—a fellow who has been about the world and knows things. Lord—man! Five thousand dollars a year? Why, you 'd be worth five hundred thousand! You 've only to say five thousand isn't enough. Put it up to Henkel and see.'

'I 'll be hanged if I will!' returned the ex-soldier. 'I used to think, if ever I got the chance, I 'd shoot the colonel of the Third Midshires—Malleson, his name was. He made it hot for me every time *he* got a chance. I 've wanted to shoot a colonel—dreamt about it; done it in my dreams. I 'll shoot one now, sure—but he 'll be a German colonel.'

Christy laughed. 'I thought you were English all right,' he said, 'for all your talk. But you don't want to spend the rest of your life in a Mexican prison. Keep quiet. Swallow the insult. Lead the fellow on. Get everything you can out of him, and report to our minister in Mexico City. It might do a bit of good at Home—open their eyes a bit. Lord! they need it, for they 're the blindest bats in all creation.'

They parted at the track—the rocky bed of a mountain stream—which took Christy to the Moctezuma *finca*, and the ex-soldier rode on alone to Bella Vista, very thoughtful. 'Sell the Old Country!' he reflected. 'The dirty swine! If I meet him in a safe place, I 'll risk all the prisons in Mexico—I 've got to kill a colonel, anyway.'

The insult continued to rankle, and the news given him by Christy—all of which he firmly believed—to work in his mind; so that when he chanced to breakfast with a number of Germans, all strangers to him, although he was not altogether a stranger to them, he was quite ready for the inevitable quarrel, but not for the startling information he received. This happened at Tonala, on the Pan-American Railroad, where the ex-soldier had, perforce, stopped on his way to Puerto Mexico on business. As trains did not run on the Pan-American at night, and there were only two trains daily—one up and one down—the train staffs, when the state of the bridges and permanent way permitted, contrived to meet before sunset at Tonala, for the reason that the town possessed an hotel, where the passengers could put up. The ex-soldier was aware that the north-bound train, his own, would leave at nine o'clock, and the south-bound at eight-thirty, and he entered the one and only eating-room at eight. The one and only table was occupied by half-a-dozen unmistakable Germans. There was one vacant place, and he sat down and ordered breakfast.

'Dis is not your breakfast!' immediately exclaimed one of the Germans, a tall, stout fellow with a bristly, upturned moustache. 'Get out!'

'Get out yourself!' retorted the ex-soldier.

'But I say dis is not your breakfast. You an hour haf. Ve haf only half-an-hour. Dere enough breakfast for us is not. So I say again—get out!'

'And I say—go to the devil!' rejoined the ex-soldier, and turned to the waiter. 'Here, *mozo*, bring me eggs and coffee.'

'He vill not,' intervened another of the first-comers, also tall, stout, and bristly. 'Ve know you, Don Andrés—Misder Andrew Martin, if you like better de *verdammlich Englander* name—and soon you out of dis country vill be kicked, mit all de oder Englanders. I someting you don't know tells you, Don Andrés. Der Kaiser's army in Paris is, or close dere. Der English army in France is, whipped and running avay from anoder Kaiser's army. Next week anoder Kaiser's army in London vill be. Den ve your colonies takes and kicks you out all ofer de vorld. Now vill you out get? Dis is our country—efery bit of it. Vill you out get?'

The ex-soldier laid a black, long-barrelled Colt beside his plate. 'No,' he said. 'Tell your lies to somebody else. But I 'll tell you something. If you don't dry up *pronto*, your share of this country will be six feet by two.—*Mozo*, bring me eggs and coffee.'

As none of the would-be inheritors of all the earth seemed to fancy having to put up with such a small part of it, and certainly did not, in accordance with Mexican law, wish to be locked up as witnesses of a killing, Don Andrés was permitted to eat his breakfast without further interference. But he did not continue his journey to Puerto Mexico. He returned to Tapachula by the eight-thirty train, and because there was only one first-class carriage, he travelled with the inheritors, who left him severely alone.

The news had reached Tapachula two days before by cable. A big placard on the wall of the Club Alemania informed all and sundry, including many Spaniards and more Mexicans, that the Germans had invaded Belgium and France, that Britain and Russia had declared war, and a British army had landed in France. Within the Club Alemania there was great

rejoicing, and an equally great consumption of Scotch and rye whiskies and schnapps in honour of *Der Tag*, which had at last arrived.

It was no place for Don Andrés or any other Britisher. On his meeting Christy, the two men went to the house of the British Consul, where all the other Britons in the town had gathered.

(*Continued on page 728.*)

GOOD, GUILELESS GERMANY.

By Sir GEORGE SCOTT, K.C.I.E., Author of *The Burman: His Life and Notions*, &c.

POOR, innocent Germany is being very sadly put upon by the world just now. The Boches cannot convert their cannon-fodder into glycerine and hogwash without being told that it is devil's broth. All their carefully contrived intrigues in Persia, Egypt, South Africa, the United States, India, China, Mexico, Ireland, and where not have failed. Patient persistence for so many years deserved a better fate. One could almost pity them as Burns commiserated 'Nicky Ben.'

Everything was so well and thoroughly planned. There was a young assistant in the firm of Hollweg, Tirpitz, and Company, in Rangoon, who became the father of a baby-boy. The mother was a Burmese woman, and the child was what the office baboo called a 'demi-official infant.' The father called him Fritz, but Ma Pu, the mother, like all Burmese, could not pronounce the letter *f*, so she called him Parit. Before very long she got tired of Boche ways with women, and walked off with Parit and set up as a seller of silks in the bazaar. The father was annoyed at this disregard of discipline; but there are plenty of Burmese girls, so he made no attempt to get her back.

Ma Pu did very well in the bazaar, and before long started business as a rice-broker, and made a lot of money. She sent little Parit to the Government school, and he proved quite a smart little boy. He passed all manner of standards, and went on to the Calcutta examinations, where he got the length of 'failed B.A.,' a distinction which many baboos put on their visiting-cards. Ma Pu now thought that he ought to enter Government service, which is the one idea of all Burmese parents.

She did a good deal of business with Hollweg, Tirpitz, and Company, and saw the father frequently. The Burmese have no prejudices on the subject of conjugal separations, and Parit's father and mother were quite friendly in their relations. Besides, Ma Pu had got very fat. She told him of Parit's school triumphs, and asked the father to get their boy's name entered for the Subordinate Executive service. The young assistant had by this time become head of the firm in Rangoon, and, like all Germans, had a very high opinion of the future of Burma. He was also a very firm believer in Pan-Germanism; so he said that up to now he had done nothing for the education of his son, and he thought it was time he did. He offered to send Parit to Europe to complete his education, and said that when he came back he would be fit for something much better than provincial Government service.

Ma Pu was dead against the proposal; but Parit was delighted, and eventually persuaded his mother to agree. She consented that he should go to England on condition that he did not stay very long, and that he should marry no English wives. In her mind Europe meant England. The father told her it was Germany that Parit was to go to; but Ma Pu thought Germany was a mere district of England, and protested that if Parit was to go at all, he should go to the 'headquarters' place. The agent of Hollweg, Tirpitz, and Company was obliged to settle the question by the promise that the boy should certainly go to the best place.

So Parit was shipped off to Singapore, where he was consigned to the care of a Norddeutscher Lloyd boat, and he got safely to Hamburg. There a clerk from the head-office of Hollweg, Tirpitz, and Company met him, and carried him off to a Moravian school in south Germany. After a couple of years there he was quite fluent in German, but cordially detested the Spartan strictness of the establishment, which he said was no better than a monastery school in Burma.

Therefore he was delighted to hear that his father had come home from Burma and wanted to see him. He lost no time in taking the train to Hamburg, and the first news he got there was that his mother was dead. Ma Pu had been carried off suddenly through eating too many durians, so he was told. Parit's father had taken out letters of administration, and had realised the estate, which amounted to two or three lacs of rupees, and this he had put into the firm of Hollweg, Tirpitz, and Company in Parit's name. He said it was the best investment he knew of. Meanwhile, he said, he wanted to take Parit to Berlin, to get him instructed in matters which would be of great value to the firm—his own firm—and to his country, which, he was now told, was Germany. Parit was inclined to demur at this, because he had found that German boys did not play football, and he had been rather a useful wing-forward at the Government school in Rangoon. However, he concluded that anything was better than going back to the Moravian school; so he

said he was quite ready, and after he had got a new suit of clothes more suitable to his years, he was taken off to Berlin and introduced at the Reptile Department in the Wilhelmstrasse.

There he spent some years learning all the artifices of the system, and having steadily impressed upon him that the British Government was a curse to human society, and especially to Germany. Every now and then, when a rice-steamer came from Rangoon or Maulmain, he was sent to Hamburg to see any Burmese there might be on board. This was intended to keep his knowledge of the language from getting rusty, and to test his capacity for getting information.

Finally, in 1914, he was sent out to begin his work. He had gathered from all he had heard that it was no use trying to spread sedition among the Burmese of Rangoon (which is really not a Burmese town at all) or in the Delta. The only chance was among the natives of India, and there were already several of them in the pay of the Reptile Bureau. He would have to go up-country. He had never been there, and the question was how he was to get there without attracting attention. He came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to travel as a *pōngyi*, a Buddhist monk. Monks can travel anywhere all over the country at any time, except during the rainy season of Lent, when nobody wants to travel. They have only to say that they are visiting holy shrines, and no further questions are asked. Moreover, they are welcomed and fed everywhere by the pious.

But to figure as a monk it was necessary that he should learn some Pali prayers and rubrics. All he knew were the ordinary formulæ which every Burman learns. So he went off to a big fishing-town in the Delta, entered the first monastery he came to, and said he wanted to become a novitiate. The old abbot was rather interested in him, and was further impressed by his zeal and quickness in learning. Very soon, however, Parit got into disgrace. The monastic rule is that no food can be eaten after midday. Parit was a gross feeder by heritage and German education, and he was discovered by some of the little day-scholars eating corned-beef at dusk in a corner of the curtilage. The abbot was scandalised, imposed penance, and announced that it would greatly delay Parit's promotion from the novitiate.

Parit did not mind this much, but he did object to going without food for two-thirds of the twenty-four hours. So he took to going to the shop of a native of India in the afternoons. He found that this man took in *Ghadr* (*Mutiny*), the organ of the *Bande Mātaram* baboos, which he knew very well to be printed at German expense in San Francisco, and thence despatched all over India, and wherever there were Indian communities. So he cautiously revealed himself, and found that the shopkeeper was in the pay of the Reptile Department, and had travelled a good deal in Indo-China.

The baboo assured him that it was no use trying to preach rebellion among the Burmese of the plains. The hill-tribes were the people to get at, all the more because trouble among them would seriously interfere with the Government of India's military plans if an expedition should have to be undertaken in their very difficult country. He told Parit it was the easiest thing in the world to stir up the tribesmen by denouncing the payment of taxes, and putting the blame for them on British officials. Religious texts, he assured him, were of no use among them. Any sort of gibberish—German, for choice—would pass with them, if it seemed necessary. If he started a rising there it would be very effective; for the tribes could get about very fast in their hills, and a British column would find the foot-tracks quite hopeless for their guns. There were places where even mules could not get about, and, as the Chinese say, a mule can slip with three legs and hold on with the fourth.

The first battle of the Aisne had already been fought, and Parit thought he might as well start at once, all the more because he was sick of the monastery discipline and of memorising Pali collects, which he only partially understood. So he sent off a cipher letter to the Wilhelmstrasse, got the names of some *Bande Mātaram* agents from the shopkeeper, and made a moonlight flitting from the monastery.

He made his way to the Shan States without difficulty. Here and there he met some of the *Ghadr* propagandists and spies, one or two of them treasonous sepoys; but they all told him the work was hopeless in the Shan valleys. The people there were as little likely to rise as the Burmese. So he branched off from main roads and went into the hill-ranges. Even there he had not much success to begin with; but at last he came upon a cluster of villages which were in a state of great indignation. A native of India had made his appearance among them, and had demanded a rupee a head poll-tax for every adult in the village, and had gone away with quite a lot of money. They had protested to the political officer, and were told that the man was not a Government official at all, but was the absconding servant of an officer who had accused him of stealing. They wanted their money back, but were told that was impossible till the culprit was caught, and they were advised to catch him.

Parit found his chance here. He scoffed at the political officer's story, and said that this was just what the 'Great Universal Monarch' was making war on the British for. They had perhaps heard of the war in the West which was then going on. The Great Universal Monarch was fighting the British to put an end to their tyranny and their exactions. What the villagers

ought to do was to join in the fight, and he would show them how to do it. They must begin by forming a league, and then, bit by bit, they would get hold of the whole country, and the Universal Monarch would grant it to them free from taxes for ever. The idea quite appealed to them. They had always been noted as cattle-thieves, and they thought a rising against the British Government would only be a slight extension of that pursuit. As a matter of fact, they began lifting cattle immediately; but Parit incited them to steal guns as well from the Shans in the valleys, and to invite all the villages of their clan to join in the enterprise. The valley-dwellers, he assured them, would join in the rising as soon as it promised success.

The nearest British post was quite a long way off, and news did not travel fast; so before long Parit had quite a considerable band at his disposal. Then he made a more ambitious move. He descended with a big party on the camp of a teak-trader in a gorge at the foot of the hills. The camp was rushed; the staff were massacred; and besides some rifles and shot-guns, he got a considerable supply of dynamite-cartridges, together with the fuses and detonators. Parit explained that with these they would be able to attack the British post, and get a great supply of guns and ammunition, which would bring them supporters from all sides. He set himself to teach some of the more enthusiastic how to use the dynamite-cartridges.

As he expected, the news of the murder of the teak-traders brought out a party of military police. According to the incorrigible British habit, there were not many of them, and they were ambuscaded on their way up the narrow foot-track that led into the hills, and were beaten back. Parit made preparations to meet the stronger force which he was sure would come. He fixed places where men were to lie in wait for the attackers, and stationed among them those who had been practising with the captured rifles and shot-guns. He himself, with two others, took his stand well down the hill, over a narrow ravine along which the sepoys must come, and scouts were sent out to warn him of their approach. The main body, armed with cheek-guns and crossbows, and other miscellaneous weapons, remained behind, ready to join in the pursuit which Parit promised them. They had been largely reinforced by men from other villages attracted by prospects of plunder. Parit told them that success in this fight meant the immediate rising of the whole of the hills, and recruits from a great many of the valley villages. The end of the tyrannical British Government was at hand, and the Great Universal Monarch would richly reward them.

A party of about a hundred sepoys was reported. They camped for the night about a mile from the foot of the hill, and with the first dawn started the ascent. About a thousand feet up they came to the gully over which Parit was posted. Flanking-parties were impossible. Parit let the advanced guard pass, and then lighted the fuse and threw the dynamite-cartridge on the main body. There was a deafening report. The man on Parit's right, who had instructions to light the fuse of another cartridge to be handed to Parit, was so startled that he let it drop, lighted, on the small pile of cartridges. Parit was too late to snatch it away, and he and his companions were blown to atoms.

It is uncertain whether the Reptile Department in the Wilhelmstrasse ever heard what became of their promising Burma recruit; but they were extremely annoyed that a most carefully planned scheme should have failed. They had expected a costly and troublesome frontier war, and hoped that it would stir up the baboos. After a decent interval, they put *verunglückt* after Parit's name in the register. About the same time Parit's father heard that the mills and premises of Hollweg, Tirpitz, and Company had been sold. He got a steam-organ to play the *Hassgesang* opposite his office in Hamburg for four hours every day.

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

A LITTLE ROMANCE OF THE FAR WEST.

By Mrs W. F. Irvine Bell, Author of *Ole Cam'ron*, &c.

CHAPTER VIII.

SUMMER with its brazen skies of blue, and earth baked to brownness, waned to autumn, until one morning in late September which found John Pardon, under the shade of some tall oaks, busily greasing the axles of his wagon-wheels, preparatory to hauling the Powells' winter supply of wood. The last wheel set, he was jauntily whistling, as was his habit at the finish of any tiresome piece of work, when his solo was disturbed by the clatter of a horse, and, looking round, he saw Bob Powell's black mare, flecked with foam, and Bob himself riding with white, set face. Pardon's instant thought was of Joy, and for the moment his heart stood still with nameless dread; but as young Powell pulled up his dripping horse, his friend had recovered himself and was at his side.

'Hello, Bobby!' he cried; 'you 've sure bin *goin'* some; and you 're lookin' tired, boy. This blessed old sun is pretty hot still for all it 's most

October. Leave your hoss to cool a bit, and come inside, won't you?'

'No, thanks, Pardon. I'm going straight back,' said Powell. 'The fact is, we've had bad news from home. My father is dead, and they've cabled for me to come at once; but, of course, I had to see you first.'

The Powells going back to the Old Country! For an instant everything whirled before Pardon's eyes, and he caught at Bob's saddle-horn.

'I say, Pardon, you aren't well yourself! What a selfish brute I am to keep you standing in this sun!' exclaimed Bob. 'Here—I'll tie "Meg" and come in for a moment; but I mustn't stop long, as there is lots for Miss Joy and me to do before I start.'

They entered the kitchen, and Pardon motioned Bob to a chair; but the young man, mechanically taking out his tobacco and rolling a cigarette, said hurriedly, not looking at Pardon, 'Pardon, I hate like anything to have to go; but I must. And I only hope it won't be long before I am back again. You've been such a good friend to us both that—that I'm going to ask whether you won't stand by Miss Joy, and help to fill the breach until I return.'

'Stand by Miss Joy! Why, what d'ye mean, boy? Ain't she goin' with you?' exclaimed John Pardon in amazement, while a storm of contending emotions raged within him.

Powell took a quick turn up and down the room, saying, with a gesture of hopelessness, 'No—that's just it; she's determined to stay here; and I suppose she's right in one way, though it seems all wrong in another. You see, if we both go it means sacrificing all our things here—and, of course, I expect to come back. Joy says it would be an awfully expensive journey for both of us, and now that my father is dead, and my brother Dick comes in for the property, there won't be much coming to Joy and me. No fault of Dick's,' he added hastily, taking another turn up and down the floor. 'I've said all I can to Joy, but she is quite determined; and so I thought'—— He broke off as Pardon, jumping up, laid his two great hands on the younger man's slight shoulders.

'That's all right, sonny. Don't you worry. I'll be proud to look after Miss Joy,' he said heartily; 'and, please the Good Man, we'll have you back again before the snow flies. Not that we're much troubled with them kind o' flies *here*,' he added jokingly, striving to infuse a note of cheerfulness into his voice. 'But it's awful sudden-like. When are ye startin'?'

'To-morrow,' replied Powell. 'Perhaps you could come up and be there when I leave—if it's not asking too much.'

'Not the least bit in the world, boy. I'll be there,' was Pardon's answer, as he untied Bob's horse. Then, as the two sped down the lane, he stood watching the vanishing figure, while a flood of wild thoughts raced through his brain. At length he turned slowly away from the gate, his strong face set and very pale. 'I reckon the boy can trust me—so help me God,' he said, instinctively removing his hat.

The next day found him bright and early at the Powells' ranch, unobtrusively but diligently helping the brother and sister to prepare for the sudden hard parting, his steady cheerfulness buoying up their own spirits, and his quick hands relieving them of many a usual household task. Then, when the last moment came, and Joy, her great blue eyes swimming in tears, though the brave lips strove to smile, clung to the dogs' collars lest they should attempt to follow their adored master on his long, long journey, it was John Pardon who, having slipped out of sight till the parting was over, presently reappeared with a cup and saucer and a pot of steaming tea in one big hand, and, gripped in the other, a plate and an array of cakes.

'Now, Miss Joy,' he cried, 'you just let them hounds loose, and come and have a cup o' tea. You've never tasted any tea o' my makin', and I'm a grand cook, you know!'

So poor Joy, fearful of hurting his feelings, resolutely gulped down the tea and made pretence of eating a cake, though Pardon's watchful eye noted how close to her hand were the moist noses of two greedy dogs.

Afterwards Pardon insisted that Joy should go for a walk, saying, 'It'll do you good, Miss Joy. And I'll do them dishes and feed the chickens, and stay till you come back;' and Joy, turning quickly towards him, her fair face paler than its wont, but lit up with gratitude, said impulsively, 'Bob and I can never repay you for all your goodness, John Pardon!'

'Repay? Repay the devil!' was John's unexpectedly gruff reply.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTMAS had come and gone—a Christmas which, in that wonderful climate, Joy Powell, in delighted astonishment, had been able to spend astride of her gray mare, among those evergreen foot-hills, the dogs panting beside her in radiant sunshine, and the only suggestion of Yuletide being the sprig of so-called 'holly' in the front of her light cotton blouse. The rainy season was due with its sombre skies and soaking rains, but although ranchers and herdsmen watched with anxious eyes for the dark clouds upon which depended grass for cattle and meat for man, to Joy, living alone in the old bungalow and bravely trying to carry on until her brother's return, the bright, warm weather, with its treacherously early dawnings of spring, was the greatest help and comfort. So, while John Pardon and Joe Patrick shook their heads over leaf and bud already 'crowding to be born,' and daily measured the water-supply in well and creek, Joy, with the

tears shining in her eyes, but with a happy thrill at her heart, gathered the first wild cyclamen to send in a letter to Bob—to Bob, still all those weary thousands of miles away from the golden-haired girl so pluckily 'holding down' the ranch. For in Bob's case, as so often in the affairs of 'mice and men,' plans had miscarried, and his return to his Western home had been postponed from month to month. His father's estate, heavily embarrassed, took long to settle, and as Joy's as well as his own future interests depended upon his presence, he had no choice but to wait with what patience he could command, while executors and lawyers, trustees and legatees, agreed or disagreed. To John Pardon he wrote from time to time—short, ineffusive letters, but between the lines the man upon whom had been laid so great a charge could read deep gratitude and an absolute trust; and as the slow weeks slipped away the girl herself came to depend more and more not only upon her rough friend's ungrudging devotion of time and labour, but also upon his unfailing good spirits and chivalry.

Rain or shine, wet or wind, John Pardon duly arrived at the Powells' ranch, resolutely crushing down the passionate longing to seize the girl's slight figure in his arms—ever on guard not by word or look to reveal his feelings or shake the happy confidence with which she admitted him into the full measure of her home life and of her longing for her brother's return. Yet, in spite of his heroic self-control, and the girl's own sweet dignity and trustfulness, the 'little more' that in an instant so completely spans the gulf between friendship and love was fated to happen in the lives of these two, and it was on this wise.

Pardon, on reaching home late one afternoon, found Joe Patrick awaiting him to ask whether he would haul out from Orangeville the next day some sacks of seed for the spring sowing. Nor, though his thoughts flew at once to the prospect of Joy Powell being without his help all day, could he very well refuse. But after his live-stock were fed and his own supper was disposed of, he tidied himself and swung off across the hills to the Powells' ranch—'to let the little girl know,' he said to himself, and see whether there was any errand he could do for her in town. The nights were still cold enough for the log-fire in the Powells' big living-room to be acceptable, although, as usual, the door on to the veranda stood open. Pardon came up the steps, announcing his approach by whistling a tune (for the dogs no longer barked at sound of his step), and pausing on the threshold, he discovered Joy perched on a low stool before the fire, gazing dreamily into the glowing logs, her small pointed chin propped in one hand, while the other held a much-crumpled handkerchief, which, at sight of Pardon, she quickly hid, turning her face with a bright smile of welcome. The firelight, playing upon her hair and darting little shadows over her flushed cheeks, made her look very sweet and beguiling, cuddled up on the low stool. Half-laughing, she stretched out a deprecating hand, saying, 'Oh, Pardon, is that you? Do come in. See how *lazy* I am to-night!'

Carried away by a rush of feeling—scarcely realising what he did—the man strode towards her, and seizing the slender white hand, covered it in his own coarse palms. 'Miss Joy—my dear little girl—you've been cryin'! Tell me what's the matter, dear. You know I'd do anythin' in the world to help you, little darlin'!' He stood bending over her, pressing the captured hand against his rough woollen jersey. Now trembled in the balance, so delicately poised, the honour and happiness of this man and woman, whom darkness and the wide wilderness enwrapped, and the loneliness of whose lives had drawn thus strangely together. A good man and a strong was John Pardon, but love can be a cruel master, and he had suffered long and been sorely tried. Must he be for ever a slave to conscience, nor ever take the cup of happiness for which his whole being cried out?

Then rose gloriously to his succour the sweet, sound nature and blue blood of this slip of a girl for whose sake he would willingly have sacrificed his soul. Not even attempting to withdraw the hand which trembled in his, but letting it lie quietly on Pardon's breast, Joy Powell, though her heart beat furiously and the colour fled from her face, said very softly but steadily, 'Thank you, Pardon. Indeed I *know* that no one in the world has so splendid a friend as have Bob and I in you. Without you I couldn't possibly have carried on all these long, sad months—and it is very silly of me to cry.'

Silence, broken only by the snapping of the burning logs and the heavy breathing of the man, reigned in the dusky room, but slowly his strong fingers relaxed their hold on the poor little shaking hand. But Joy, suddenly tightening her grasp, as though to assist in raising herself from the low stool, stood up, and for the fraction of a second, while a swift blush mounted from chin to brow, bravely and unflinchingly met his eyes. Then, turning quickly, as the heavy end of a burnt stick fell upon the hearth, she dropped on her knees, and, seizing the iron claws, began clutching at the smoking faggot. 'Oh—oo—it *is* hot!' she cried, laughing lightly. 'Do come to my rescue, please, Pardon. Here are the tongs;' and she retreated, making-believe to rub the hot places on her hands. Then, tactfully trying to give the man further time to recover himself, she chattered on. 'I'm so glad you happened to come back to-night, because I quite forgot to give you something nice that I made to-day;' and she hurried away to the larder, the dogs clumping after her. Returning in a few moments with a spicy-smelling parcel, she said, 'Here are some buns, made after an old English recipe. Perhaps you would like to share them with Michael O'Keefe—and this bundle of English papers. But won't

you sit down, Pardon?' she added kindly, but in a voice that to the man's sensitive ear betrayed the effort it cost her; nor did he fail to notice how she steadied herself against the mantelshelf, as though a great weariness possessed her.

Ever quick to understand another's suffering, John Pardon's better self at once regained its poise; so, controlling his voice and resuming his usual manner, he rapidly explained the reason of his late visit. 'So, Miss Joy,' he concluded, 'if there bain't nothin' you kin think of that you're wantin' from town to-morrer, I'd best be sayin' good-night—must pull out early in the mornin'.' At the door he turned again. 'God bless you, Miss Joy!' he said in a voice tense with feeling, then hastened away and out of the gate.

For a moment the girl stood listening to his retreating footsteps, then suddenly flung herself down on the black bearskin before the ruddy fire, and burying her face in the collie's soft white ruff, burst into an agony of tears. 'Oh Bob, Bob—come home!' she sobbed. 'It is more than I can bear.' No answer; only the whisper of the night wind in the encircling pine-trees, and a low whimper of the dog, distressed because of his beloved mistress's distress.

Outside in the darkness, stumbling along the rough short cut he was following, scarce heeding his steps, so deep in an abyss of conflicting thoughts was he, John Pardon was suddenly roused by a gleam of light among the trees in the direction of the Patricks' ranch. The accusing thought rose in his mind that never in all these years had he, on the eve of a trip into Orangeville, failed to ask Mary whether she had any commissions for him. Struggling between disinclination and the claims of long-established habit, he turned his steps sharply in the direction of the light, and soon reached the Patricks' home. Forcing his lips to the customary whistle, he knocked at the door, at the same time calling cheerily, 'Anybody home?' as Mary, lamp in hand, came to open it. 'No, thank ye, Mary; I bain't comin' in,' he said, as she motioned him to the kitchen. 'Just stepped round to see if there's anythin' you want from town to-morrer. Joe'll likely have told you I'm haulin' some stuff over for him.'

'Come in, John! What's your hurry? 'Tain't late,' said Mary. 'No? Well, I guess I don't want anything this time. But, my word!' she suddenly exclaimed, 'you're awfully white and scared-looking! Aren't you well?'

At this Pardon, making a great effort, and taking the lamp from Mary's hand, said, 'Oh, there bain't nothin' wrong with me, Mary. I'll come in for a bit,' and followed her to the cosy kitchen.

'Still working over to Powells'?' Mary questioned. 'When's that young man coming back? Seems to me it's kind of queer his leaving that girl there alone all this time.'

Pardon, in spite of himself, felt himself flushing hotly—felt, too, that Mary was observing him closely. For Joy's sake he must not betray the sweet secret in his heart, which he now felt to be dearer than life itself. And in his anxiety to avoid further catechising from Mary, he committed a man's mistake by rising abruptly and reaching for his hat. 'Oh, I reckon he'll be along in the spring,' he said carelessly, and making for the door. 'Well, Mary, I guess I'll mosey along home. Sure there's nothin' I kin do for you in the shoppin' line? No? Well, then, good-night;' and passing out, he quickly disappeared up the garden path.

For some seconds Mary Patrick, lamp in hand, stood staring into the darkness. Then, with knitted brows, and a half-bewildered, half-angry expression in her eyes, she closed the door, and suddenly feeling strangely tired and old, climbed the stairs to her bedroom. John Pardon had forgotten—yes, *forgotten*—to put to her the old, old question at leave-taking, and Mary, with a woman's unerring instinct, had guessed *why*.

(*Continued on page 723.*)

SANDS FOR GLASS-MAKING.

By Arthur L. Leach, Secretary of the Geologists' Association.

BEFORE the war, when British glass-makers drew their supplies of sands from abroad, large and regular shipments were made at cheap rates from France, Holland, and Belgium. From Fontainebleau, near Paris, came a beautiful white sand, highly prized by manufacturers of camera and telescope lenses and of the best table-ware. Holland and Belgium exported sand suitable for the production of common sheet-glass and bottle-glass. This came frequently as ballast, the cost upon delivery in this country varying, in pre-war days, from four shillings to sixteen shillings per ton. Fontainebleau sand, shipped at Rouen, and delivered in east coast ports at about ten shillings per ton, was worth twenty shillings to thirty shillings per ton in English glass-making districts. Since 1914 difficulties of freight and labour have raised the prices of Continental sands to three or even four times their pre-war values, and rendered supplies not only abnormally expensive, but irregular in amount and delivery. The cessation of imports of lenses and prisms from Germany made an increased home production of high quality optical glass essential. Thence arose a demand for substitutes for the foreign sands which hitherto had held the market.

In this country fortunately, even before the

war, a beginning had been made in the systematic examination of British sands with a view to testing their constituents and degrees of fineness by scientific methods. The ground being thus to some extent prepared, the consideration of British sands from the point of view of their suitability for glass-making appeared to afford an opportunity of linking scientific research with industrial needs. Investigations were carried on with the support of the Imperial College of Science and Technology, aided later by the Ministry of Munitions; and the publication of Dr P. G. H. Boswell's memoir on the result of his work marks a new, practically a first, stage in the study of British deposits available as substitutes for foreign glass-sands.

Let us consider briefly the raw materials required by the glass-manufacturers. Very obvious differences appear between the dull green or brown glasses used for bottles and the clear, lustrous 'crystal' of lenses and cut-glass table-ware. Colour roughly indicates the presence of certain constituents, permissible in coarse bottle-glass, but highly injurious in glass for optical purposes. All varieties of glass contain silica (oxide of silicon), known as quartz when in the form of translucent six-sided crystals. In addition to the silica certain special ingredients are required—namely, potash and red-lead in 'flint'-glass, and the carbonates of soda and lime in sheet-glass; common bottle-glass may contain salt (in place of soda), crushed felspar, limestone, fusible slags, &c. The bulkiest constituent, silica, is used in the form of sand, 52 to 65 per cent. by weight, calculated quantities of alkalies, powdered limestone, red-lead, &c. being added according to the kind of glass. As with metals, small percentages of undesirable substances—for example, iron oxides—may seriously affect the quality of the final product. Sands for common window-glass may contain one or more per cent. of iron oxide, but a far smaller proportion would quite destroy the transparency and refractive powers of optical glass. The quality of the sand being all-important, it is necessary to ascertain exactly what are the properties or constituents which cause certain sands to be in great demand for the choicest glass-wares, while other deposits are valueless even for the coarsest bottle-glass. Such inquiries are bound up with the development of the glass industry, and must precede the search for new supplies of sands.

What, in brief, is sand? Like many familiar substances, it is easy to recognise and yet difficult to define. Its chief constituent, quartz, in hard angular grains, causes a peculiar grittiness; but no sand consists wholly of quartz particles. Even the purest quartz sands, those of Lippe in Saxony and of Fontainebleau, contain small proportions—sometimes less than ·03 per cent.—of other minerals. Ordinary sands dug from inland sand-pits in many geological formations are often vividly stained by iron oxides and stiffened by fine clay or chalky silt. A pinch of beach-sand may be quite a little museum of minute mineral specimens, oxides of iron and aluminium, heavy grains of rutile, tourmaline, zircon, and other silicates being present in addition to the quartz. Moreover, sand grains vary greatly in size and shape, not only in different localities, but in samples from the same pit. Why does the manufacturer choose one kind of sand for cut-glass table-ware, and reject as only suitable for coarse bottle-glass another sand which to the uninstructed may appear almost indistinguishable from the former? Methods of selection based on experience, however extensive, and mere 'rule of thumb' have obvious disadvantages, especially when new supplies of material must be sought. Clearly, if the essential qualities of a good glass-sand can be stated, the quest for substitutes will be facilitated.

To ascertain exactly the characteristics of sands, three analyses have been found necessary—namely, (1) chemical, to measure the actual quantities of iron, silica, carbon, &c. in a sample; (2) mineral, to isolate the various minerals—for example, quartz, felspar, alumina, &c.; (3) mechanical, to test the grade or average size of the sand grains.

Chemical analysis needs no further reference, but special methods of great interest have been developed to complete the analytical processes. Thus, by treating sands with certain liquids of high specific gravity—for example, bromoform, in which zircon and other heavy minerals sink, while the lighter quartz particles float—the dense silicates can be abstracted and estimated in bulk. For the mechanical analysis, streams of water regulated to different velocities, and passed through elutriation apparatus, carry away successively the fine, medium, and large grains, which can then be graded according to size.

From long series of such analyses the qualities possessed by typical sands used for many kinds of glass can now be stated. A thoroughly good sand should contain at least 98 per cent. of quartz; it should be free from clay, calcareous particles, and grains of heavy silicates; not more than a minute amount of iron (·04 per cent.) should be present.

To facilitate even and complete melting of the materials, the grains should be nearly uniform in size, and 70 per cent. at least should be particles of medium grade—that is, between ·01 and ·02 inch in diameter. For the very best glass a larger percentage of silica (99·5 per cent.) and a higher degree of evenness in grain may be essential. Good sheet and window glass may be made from sand containing upwards of 1·0 per cent. of iron oxide; and the standard of purity for green and brown bottle-glass is considerably lower; but even for these, uniformity of grain is highly desirable.

It is somewhat disappointing to find that, judged by these standards, no large reserves of British sands appear to be available of such uniform excellence as the pure quartz sands of Lippe and Fontainebleau. Small quantities of selected sands from Aylesbury and other localities are nearly, if not quite, equal to Fontainebleau sand, and quite suitable for high quality glass. Excellent optical glass has even been made during the past year from British sands; but if any large deposits of first-class sands exist, they have yet to be discovered.

Good sands, quite equal to those formerly imported from Belgium, and suitable for making window-glass, white bottles, laboratory-ware, lamp-chimneys, &c., exist in plenty at Aylesbury, Huttons Ambo in Yorkshire, Godstone and Reigate in Surrey, Leighton-Buzzard, Lynn, and elsewhere. For the cheaper varieties of dark bottle-glass, abundant supplies are available and are worked at Charlton and Rochester in Kent, in addition to the localities mentioned above. From the geological point of view, it may be noted that the best British glass-sands are associated with the formation known as Lower Greensand, as at Reigate, Leighton-Buzzard, and Lynn. Sands long worked for window-glass near St Helens in Lancashire belong to the Glacial Drift, and fairly pure deposits of similar character exist in the Kames of Carstairs, in Lanarkshire. A sand much used in the bottle-industry of Belfast and Dublin is obtained by crushing a soft sandstone in the Keuper Waterstones at Spital in Cheshire.

It should be evident that British resources of sand for glass-making are capable of great development. Supplies of the best sand from Lippe cannot be anticipated in the near future, and even those of Fontainebleau may not be so freely available as in the past. The British Empire probably contains vast undeveloped stores of most valuable glass-sands which might provide home industries with materials for the finest optical glass, thus remedying the deficiency which seems to exist in these islands. Manufacturers have now before them methods of testing sands, and recording the results in consistent schemes, which in the hands of skilled chemists would ensure the purity of consignments from well-known sources and permit thorough examination of proffered substitutes. Investigation and development of resources should render the Empire independent of external supplies. Therein lies the value of the precise methods of testing sands developed at the Imperial College of Science and Technology.

MR TEACHILD'S TRANSFORMATION.

By B. Paul Neuman.

I.

'OLD T.,' an irreverent pupil, now a K.C., had once named him, and the name had become a tradition of the pupil-room, as much part of it as the dust that lay thick on the windows, or the smell of damp leather that clung lovingly round the bookshelves. On the board at the entrance in Stone Buildings he appeared as 'Mr Teachild,' and it was characteristic that his line was the darkest and dingiest of the lot.

Yet, as a matter of fact, he was hardly more than middle-aged—forty-eight, to be precise. But the tall, lean figure, the bald head, the grizzled beard, the spectacled eyes, and the stooping shoulders, all seemed to suggest a bygone generation. As if these suggestions of age were not sufficient, his dress, which never varied in cut or colour, supported them. A long, dusty-gray frock-coat, a vest of the same sad hue, and black trousers—it was wonderful that any self-respecting tailor could be found to supply, year by year, such poor advertisements of his skill. The finishing touch was given by the big 'Gladstone' collar, and the black silk scarf tied in a stiff bow.

With these outward indications the habits and temperament of the man seemed quite in accord. Even as a child he had been prematurely old. Circumstances, no doubt, had a good deal to do with it. His father and mother had died while he was still in the nursery, and he had been brought up by an austere spinster aunt, one of whose many peculiarities was a great horror of schools. The boy's education was committed to the care of an ancient clergyman, who took snuff and used the cane with about equal liberality. But he was a good scholar, and at seventeen Martin was already quite a prodigy of learning. His father had destined him for the law, and as his aunt lived in Bloomsbury, he was sent to University College, where his career was highly creditable, if not exactly brilliant. He took his B.A. and M.A. with considerable distinction, and then entered at Lincoln's Inn.

In the year of his call to the Bar his aunt died, leaving him a modest fortune of about a hundred and fifty pounds a year. From the first it was evident that conveyancing would be his line, and the famous John Rutters, with whom he read in chambers, not only prophesied distinction for him, but helped to fulfil the prophecy by putting work in his way. The young man's father had been a solicitor, and his old firm soon showed that they had not forgotten the connection. Slowly but steadily his practice

grew, his pupil-room filled, and by the time he was forty he held an assured position as one of the leading conveyancers in Lincoln's Inn.

II.

Since the death of his aunt Martin Teachild had contributed to the directories only two addresses, a fact of which he was rather absurdly proud. One was in Stone Buildings, where he received his clients; the other was in Church Row, Hampstead. His chambers were on the third floor, a choice originally prompted by motives of economy. Within a few years he could easily have afforded a descent to the second floor, or even to the first. But wherever he once established himself, he took root, and the very idea of a change was abhorrent to him.

It was just the same with his private address. When he started housekeeping for himself he had taken two empty rooms on the first floor of a pleasant, old-fashioned house in Church Row. He was fond of solitary walks, and—except on Bank holidays—the famous Heath appealed to him strongly. His landlord, a German waiter named Wegler, had saved some money, which he invested, partly in an English cook, whom he made Mrs Wegler, and partly in a lease of the house, which the shrewd and thrifty couple proposed to let to eligible tenants. The two rooms taken by Mr Teachild were large and pleasant, and he furnished them with the best and most ancient of his aunt's belongings. He paid a pound a week, and Mrs Wegler acted as his housekeeper. Every Thursday evening (he had gone in on a Thursday) with his dinner she brought in the rent-book and the tradesmen's books. Two hours and a half later she carried away on the supper-tray the little pile of books, each with its right amount of cash inside it, for it was one of his peculiarities that he never paid by cheque when he could help it.

When he had occupied the rooms nearly three years, Mr Wegler represented to him, with many flourishes and apologies, that, the superior landlord having cruelly and wickedly raised the rent on renewing the lease, he was, though with endless sorrow, obliged to make the two rooms yield a higher contribution.

'How much do you want me to pay?' asked Mr Teachild.

Wegler rubbed his hands together softly, and almost whispered that he thought perhaps, under the unfortunate circumstances, twenty-five——

'Very well,' said Mr Teachild; 'twenty-five let it be.'

Whereupon Wegler went down to the wife of his bosom and lamented that he had not said twenty-seven and six. Still, as the rise in his own rent had been only five pounds a year, and as there were two or three other tenants to be exploited, he was not really dissatisfied.

As time went on, the rent of the first floor rooms was raised, on one pretext or another, till it reached thirty-five shillings a week.

'He'll pay anything sooner than quit,' said Wegler to his wife.

'Don't push him too far,' she counselled. 'Where should we be without his money?'

'There's fish as good in the zea,' he quoted; but he knew well enough that the specimen they had landed was an unusually fine one.

III.

For a good many years Mr and Mrs Wegler did all the work of the house themselves, with only occasional help; but as time went by, and their income increased, they began to take life a little more easily. First of all, they had a boy regularly to clean the boots and knives. Then a girl fresh from school took his place, to be trained by Mrs Wegler in the domesticities. When she left to better herself—not a difficult matter—her successor was an elderly widow with a slight limp and a chronic sniff. These changes were gall and wormwood to Mr Teachild, and when the widow gave notice he showed a spirit that astonished and dismayed his landlord.

'Wegler,' he said, 'I'm not going to stand this sort of thing. I've been here more than twenty years, not so much because it's a particularly attractive house, but because I particularly dislike change. But change inside is just as bad as change outside, and I'm tired of seeing a new face every six months. I know why you get raw children and poor worn-out women; it's because they are cheap. Now I know, and you know, that I pay you just about twice as much as the rooms are worth—no, I have not finished yet—and I think I am entitled to decent and regular attendance. Still, as I said, I dislike change, and I am willing to pay you twenty pounds a year more if you will get a competent person to help Mrs Wegler in the house-work; get her, and keep her, mind. If she leaves without my approval, I shall leave too. That is all I have to say.'

Wegler was thoroughly frightened. 'I'm sure, zare,' he stammered, 'I'm very, very zorry. I know you to be always most liberal, but my landlord is a most unreasonable man. It quite cuts the gold off the gingerbread.'

'Never mind about that. What do you say to my offer? You had better talk it over with Mrs Wegler.'

'Oh zare, there is no need. We will do exactly as you wish.'

'Very well, then; get some one, as soon as you can, and do not let us have any more changes.'

When Mrs Wegler heard the news, her first remark naturally was, 'There! What did I tell you? I always knew he had it in him to be nasty.' The twenty pounds, however, brought out a broad smile on her face.

'Our luck's in, after all, Carl,' she exclaimed.

'I've just had a letter from Cousin Grace at Folkestone. A great friend of hers has died, leaving a girl of nineteen. She was being trained for a teacher, but there 's no money, and she 'll have to do something else for a living. Grace asks me if I know of a place where this girl could get some training in domestic work, so that later on she might go somewhere as housekeeper. It 'd be the very thing. We could give her board and lodging, and there 's not much in the way of housekeeping that we couldn't teach her. And we might offer her a pound a month. We wouldn't call it wages, because, from what Grace says, she 's a superior sort of girl; but we could make the arrangement a friendly one, and call it pocket-money.'

'It zounds good,' said her husband, 'but we couldn't keep her on those terms, and there are to be no more changes, he zays.'

'We could afford to raise her pocket-money for a year or two, at any rate, and one never knows what may happen. Even then, we should be getting the work done for next to nothing.'

Mr Wegler rubbed his hands. 'Good business, that,' he said.

IV.

A week later, when Mr Teachild came from his bedroom to the sitting-room for breakfast, he found his *Times* drying in front of the fire. It was a wet morning, and, under such conditions, the paper was often disgustingly damp. In fact, he had often been obliged to dry it himself. Of course, he could have asked the Weglers to do it for him, but that was not his way.

As the clock struck a quarter to eight there came a knock at the door. Mr Teachild, standing with his back to the fire and the *Times* in his hand, said, 'Come in.' Whereupon the door opened, and, instead of Mr or Mrs Wegler, a young woman entered.

Mr Teachild was ridiculously shy of the other sex, and the instant he saw the strange face he turned round to the glass. There, however, he met her eyes, and immediately, in great confusion, dropped the paper, and, seizing the poker, began a most unnecessary assault on the fire.

'Good-morning, sir,' said the new-comer, and, even in his confusion, he noticed that her voice was refined and very pleasant. But his shyness made his answer unintentionally gruff.

She set the things on the table, and then looked over them. 'Is that how you like them, sir?' she asked.

He turned from the fire and looked critically at the table. 'Not quite,' he said. 'I like the toast on the left side, and the teapot on the right. Then I can lean the paper against it, and get the light from the window.'

'I see,' she answered, with a little nod and a smile. 'I won't forget—sir.'

He noticed the pause before the last word. For the first time in many years, he omitted to prop the paper against the teapot, though he had just been insisting on the importance of the ritual. In his surreptitious glances through the glass he had noticed a good deal. The girl had a pleasant face; nay, she was certainly what people commonly called pretty. She did not wear either cap or apron. Her voice made it quite a pleasure to have a few words with her. If it was she who had dried the *Times*—and it could hardly have been any one else—that spoke volumes in her favour. New brooms swept clean, no doubt; but this was certainly a very good-looking broom.

The cleaning of Mr Teachild's sitting-room had always been a sore point. It was done once a fortnight, and it took him two evenings at least to replace his books in their proper order. The Friday after the new arrival was cleaning-day, and as soon as dinner was over he got up to begin the weary business of rehabilitation. To his amazement, there was nothing for him to do. Every book was in its proper place, the long lines without a single break. Yet the books had evidently been dusted and cleaned with scrupulous care; he took out half-a-dozen and examined them. 'Wonderful!' he said to himself. 'If only it lasts.' But he shook his head. It was really too much to hope for.

V.

The days and the weeks and the months went by, and Mr Teachild's doubts melted away. Beyond all question, Norah—that was the new girl's name—was a wonder and a treasure. There was not one of his little fads and fancies that she ever forgot. Sometimes he almost wished that she would forget, and give him the opportunity of showing that he was not the crusty old curmudgeon he began to be afraid he must appear.

By this time he was quite at his ease with her, and had even begun to consult her on matters of high importance.

'Norah,' he said one morning, speaking with a certain air of determination and effort, which was not lost upon her, 'I want to ask your opinion, and I wish you to be quite frank, and tell me the exact truth.'

'Yes, sir,' she answered, putting down the tray that she was just about to carry out of the room.

'These collars that I am in the habit of wearing—they are old-fashioned, I know. Do they make me look very eccentric and old?'

She considered for a minute. 'I think they 're rather picturesque,' she answered. 'But they do make you look different from other people, and I 'm sure they add on ten years to your age.'

'Thank you, Norah,' he said. 'That is exactly what I wanted to know.'

A few days afterwards he gave the Weglers the surprise of their lives by appearing in turn-down collars.

'I would not have believed it,' declared Mr Wegler, 'if I had not seen it with mine own eyes.'

'If it had been any one but Mr T.,' said his wife, 'I should have said he'd fallen in love.'

Norah smiled and held her tongue.

One evening, a few weeks later, when she brought in his supper, she found him with a couple of tailors' pattern-books before him on the table. 'Norah,' he said, 'I believe you have very good taste. For the last twenty years or more I have always had exactly the same cloth for my suits—the same colour and pattern, I mean.'

Norah stooped to a double atrocity; she giggled and punned. 'I suppose lawsuits are very much alike,' she remarked.

Mr Teachild looked up in quick surprise. Then, as the full extent of the outrage dawned upon him, his face relaxed into a smile, which was followed by a hearty, almost boyish, laugh.

'Law suits—lawsuits,' he chuckled. 'Very good, very good. Well, I was going to say that I think perhaps a change might be desirable. I want you to tell me which of these you fancy.'

'I'll do my best, sir,' she said, with the smile that he was now always trying to provoke, and bent her head over the patterns, and held them to the light, and at a little distance; while he stood behind her, looking at her hair and her lithe young figure a good deal more than at the cloth. 'I like these two the best,' she said at last. 'I don't think there's anything to choose between them.'

'Turn down the corners of both, then, my dear,' he replied, and, the moment the words were out of his mouth, seized the poker and set to work on the fire.

When, a fortnight later, Mr Teachild came from his bedroom arrayed in a beautifully cut morning coat and vest, with trousers that hung without a wrinkle, Mrs Wegler, who was the first to see the apparition, hurried downstairs.

'Carl!' she cried to her astonished husband, 'what *has* come to Mr T.? First the collars, and now he's dressed like a fashion-plate. It must mean something. Why, he looks younger than we do.'

'I only hope he will not make of himzelf a fool,' answered her husband, shaking his head.

'We'd better make our hay as fast as we can,' said Mrs Wegler.

VI.

Norah was certainly a pretty girl, and as shrewd and clever as she was pretty. Before she had been a week in Church Row she had taken the measure of the Weglers. But she was alone in the world and almost friendless, and she was only just beginning to recover from the blow that had robbed her at once of her mother and of the work she loved. So, whatever the disagreeables of her new position, she determined to put up with them for a time, and earn her 'pocket-money,' and learn all that she could.

From the first she had taken to Mr Teachild. The Weglers did not trouble to hide their contempt for the simplicity upon which they imposed and fattened. The tradesmen's books, which he paid without a murmur, covered half their housekeeping as well as his own, while the demands made upon him under cover of the landlord's name could hardly, one would have thought, have deceived a child. But beneath the apparent simplicity and the obvious eccentricities she was quick to detect the ability as well as the kind-heartedness of the man. The Weglers were vulgar cheats, but he was a gentleman and a scholar.

It took him a good deal longer to discover that she had the education as well as the manners of a lady.

'There's the best biography that was ever written,' he said to her one day, pointing to Boswell's *Johnson*. He had been praising her care of the books.

'And there's the third best,' she answered, touching Lockhart's *Scott*.

'What is the second best, then?' he asked.

'Trevelyan's *Macaulay*, I think,' she replied.

Now Trevelyan's *Macaulay* was too recent a book to have found a place on Mr Teachild's conservative shelves, but the very next day he bought a copy.

'Norah,' he said a few days after, 'I am not sure that I do not agree with you about Trevelyan.'

She smiled and looked very pleased. 'I felt sure you'd like it, sir,' she answered.

Mr Teachild walked to the window. 'Norah,' he said, speaking very distinctly, for his back was towards her, 'will you be good enough to give up calling me "sir"? It is unnecessary and unbefitting.'

'I will,' she replied, 'if you really wish it; though I've got quite used to it now.'

'I do wish it, my dear,' he said with emphasis.

. . . . . .

Mr Teachild was a very regular church-goer, morning and evening. The Weglers had a sitting between them, and it was generally occupied, morning or evening, by Norah. One Sunday evening, soon after he had forbidden the use of 'sir,' Mr Teachild went out, as usual, while the bells were still in full swing. Instead of going inside, however, he waited about, in the shadows of the churchyard, his eyes fixed upon the gates. It was nearly ten minutes after the bells had ceased before his patience was rewarded. He came out of the shadows and met Norah just inside the gates.

'We are both late,' he said—'terribly late.'

'Yes,' she replied; 'Mr Wegler was out, and I had to wait till he came in. Mrs Wegler doesn't like being left alone.'

'I really do not like going in so late as this,' said Mr Teachild.

'It isn't very pleasant,' Norah assented.

'Suppose, for once, we go for a quiet little stroll,' he suggested.

She hesitated, too much astonished to have an answer ready.

'I am an inquisitive man,' he said, with a smile that she liked, 'and there are one or two questions I should very much like to ask you. It is not mere inquisitiveness,' he added quickly. 'Do you think you can trust me?'

'I know that I can,' she answered.

The questions and the answers took some time, but Mr Teachild was not too engrossed to keep count of it, and they came back into the Row just as the church was emptying. She was going down the area-steps, but he stopped her.

'No, Norah,' he said softly, 'not any more,' and opened the hall door with his latch-key.

Mrs Wegler was coming downstairs. As Mr Teachild went up to his room she said sourly, 'You should have gone to the other door. It 's great presumption to come in here.'

Norah's face flushed scarlet. 'I know it looks like it,' she replied; 'but Mr Teachild insisted on my doing so.'

VII.

Mr Wegler had used his landlord as a stalking-horse so often, so long, and so successfully that it came like a thunderbolt when, the next evening, he received a letter from the solicitors who collected the rent reminding him that his term expired at midsummer, and adding that if he desired a renewal he could have a lease for seven years at an increased rental of twenty-five pounds per annum, on paying a premium of a hundred pounds.

'*Himmel!*' he exclaimed, throwing the letter across to his wife. 'It 's ridiculous—monstrous—an outrage—robbery.'

'We shall have to leave,' she said, 'just as we 've got the best lot of tenants we 've ever had. They must have found out how well we 're doing. I wonder'——

'Eh?'

'Old T., Carl. He 'll never leave this house if he can help it. This time you could show him the letter. If he would find part, it might be worth our while to pay the rest.'

'Yes,' said her husband. 'If he 'll pay two pounds for the rooms and half the premium, we might raise the others a shilling each, and then we shouldn't be zo much out of pocket after all. I 'll shpeak to him on Thursday. I believe he 'll pay anything zooner than turn out.'

'If we have to move, will he come with us, do you think?'

'Ah, I 'm not sure,' answered Wegler meditatively.

'If not, we 'll get rid of Norah,' declared Mrs Wegler. 'I can't bear the girl, with the airs she gives herself and her sly ways. I believe she 's set him against us. I always feel she 's watching and spying. I saw her looking at the butcher's book the other day for ever so long.'

Mr Wegler nodded. 'She zeems sheap,' he said; 'but if she 's that zort, she 's dear at any prize.'

For some time the Weglers had been none too pleasant with Norah, but for the next few days they were openly and unbearably insulting. Just before tea on Thursday she went out for a few minutes. When she came back Mrs Wegler demanded angrily, 'Where have you been?'

'To fetch a cab,' Norah replied.

'Who for?' Mrs Wegler's syntax varied with her temper.

'Myself.'

'Oh, indeed! Are you going to the opera?' inquired Mr Wegler, with ponderous sarcasm.

'No; but I 'm going to say good-bye to you.'

'What do you mean, girl?' Mrs Wegler's voice showed that she was startled.

'I mean just what I say. I 'm going to leave now. You know how you 've behaved to me the last day or two. I don't feel like putting up with any more. My box is in the hall, unlocked. You can look through it if you 're anxious about your spoons.'

'But you can't leave without notice. I 'll give you in charge,' Wegler blustered.

'Oh no, you won't. You know the law too well.'

He tried another tack. 'Your month's money 's due to-morrow; you won't get a penny of it.'

'Then I must manage without pocket-money for this month,' she answered, smiling.

'Be off with you!' cried Mrs Wegler shrilly. 'A good riddance. If we miss anything, the police will find you out.'

'I 'll let you have my address as soon as I am settled,' said Norah, with a little wave of the hand, as she went up into the hall.

VIII.

That evening Mrs Wegler, reverting to her former custom, brought in the dinner and placed the housekeeping books on the bureau. Some time after the meal was over and the table cleared her husband appeared, rubbing his hands with the mournful and deprecating air that always indicated finance.

'I 'm exceedingly zorry to zay, Mr Teachild,' he began, 'that we have two very unpleasant and distressing things happened.'

'Oh, indeed!' said Mr Teachild briskly; 'and what may they be?'

'The girl Norah has taken herzelf off—gone away in a cab without notice—left us zingle-handed to do what we can.'

'Well, Wegler, you know what I told you about changes.'

Wegler spread open his fat hands with an exculpatory flourish. 'But, zare,' he pleaded, 'you are always zo reasonable—you will zee it is not our doing—it is hers.'

'The result is exactly the same. What is number two?'

'Number two,' answered Wegler, with a little smile intended to propitiate, 'is still more grievous. The landlord'——

Mr Teachild shook his head. 'No, no, man. Give the landlord a rest. There's reason in all things. If you want to raise my rent again, you really must think of something else.'

Wegler twitched his cuff, and a letter fell into his open palm. He handed it eagerly to his tenant. 'You can zee for yourzelf, zare,' he said.

Mr Teachild glanced over it, and threw it on the table. 'It's your business, of course,' he remarked; 'but I should not have thought it worth your while to pay all that.'

Wegler's face fell. 'It is not possible. I shall, after all these years, have to give up the house.'

'The best thing you can do. I'll tell you what it looks like to me. I believe your landlord wants to occupy the house himself. I suppose he has never told you so, has he?'

'I have never even zeen him, zare.'

'Oh, come, Wegler,' said Mr Teachild, shaking his head again, 'I cannot credit that. I believe you know him as well as you know me.'

Wegler became almost apoplectic. That the absolute truth, on one of the rare occasions when it passed his lips, should be doubted was intolerable.

'I give you my word of honour, Mr Teachild, I have never zeen the gentleman,' he protested. 'I am not sure that I even remember his name. The zolizitors have always written the letters. I have zertainly never zeen him.'

'Well, you see him now, at any rate,' said Mr Teachild, a shrewd little smile playing round his clean-shaven lips.

Wegler gave a great start. His urbane manners, of which he was inordinately proud, deserted him for the moment. 'Eh?' he exclaimed, and stared, goggle-eyed.

'Yes,' Mr Teachild went on, 'I've been your landlord for about five years now; so, you see, some of your fairy-tales about his extortionate demands have been rather entertaining.'

A change came over Wegler's face. A bland, ingratiating smile appeared, and with it his beautiful manners came back. 'Ah zare,' he said, 'you are having your joke with me. You have given me a bad panic. We go on as before—is it not zo?'

'No, it is not. Now, look here, Wegler. I have been over the figures of what you have been screwing out of me, and I think that twenty-five pounds a year for seven years and a hundred down will be about right. If you like to pay it you can stay, though in that case you will have to let my rooms to some one else. If you do not like the terms you can go, and then we shall have the house done up, and live here ourselves.'

'We—ourzelves,' Wegler repeated. 'I don't understand.'

'Oh, Norah didn't tell you?' said Mr Teachild with great composure, though his cheeks showed a tell-tale flush. 'We are going to be married on Saturday. I have taken a furnished house for the summer at Harrow. This furniture is going to be warehoused; the vans will be here to-morrow. You need not hurry over your decision. Any time before quarter-day will do.'

Wegler seemed more than half-dazed. He said nothing, but turned to leave the room.

'There are the books,' said Mr Teachild, pointing to the row on the table, each with its little pile of coins. 'They seem a bit wickeder even than usual. I am afraid you will miss my weekly contributions to your housekeeping. Good-night, Wegler, and good-bye, if I don't see you to-morrow.'

'*Der Teufel*'—— Wegler began; but he said it under his breath, and as he said it he went out and closed the door softly behind him.

THE SECRET OF THE WIND.

WHENCE came the night-wind? O whence came he
  Who travelled to greet us from far,
When in the darkness she walked with me,
  On that night with never a star?

What did the storm-wind? O what loosed he
  In the dim blue darkness there?
He loosed strange dreams in the heart of me,
  As he loosed the strands of her hair.

What said the wild wind, stirring in the trees?
  'Now shall I stir you as well;
Ye shall both be movèd, as I move these,
  By the secret I come to tell!'

What said the strange wind, blowing from afar?
  What was the secret he told?
'O ye who are here were other than ye are,
  In a bygone age of old!'

Thus said the storm-wind, sighing as he went:
  'Meet it in joy or in pain,
But this is the last hour together that ye spent;
  Ye tread it together again!

'What do I bring you? O what brought I
  On that starless night long past?
I brought you a sword, and I brought you a sigh,
  But never the thing that ye asked!

'What canst thou say to the one at thy side?
  And what can she say unto thee?
Better (as then) in your silence abide,
  And leave all that telling to me!'

Heard she the secret he told ere he passed?
  O, most surely she heard it; yea!
And I rest content, for she knows, at last,
  What none but the wind could say.

A. L. HOLLAND.

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SOLDIER POETS.

By E. B. OSBORN, Editor of *The Muse in Arms: a War Anthology.*

IN the past the making of war poetry has been left to the non-combatants who, both in France and Great Britain, have been brilliantly successful in producing the munitions of patriotism. Indeed, we have to go back to the far-off days of folk-song to find songs and ballads of battle which are manifestly the work of fighting poets. The late Lord Kitchener once told me that he felt sure that the noble ballad of 'Chevy Chase' must have been made by some man-at-arms who fought in the historic border-fray. The rough lines and rugged stanzas of the oldest version extant certainly remind one of the pithy yet picturesque utterances of the modern soldier, who would not, if he could, use any of the neat tricks of rhetoric. Now and again, in the long interval between the raids and counter-raids of the Douglas and the Percy and the present war, we do find an occasional piece which might well have been the work of a fighting poet. A case in point is 'Agincourt, or the English Bowman's Glory,' which contains the following significant stanza:

> Agincourt, Agincourt!
> Know ye not Agincourt?
> Oh, it was noble sport!
> Then did we owe men;
> Men, who a victory won us,
> 'Gainst any odds among us;
> Such were our bowmen.

Then, as now, the fighting islander insisted on regarding warfare as a sport; a point of view which has been regarded by his enemies in every age as a proof of his inability to grasp the true meaning of an appeal to arms. Spaniards, Dutchmen, Frenchmen, and Germans have all complained, even while they were being beaten, that the English never would take war seriously enough. They did not know, they do not know yet, that 'sportsmanship' is our homely name for the *chevalerie* of the Middle Ages, being one of many terms of apparent belittlement originating in a racial tendency to compare great things with small things. Coming down to the long agony of Napoleonic wars, we find the British soldier more than ever inarticulate. The celebration of the immortal personalities and undying days of the great struggle was left entirely to the professional poets. But when we read such crude, half-forgotten ballatry as Sergeant Grant's 'Battle of Waterloo,' with its quaint, matter-of-fact final stanza:

> Here's a health to George, our Royal King, and long may he govern;
> Likewise the Duke of Wellington, that noble son of Erin!
> Two years they added to our time for pay and pension too,
> And now we are recorded as men of Waterloo;

or 'Sahagun,' the song of the 15th Hussars that was sung every 21st of December, which begins:

> It was in quarters we lay, as you quickly shall hear,
> Lord Paget came to us and bid us prepare,
> Saying, 'Saddle your horses, for we must march soon,
> For the French they are lying in the town of Sahagun,'

we cease at once to be literary critics, and are as strangely touched to the heart as Sidney was when he heard 'Chevy Chase' (which had no literary allurement for Elizabethan men of letters) sung by a blind crowder at the door of a tavern. For such artless doggerel possesses a quality which the finest art-poetry lacks; it has what Ruskin called the beauty of memorial. It was written with a sword or a bayonet, so to speak; the dust of an heroic heart sighs in the silence before and after.

The amount of war verse written by civilians since August 1914 is simply appalling. It is said that the German output alone runs to more than a million pieces! In Great Britain and America the aggregate production has been very large indeed; a friend of mine has a *selection* of six thousand pieces, all of which have actually been printed. France, more deeply engrossed in the war than any other of the Entente Powers, has been much less prolific than her English-speaking Allies. Very little of all the verse written by non-combatants will survive; even the established poets, such as Mr Rudyard Kipling and Dr Bridges, have failed in their few attempts to write poems worthy of so tremendous an occasion. But much of the work of the soldier poets will live on—at any rate, in anthologies; and it may be that the prophecy of Captain Robert Graves, perhaps

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the least conventional of all, may in the end be fulfilled:

> On Achi Baba's rock their bones
> Whiten, and on Flanders plain,
> But of their travailings and groans
> Poetry is born again.

The English muse, having played her part as a spiritual *cantinière*, and seen the squalor and splendour of modern warfare, will in the near future care more for the realities of life than for the fantastical word-play of the later and lesser Victorians. Truth will be her chief quest; beauty, particularly the beauty of words, merely incidental treasure trove.

The best of the soldier poets are educated young men—many of them, alas! fallen in action—who would have written verse even if they had never been drawn into the vortex of Armageddon. The true soldiers' songs—rough-and-ready reflections, mostly humorous, set to some favourite tune—are infrequent, and hard to come by. Some of them are authentic folk-songs which reflect a mood of the army, and have come into being nobody knows how. A good example is the chaffing ditty which used to be sung up and down the trenches by Territorials and Regulars alike, when it seemed that the men of Kitchener's Army would never arrive to relieve them:

> Who are the boys that fighting 's for?
> Who are the boys to win the war?
> It 's good old Kitchener's Army.
> And every man of them 's *très bon;*
> They never lost a trench since Mons,
> Because they never saw one.

In these days the popular music-hall song has put such spontaneous minstrelsy more or less out of court. None of the true soldiers' songs has had anything like the popularity of 'Tipperary' (never heard to-day in the British lines), or of that grim revival of the old Salvation Army song which begins:

> The bells of hell ring ting-a-ling-a-ling
> For you, but not for me.

Perhaps the most popular of the improvisations was the famous gibing rant against Von Kluck and his army. It greatly annoyed the Germans, and almost always brought about a renewal of the daily 'hate' from their machine-guns and rifles and trench-mortars. It is much too Rabelaisian to be quoted in print.

At least a dozen of the soldier poets whose work has been published in book-form will be read by posterity. Rupert Brooke hardly comes into the category, though his sonnet beginning,

> If I should die, think only this of me,
> That there 's some corner of a foreign field
> That is for ever England,

is perhaps the best known of all the war-poems. Captain Julian Grenfell's 'Into Battle,' a wonderful vindication of the fighting-man's fellowship with all living creatures, has also been very widely quoted, and well deserves Mr Kipling's sentence of praise: 'His lips must have been touched when he wrote it.' He left only half-a-dozen pieces—of which 'The Hills,' written in India, is a most noble act of nature-worship—but is sure of his place in the national remembrance. Already it is recorded that a young officer has been killed while reciting two lines from his ecstatic battle-hymn,

> The thundering line of battle stands,
> And in the air Death moans and sings,

and awaiting the 'zero' moment for leading his men over the parapet in a triumphant attack.

Several poems which are not nearly so well known are worthy of comparison with these famous pieces. The one and only sonnet by Lieutenant Geoffrey Howard, entitled 'England,' is a tribute to the greatest littlest land, which is written in the grand style throughout:

> Her seed is sown about the world. The seas
> For her divide their waters. She is known
> In swamps that steam about the burning zone,
> And dreaded in the last white lands that freeze.

This soldier poet has a Miltonic sense of the value of open vowels, and it is to be hoped we shall have more of his organ music. Love of the Motherland is a constant inspiration of the soldier poet, and another fine example is the poem in which Lieutenant Robert Nichols, while awaiting the signal for attack, remembers the beauty of the country-side in which he was born, and understands that a price is required for it all:

> The gorse upon the twilit down,
> The English loam so sunset brown,
> The bowed pines and the sheep-bell's clamour,
> The wet lit lane and the yellow-hammer,
> The orchard and the chaffinch song,
> Only to the Brave belong;
> And he shall lose their joy for aye,
> If their price he cannot pay.

The same poet has also taken for his theme that all-engrossing love of the regimental officer for his men, which is the secret of the unbreakable strength and incorruptible discipline of our New Army. Walt Whitman never wrote anything more poignant on comradeship in war than the poem which begins:

> Was there love once? I have forgotten her.
> Was there grief once? Grief still is mine.
> Other loves I have; men rough, but men who stir
> More joy, more grief, than love of thee and thine.
>
> Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,
> Lined by the wind, burned by the sun;
> Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,
> As whose children brothers we are and one.

The same thing is even more powerfully treated in a poem by Lieutenant E. A. Mackintosh, M.C., addressed to the fathers of his Highlanders fallen in action, which contains the lines:

> You were only their fathers;
> I was their officer.

The whole inner history of Scotland's famous regiments is latent in those few simple words.

The British conception of the regiment as a 'clan in action,' in which all are equal as gentlemen though of various ranks, is a gift of the North to the South. It is the principle on which a national army can be completely democratised without the slightest loss of power and precision—nay, with a great increase of moral fervour and of that impregnable discipline which was so well defined by Baden Powell as 'confidence in one's pals.'

Many of the best of the new soldier poets have fallen in action or died of wounds. The passing of Captain Charles Sorley, Captain Colwyn Philipps, Lieutenant W. N. Hodgson, M.C., and other singers and makers of much achievement and even more promise, is a sad loss to English literature. But others, such as Lieutenant Siegfried Sassoon, M.C., and Lieutenant F. W. Harvey, now a prisoner of war in Germany, still live to carry on the high task of interpreting to future generations the significance of a war which is really a crusade against scientific savagery and a non-moral plan of world dominion. None of the poets I have named are experimentalists in technique, though most of them are scornful of the social conventions, 'bloody-rooted, though leaf-verdant,' of the régime of luxurious indolence and bitter logomachy which has been so ruthlessly wrecked. Each has his own vision of a happier Britain, of a new Jerusalem to be, built up in sunshine and with singing, when the warrior-nation can sheathe its victorious sword. All of them hope that the comradeship of the trenches will survive as a vital factor in the national life to come. Voices of rebellion are not lacking to preach revolution rather than reconstruction. But they are few and incoherent, though at times their songs have a strange and piercing sweetness. In conclusion, let a word be said of a characteristic of all this real war poetry which distinguishes it from that of the German soldier poets. I have read in print and in manuscript some two thousand war-poems written by men actually serving, and not one of them can be called a song of hate. When Mr Kipling told the world how 'The English began to Hate,' he forgot that hatred is rooted in fear, and must never be imputed to this nation in arms. Our soldier poets will see to it that justice is executed on a felon race. But it is the offence, not the offenders, that they loathe and despise. Charles Sorley, the most ruthless of all these militant thinkers, could even find it in his heart to write a sonnet 'To Germany,' in which these lines occur:

> You only saw your future largely planned,
> And we the tapering halls of our own mind,
> And in each other's dearest ways we stand,
> And hiss and hate. And the blind fight the blind.

It has been left to civilian versifiers to abuse and argue with the enemy, and attempt imitations of Lissauer's song of the *furor Teutonicus*. The singers of our New Army are too mighty and merciless to fall into any such wordy folly.

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

CHAPTER X.

THE late spring rains of 18— will long be remembered by the older generation in that particular section of the Sierra Nevada foot-hills. Following upon an exceptional winter of warmth and sunshine, with, latterly, drying north winds, which scorched every living green thing and hardened the ground to the consistency of a brick, the long-hoped-for, well-nigh-despaired-of rains at last set in with unprecedented violence. Nature, as though impatient of man's impatience, opened the vials of her wrath, and for three relentless weeks poured down a veritable avalanche of long-stored waters. Day after day anxious ranchers, clad in oilskins and high gum-boots, strove to combat the pitiless deluge, hurriedly hoeing gutters in the hillsides from which the winter grain, just flushing into green, was being washed into the flooded ditches and roads. Cattle and horses, already lean from protracted want of fresh grass, were driven back and back into the bush by the cruel fury of the slashing rain; calves and colts were born, only to perish in the soaked wretchedness of mother earth; while foliage and blossom, forced forward by the treacherously warm winter, were bashed and battered into tattered semblance of leaf and bud. April rains, hitherto accounted a blessing because of spring sowings and the 'wild' grass, now became first a menace, then disaster, to man and beast. Mountain roads were washed away; the river, swelled beyond all possibility of carrying the accumulated waters, undermined its banks, tore away the trees, flooded every small 'flat' and reedy meadow, swept away bridges, and obliterated long-established fords.

When at length the wearied, discouraged eyes of men once more beheld a golden sun sailing through a sky of unimaginable blue, it shone, as it were, upon the wreck of a fair world, whose nakedness and bruises showed all the more pitiful for the revealing brightness. In the district about Beestop there was no one but had suffered injury and loss, though the Patricks, with their usual good luck, owing to the peculiar location of the ranch, came off better than the majority of their neighbours. Not so with John Pardon, whose property had been punished so severely that, strive as he would to

accomplish the work of two men with one pair of hands, he could spare but little time to help Joy Powell in the hard and lonely task of 'holding down' the ranch until Bob's return. This was, to a certain extent, a relief to them both; for, although John Pardon, having emerged victorious from the terrible battle of that memorable night when first he realised the depth of his love for the English girl, never wavered in his resolve to abide by both his self-undertaken troth to Mary Patrick and his promise to Bob Powell to protect and befriend his sister, the strain of constant contact with her was almost more than he could endure.

As for Joy, recognising and understanding the man's pain as well as his passion, she helped him by every power of mind and body, and many an anxious prayer, to be true to himself and to the man who had trusted him—helped him, though her own heart was growing sorely troubled, and the blue eyes strangely wakeful and full of tears in the long, lonely hours of night.

Of the occasion when Pardon's secret had been suddenly wrested from him no word ever passed between them. When next he came to the house and mounted the steps, his face pale beneath the tan, and his heart thumping so heavily that he felt the girl must hear it, she had met him with frank ease, and though crimson flooded her face, and the long fingers tightened on the veranda-rail, her eyes were bravely raised to his. In their depths John Pardon, discerning a mute appeal which struggled with an expression of tender sympathy and understanding, read also a fearless confidence, which he would have sacrificed his own right hand rather than have destroyed.

Thus, each helping the other, the old comfortable relations between them were, at least to all appearance, re-established. Yet the mere fact of this mutual effort to bear an unlooked-for burden inevitably became a bond of strange intensity between the well-born English girl and this rough product of the Far West—a bond fraught with a wholly unsuspected danger to Joy, and of increasing torment to Pardon. There were times when some household task with which he was helping her brought her lithe frame and fair face so close to him that he would clench his teeth and grow almost faint with passionate desire to snatch her to his heart; whereupon Joy's quick instinct would warn her to slip quietly away, presently returning with some commonplace request or small task for Pardon to do, thus restoring his tottering self-control. But the battle, as all battles are bound to do, was leaving its scars on the heroic pair.

Pardon's spirits, despite all endeavour, lost some of their buoyancy, and from his face fell away again the happy, boyish expression born of the unruffled summer months; while poor Joy's piquant little countenance, with its elf-like chin and smiling mouth, grew thin and wistful. Hence the ensuing relief when circumstances obliged Pardon to devote most of his time to his own belongings, only now and again going to the Powells' ranch, where, working furiously in order to catch up with many neglected things, he and Joy scarcely did more than exchange a cheery word or two as they passed each other, intent on their respective duties. So it came about that Pardon almost welcomed the opportunity of some days' work for the county, repairing roads, which, bad enough before the heavy rainstorms, were now well-nigh impassable. He made a point, however, of first getting in some hours of extra hard toil at the Powells' ranch before saying one evening to Joy, cheerily but with a wretched ache at his heart, 'Fraid I sha'n't be able to git round for a week or so, Miss Joy—got a job on the roads that 'll keep me and the hosses hustlin'. But,' he added, miserably noting how white and worn the girl looked, 'things are pretty well tidied up again, and now that we 've got the blessed sunshine once more, you must git out and ride a bit—take some of the fat off old "Silversides," and' (his voice full of tender concern) 'try to git some of the colour back into them cheeks o' yourn; else, sure, Miss Joy, your brother 'll be thinkin' we 've bin treatin' you bad while he 's bin back home!'

'Treated *badly!*' protested Joy, laughing. 'Why, I've never been so spoiled in all my life, Pardon. Bob will have to train me all over again to be a useful member of society! But I *can* saddle "Fay," and shall enjoy some good rides; so don't have me on your mind. I shall manage beautifully, while you and old "Kate" and "Custer" are making splendid new roads for "Fay" and me. See, here is an extra supply for the "jockey-box"!' she added gaily, filling his hands and pockets with good things.

'Thank ye ever so much, Miss Joy. So long—and take good care o' yourself,' said Pardon.

'Good-bye, Pardon!'—and yet again 'Good-bye!' floated sweetly towards the yearning man's ear as he faced homewards, resolutely refraining from glancing back until he reached a bend in the road, whence he knew he could see and not be seen.

In the gathering darkness he could just make out the shadowy silhouette of her face and figure against the evening sky, where he had left her standing—such a lonely little figure on the edge of the far-stretching wilderness. Was it solely a fantasy of his own overwrought mind that made him fancy he saw the girl's arms outstretched as though in silent appeal for some one to come to them? 'Joy—my own little girl!' broke in a low cry from John Pardon's lips as, with a wild hope tearing at his heart, he started back—only a pace or two; then, with a groan, he turned on his heel and swung rapidly down the road. The following morning was devoted to seeing that his wagon, harness,

horses' shoes, &c. were in good order for the strain that would presently be put upon them; then, early in the afternoon, he struck away through the bush behind his ranch with intent to discover whether the short cut which crossed Dry Creek by a ford to the Cañon Hill would be possible for his team to travel after the great rains. If so, it would save him and them a good few miles of the way to where his work was to begin. It was a superb day—spring at her gayest and brightest—every outside circumstance in cruel contrast to the misery in the man's breast. As he pursued his way, his thoughts rushed back to just such another afternoon, now nearly a year agone, when first he saw Joy Powell, on the windings of that same famous Cañon Hill whither his steps were now again leading him. Every sight and sound of the spotless day—the intense blue of the sky, the hot sun dancing on bud and leaf barely recovering from the recent havoc, the voice of birds, the tinkle-tinkle of cow-bells—all seemed to emphasise his own pain in the memory of that fateful meeting. Suddenly, however, the swift current of his thoughts was arrested by a sound that swelled up through the trees from the cañon below—the sound of rushing, roaring water. Abruptly Pardon halted to listen. 'What's that?' he ejaculated. 'Sure there must be mighty big water in that there Dry Creek!'

Quickening his steps, he soon reached the cañon-bottom, and stopped short, an exclamation of astonishment bursting from his lips. That which met and amazed his sight—was *that* Dry Creek? That turbulent torrent, tearing along over rock and prostrate tree—could *that* be the same trickling stream, with its shallow ford, that in summer-time was wont to be nothing but white, sun-parched stones? To solve the problem, however, did not take Pardon long. There must have been a 'break' somewhere up-country, and the accumulated mass of waters had sought and found a highway in the bed of what, ages ago, had been a great river.

'Lordy!' exclaimed Pardon, removing his old hat and scratching his head in speechless astonishment. 'Well, John Pardon,' he at length remarked slowly, and with a grim chuckle at his own discomfiture, 'that settles *your* little scheme for to-morrer. There *bain't* no ford—clean gone, I reckon!' Then, all at once, a hazy recollection that quickly became a certainty forced itself into his mind, causing his face to grow grave and thoughtful. Wednesday? This *was* Wednesday! Yes—surely it was to-day that Mary Patrick had said, when last he saw her, that she was going to take the old horse 'Tom' and the ancient vehicle known as 'the phaeton,' and drive herself over to Oak Clearing to see Annie M'Coon's parents. Annie had been writing from her married home asking Mary to go and see the old people. The heavy rains had prevented her, and it was no use, she said, waiting for Joe or Henry to take her. Pardon had promptly offered to drive her over on the first day that his work on the roads should be finished; but Mary had persisted in her own plan, and secretly poor Pardon, though he would not admit it even to himself, was relieved not to have the prospect of the long, hilly drive alone with her; she seemed of late to have grown critical and querulous. Now, however, reflected Pardon, had Mary carried out her purpose, she would almost surely be returning by the nearer road which crossed Dry Creek ford and climbed Cañon Hill. At any moment she might be coming. He must wait—for hours if need be—to warn her, unless indeed a glimpse through the bush along the road or the unwonted roar of water had already turned her back. Otherwise, so sharply did the road descend to the ford, she might have old 'Tom' floundering in the stream before she realised the danger. In order, therefore, to get as long a perspective as possible up the road, Pardon forced his way among the bushes along and above the usual bed of the creek, tied his neckerchief to a stick by way of flag, rolled and lit a cigarette, quite prepared to wait until all chance of Mary coming that way was past.

(*Continued on page 739.*)

MODERN MAGIC.

By E. Fearon.

EVER since man possessed a brain sufficiently developed to enable him to think logically, he has been demanding to know, 'Why do certain things happen?' 'What is the meaning of the various phenomena with which I am familiar?' And for countless ages a few great men in each generation have devoted their lives to answering, so far as possible, these and other questions that Nature propounds; and, taking everything into consideration, it is surprising what knowledge those pioneers have gained; for we should now regard as very crude the appliances with which they had to work. But within the last fifty years or so science has made such enormous strides that, to those who keep in touch with the latest developments of chemistry, physics, biology, &c., it is evident that we are on the threshold of discoveries that will make all that have come to light in past years seem insignificant. Even the power of producing life itself may some day be discovered, so vast and far-reaching are the possibilities of

modern research, aided by the appliances now available.

The pity is that so few people take the trouble to make themselves conversant with what is going on round about them. The average man, and more particularly the average woman, daily make use of the results of applied science without taking the slightest trouble to find out anything about them, with the result that any one with a smattering of knowledge can fool the public almost *ad lib.*, as we see in the advertisements of nearly every paper and magazine that is published.

But deplorable as is this lack of ordinary knowledge in everyday matters, it is comforting to know that there are a number of scientists who are steadily working away at the numerous problems that still remain to be solved in the domain of chemistry and allied subjects; and one of these, of which but little is heard outside the charmed circle of scientific societies and their publications, is catalysis, a miracle-worker which may help the race to win a victory over the material world that was undreamt of a few years ago.

There is little need to point out that, apart from conditions due to the war, the cost of nearly everything we use has been gradually rising for a long time past. Wasteful methods of the past, the exhaustion of virgin soil in countries such as the United States and Canada, and the steady increase in population are all factors that have had their effect, and constant effort is needed so to cheapen industrial processes that material of inferior quality, which was formerly neglected, can be utilised. If the urgent need for research-work required emphasising, the history of many of our industries, which have been galvanised into new life through some method of using what had formerly been regarded as valueless, would supply it; for one of the most interesting chapters of that history is that which deals with the discovery, by some patient worker or other, of ways of obtaining a commercial article from low-grade material, or even so-called 'waste-products.'

But the study of catalysis holds out hopes of dominion over natural forces that will render the little victories that chemists have so far won appear paltry in the extreme; for here we seem on the brink of discovering how Nature performs her miracle of changing one substance into another without any of the violent methods that man has to employ. By means of heat, pressure, or vacuum we can perform many wonderful things in our laboratories and works; but in all living organisms these wonders are brought about naturally and gently, and recent research has shown that they are due to catalytic influences at work within the organism. If we consider our own bodies as chemical laboratories, we find that various glands produce substances which are necessary for digestion, for making the blood-cells, and generally keeping us in health; and that the imperfect working of a certain gland may result in idiocy, as in the case of the thyroid gland; or in diabetes, if the pancreas fails to do its duty.

Some of these natural catalysers can be manufactured, and it is to that curiously complex body, coal-tar, that the chemist turns for at least one of them, which is known as adrenalin, and by means of which a surgeon can control the blood-pressure during an operation. This substance was isolated from an extract secreted by the suprarenal gland, and its composition investigated; then it was built up again, and the synthetic product can now be obtained commercially, and used in such a way that, before an operation, the part of the body to be operated on can be rendered almost bloodless—which is, of course, a great help to the surgeon.

In the vegetable world, by means of a substance called chlorophyll, trees and plants are able to resolve the carbon dioxide gas present in the atmosphere into carbon, which they retain for their own use, and oxygen, which they exhale, as it were, through the pores of the leaves. The little glow-worm, again, has solved the problem of producing light without any sensible amount of heat, which is more than man, with all his array of dynamos, retorts, and crucibles, can yet do.

But Nature yields up her secrets with great reluctance; or shall we say that man has hitherto been too much occupied with affairs that really don't matter, and so has missed great opportunities of advancement in the past?

However we put it, the fact remains that although man has existed on the earth for many thousands of years, he has, comparatively speaking, advanced very little in his knowledge of the marvels by which he is surrounded. We are like travellers in an unknown country, without map or compass, wandering blindly along, and counting ourselves lucky if we can find a fire to warm us and a crust of bread to stay our hunger. For the great majority of the human race, life is still a sordid struggle for bare existence; monotonous toil in field or factory makes up the daily round, and there is little of that *joie de vivre* that ought to be man's rightful heritage.

True, we know at what speed the waves of light travel, how many millions of miles Saturn or Neptune, or some other celestial body, is distant from our own little planet, and we speculate on the possibility of Mars being inhabited, and so on; but these things do not help us to earn our daily bread more easily, or to make more pleasant the hideous slums of our cities and towns.

For over three years almost all the great nations have been at war. One of them has prostituted science to gain her end, with the result that all the best brains of the race are thinking out ways of killing their fellow-men as quickly as possible, and imagination reels when

we think of the awfulness of war if ever man should unlock the door that hides the forces of Nature still undiscovered. Perhaps some *modus vivendi* will have been found before then, and the nations of the world will have recognised that scientific achievement may be more usefully employed than in battering down works of art and flinging thousands of tons of iron and steel at each other!

Be that as it may, many serious problems will continue to force themselves on our attention in the years to come; among them, greater supplies of food and cheaper industrial methods of all sorts must be found, and it is to the chemist that we look for the solution of many of our problems. And it is to this wonder-worker, catalysis, that the chemist turns in his search for better ways of effecting chemical reaction. The importance of cheapening and hastening chemical reaction is obvious when we consider that almost all the various articles of commerce—whether they be food-stuffs, clothes, or building material—depend, more or less, on chemical processes. Thus, large and cheap supplies of sulphuric acid are necessary in the manufacture of fertilisers, in the dyeing industry, and for many other purposes. The hydrogenation of oils is another important chemical process, as there are large quantities of whale-oil, for instance, which might be turned into hard fats for use in the manufacture of margarine and soap. At present it has only a very limited application for lubricating purposes, and to some extent in tanning. In other processes, such as the production of atmospheric nitrogen, surface combustion, in the manufacture of salt-cake and chlorine, and many more chemical industries, quicker and better methods of bringing about the reactions would greatly cheapen the ultimate product, and be of benefit all round; and although the influence of catalytic agents is not very well understood, there are great possibilities latent in its application, and it is being closely studied in scientific circles.

Briefly, what is known concerning the subject is that a very small quantity of a certain body (the catalyst) is capable of effecting chemical action between other bodies, without seeming to undergo any chemical change itself, and without the necessity for the employment of great heat, pressure, &c. A catalytic agent has been defined as 'that material which affects the velocity of a chemical reaction without appearing in the final products;' and although the definition is not strictly accurate, it sets forth the two principal properties of the process.

A chemical change which occurs so slowly under certain conditions of temperature and pressure as to be inappreciable may take place with immeasurably greater rapidity in presence of a suitable catalytic agent. Thus, in the case of sulphur dioxide and oxygen, when platinum is absent the gases combine very slowly indeed; but when platinum is present in a suitable form, all other conditions remaining the same, combination occurs rapidly, the sulphur dioxide and the oxygen uniting to form sulphur trioxide. A small quantity of platinum suffices for the production of a practically unlimited quantity of sulphur trioxide, and yet the metal is quite unchanged at the end of the process.

Another illustration may be found in the ordinary method employed in the chemical laboratory for the production of a considerable quantity of oxygen. Potassium chlorate is mixed with about 2 per cent. of pure manganese dioxide, and on the mixture being gently heated in a flask, the potassium chlorate is rapidly decomposed into potassium chloride and oxygen, the oxygen being set free. When the process is complete, the manganese dioxide is found to be quite unchanged; and yet in its absence a much greater heat would be necessary to effect the decomposition of the potassium chlorate, and the process would go on much more slowly.

One or two further examples may make the point still clearer. Hydrogen and oxygen can be made to combine, to form water, by the application of heat or an electric spark; but the action is very violent, and results in the production of a great deal of heat. Now, by means of a minute quantity ($\frac{1}{12000}$ of a grain) of colloidal platinum, a cubic foot of the two gases will combine without heat, and without the activity of the catalyst being impaired. Or, put in another way, one part of the catalyst brings about the union of four hundred and forty thousand parts of the gas in question.

The production of synthetic indigo is another instance of catalytic influence, and also of the part that chance sometimes plays in affairs. This process, which is worked by the German Badische Anilin und Soda Fabrik, starts with the oxidation of naphthalene to phthalic acid, and it was the accidental breaking of a thermometer bulb, allowing the mercury to fall into strong sulphuric acid, and so forming mercuric sulphate, that gave the required catalytic action to render practicable the commercialism of this synthesis.

An interesting illustration of catalysis is seen in the fermentation of beer, one part of yeast so acting upon the sugar of the sweet worts, without entering into combination with it, as to compel one hundred parts of sugar to pass into alcohol and carbonic acid gas.

It would take too long to give details of the many applications of this new means of dealing with chemical reactions, and, as yet, too little is known about the whole subject to make any definite assertions; but the experience of the last few years is enough to render us hopeful that in the near future many processes will be cheapened and many greatly improved by it.

The catalysts usually employed are the heavy metals and their oxides, such as platinum, nickel, cobalt, iron, thorium, titanium, &c.; but there

are wonderful possibilities in systematic research, and it is to this that we must look to see these possibilities developed. Only, it is to be hoped that we shall not allow Germany to reap the benefit of our research-work, as we did in the case of the coal-tar dyes. If the manufacturers will back up the scientists as they ought, there is no reason why we should not build up as huge a chemical industry as Germany's was before the war.

FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

CHAPTER II.

And for her sake, and not for gold,
At her clear call we faced her foe,
Upheld her trident as of old,
Her sons—her own—in weal or woe;
In shattered trench, in bloody fray,
Grim Death alone could give us stay;
No whit we cared for Hunnish boasts—
His hell-hounds bayed—we held our posts.

AT the British Consul's house on the *plaza* the jubilant uproar at the Club Alemania could be distinctly heard. It was not pleasant hearing, though anything but unlooked for. Indeed, except Don Andrés, there was not a man present who had not been expecting it for years. At home, in Germany, prudence in speech may have been compulsory; at any rate, it appeared to be the rule in public. Abroad, and especially in Latin America, there was no such thing. Loud boasting from the house-tops had drowned its feeble voice, if it had ever lived; and it was dead.

'Well, boys,' said the popular and usually jolly Consul, looking round the assemblage, 'the Old Country 's up against it, and no mistake. I suppose we 'll be able to steer clear of trouble here. Let the bounders shout, and leave 'em alone. Anybody anything to say?'

'What 's the latest news?' asked Christy.

'The British army is retreating, very hard pressed. The French are retreating also. A lot of men have been lost—killed, wounded, prisoners.'

'Damn!' cried the ex-soldier.

'I have a private code-telegram from the Legation,' the Consul went on. 'The Old Country 'll want all the volunteers she can get. Who 's going home? I can take your names.'

'Then take mine!' cried the ex-soldier—'Andrew Martin, Third Battalion, Midshire Regiment.'

'You, Don Andrés?' exclaimed the Consul, surprised.

'Just to give the boys a start. Christy 's lame. He 'd be turned down if he went,' was the reply.

'That 's true, worse luck,' said Christy.

'I 'm too old, which is worse luck still,' said the Consul. 'There 's paper and a pen on my desk. Those who can go, put your names down.' There was a move to the desk. The Consul turned to the ex-soldier: 'Going to join your old regiment?'

'I am.'

'You 'll be shot.'

'I 'll risk it.'

'All right. It 'll be your funeral. You 'd better ride round to all the English *fincas* up your way and let them know. The Brown boys 'll go when they hear of it. And there 's Jack Thomson and Sinclair. And don't forget Cuthbert. He 's Canadian, but he 'll go.'

'Right-o! I 'll enlist 'em. Say, it 'll take a week to get round, and another week to fix up things at Bella Vista. You 'd better find out what boats 'll be leaving Puerto Mexico in about three weeks' time.'

'I 've done it,' said the Consul. 'French boat for Havre; Ward liner for New York; English boat—Lamport & Holt—for Liverpool.'

'All right. English boat. Book me a passage, second class,' said the ex-soldier, and presently left with Christy.

On the foot-hills of Mount Tacana there are some scores of coffee-plantations, but not one decent road. To many, like Moctezuma, the only approach is the rocky bed of a small river. Visiting all the British owned or managed *fincas*, and the one Canadian, occupied Don Andrés a week; but he had called at several American-owned plantations and a French one. The French *finqueíro* was simply furious. The Americans were almost as disturbed by the news as the English and the Scotch.

'I guess Mexico won't be big enough to hold their swollen heads,' said Van Dunnop, of Finca Nord Americano. 'Reckon I 'll go to Frisco, and wait there till their Kaiser is licked to a frazzle, as he will be—sure.'

That was the general opinion. In bucking the British Empire the Kaiser didn't know what he was up against, and he was going to get the surprise of his life. The result of the ex-soldier's journeys as a recruiter was eight volunteers. They gathered at Bella Vista, and, with *mozos* to take back their horses, all rode down to Tapachula together. On the way they met Henkel and several other Germans, who were returning to their *fincas* after a debauch lasting ten days in honour of *Der Tag*, which was to be the beginning of German world domination.

Don Andrés reined up in front of Henkel. 'Here 's the answer to your dirty proposal that I should go to England as a spy, you swine!' he cried. 'We 're all going to England as volunteers. I meant to plug you for your

infernal insult, but that'll keep till I come back.'

The *ober* something or other laughed scornfully. 'Goot!' he answered. 'Ve vill meet in London at der Kaiser's coronation.' He rode on, convulsed with laughter, amid drunken shouts of '*Hoch der Kaiser!*' from his companions, some of whom could hardly keep in their saddles.

'The best joke of all,' said Charlie Brown of Finca Inglaterra, 'is that the darned fools are cocksure their Kaiser is going to be crowned Emperor of Great Britain, India, and all the British Dominions beyond the seas, in London. If I've been told so once, I've been told it fifty times. By the way, is that chap Henkel on the telephone?'

'Yes, of course,' said the ex-soldier.

'Then to-morrow we've to look out some railway bridge isn't dynamited with our train on it. The railroad agent is a German.'

The provision which the German Government had made for all sorts of happenings in far-away foreign countries was amazing, but apparently the blowing up of British volunteers from south Mexico had not been taken into its calculations. Fifteen in all, they arrived safely at Puerto Mexico, and with a score or so from other parts of the republic, they embarked on a Lamport and Holt liner.

On board ship there was much discussion as to what regiments they should join, the Legion of Frontiersmen being first favourite, as likely to be less 'starchy' than any other corps. In these discussions the ex-soldier took small part. His course was decided upon; and, for reasons which he kept to himself, he did not desire that anybody else should join the Midshires. On arriving at Liverpool, he took train to Crowling, where the Midshire's depot was situated.

Of an old, gray-haired non-com. in the orderly-room, whom he recognised at once as Sergeant-Major Cadman, perennial depot officer, he made inquiries.

'First and third battalions are in France. Second's in India; coming home soon. Fourth's training,' replied the old non-com., with soldierly brevity.

'So there's a fourth, is there?'

'Ay, and likely to be a tenth before this war's over.'

'Where's Colonel Malleson?'

'France, with the third. And mighty well he handled 'em in the retreat from Mons. There's a couple of V.C.'s in the battalion. The colonel got one.'

'He used to be a hard officer.'

'Fine disciplinarian. Rough on the bad uns, maybe. But you seem to know a fairish lot about the old battalion. What's your name, and what d'ye want?' And the old sergeant-major looked keenly at the ex-soldier from under his bushy eyebrows.

'Alfred Maddick's my name, and I want to join up with the third battalion,' said the ex-soldier, adding, 'I've come back from Mexico to wipe a German or two off the earth. Got a grouch against 'em. Also to do a bit for the Old Country.'

''Tention!' sang out the non-com., suddenly and vociferously.

Ex-Private Andrew Martin had been out of the army more than five years. Yet he stiffened, and his hands flew to the seams of his trousers.

The old sergeant-major laughed. 'I reckoned so,' he said. 'Your outlandish clothes and that broad-brimmed hat didn't take me in. Your face seems a bit familiar. Just take your tile off, will you?'

The ex-soldier obeyed, and the sergeant-major scrutinised his features narrowly. 'Seem very familiar, but I can't just place you. Did you serve in the third battalion?'

The ex-soldier nodded.

'I reckon you know me?'

'Oh yes—Sergeant-Major Cadman.'

'Staff sergeant-major now. Well, that settles it. You're welcome. If you join up at once, and haven't forgotten your drill, you can go out with the next draft. That'll be in about a month's time.'

'That will suit me. But I want a couple of days' leave to see my folks.'

'That'll be all right.'

Fifteen minutes later, as Alfred Maddick, Andrew Martin was once more a private in the Midshires—for the duration of the war. It was not surprising that the sergeant-major had failed to recognise him, or, at least, to place him. Five years of exposure to tropical suns had darkened his complexion. Hard riding and living had fined him down. In the army at the time of his disappearance he had sported a moustache. He was clean-shaven now, and looked very American in his Stetson.

Feeling pretty safe, now that he had re-enlisted, he went to Ditchington in his Mexican rig, walking the three miles from Podsbury Station. It was singular, but almost the first person he met was Jessie Osborn, who, he thought, did not look a year older, and was prettier than ever. Without hesitation, he stopped her.

'Well, Jessie, how are you?' he said, and held out his hand.

The girl stared. 'I am very well, thank you,' she answered. Then, in the direct country way, 'But I don't know you.'

'You've a short memory. Have you forgotten Andrew Martin?'

The girl almost screamed. 'He's dead! Andrew was drowned years ago.'

The soldier took off his hat. 'Was he? I reckon not. Have a good look.'

The girl obeyed, her face alternately white and red. 'No,' she faltered, 'I don't remember ever seeing you before. You're not Andrew.'

'No wonder Sergeant-Major Cadman didn't know me, if you don't, Jessie,' he rejoined. 'Don't you remember telling me in your father's orchard that you liked Bob Palmer better than you did me, and were going to marry him some day? I suppose you're Mrs Palmer now? I don't see a wedding-ring, though. I enlisted next day, you'll remember? I told you to do what you liked, and go where you liked. Remember that?'

'Oh!' she cried, convinced at last; 'it is Andrew! But you were drowned?'

'I guess not. They thought I was drowned, I dare say, but I reckon you never heard that they gave me a military funeral. There was no "Reverse arms!" and "Last Post" for me,' he replied, quizzically. 'Well, and how's Bob?' he added.

'Oh!' she wailed, half-fainting; 'I didn't want him. I never wanted him. I was only teasing. I was a little fool. You told me to go —somewhere—and I let you go'——

'I went all right,' he interrupted grimly.

'And you never wrote, and you never came any more, and it nearly broke my heart. But, oh!' in sudden fear, 'you must have deserted, and if the police see you they'll arrest you. Inspector Jones is still here. He'll know you immediately.'

Andrew Martin laughed. 'Never mind him,' he said. 'Are you married? That's all I care about.'

'No,' she faltered. 'I never meant to marry. But—but what are you going to do? You can't stay in Ditchington.'

'Never mind that either,' he said, again removing his broad-brimmed Stetson. 'What I am going to do first of all is to kiss you, and I don't care who sees me.' They were standing at the entrance to the village, opposite a group of cottages, but he took the girl in his arms and kissed her until she was breathless. 'Do they feel like a ghost's kisses?' he laughed, and kissed her again.

'No, Andrew—no,' she answered, as she clung to him, equally regardless of spectators at the cottage windows; 'but,' as her fears for her old lover returned, 'they'll send you to prison. It's war-time now, and you may be shot. Oh, what would I do then? What will you do?'

'Don't worry, Jessie. I'll tell you all about it. Let us walk along.'

He told her everything, pointing out that as Cadman and herself had failed to recognise him, there was small likelihood that Alfred Maddick would be spotted as Andrew Martin, a deserter, supposed to have been drowned more than five years before, and officially dead. 'Besides,' he added, laughing, 'suppose somebody does spot me. What's going to happen? Seven days' "C.B." while they think it over, and then a lance's stripe, and perhaps a medal for coming back just when I was wanted. That's about all that'll happen to me. What's going to happen to you is more important. So I'm going to ask you a question. Will you marry me when I've done my bit?'

'I will marry you gladly any time,' she answered. 'If you'd been really dead I should have died an old maid, with your death on my conscience all my life. And, oh,' she sobbed, but joyously, 'I didn't want to die an old maid.'

'I should think not,' said Andrew Martin, or Alfred Maddick, which name he had chosen, by the way, mainly because his shirts, handkerchiefs, and collars were marked 'A. M.,' and he kissed her again.

Of course, the Martin family were greatly surprised to find that their ne'er-do-well Andrew (and all enlisted men were ne'er-do-wells in country estimation before this status-altering war) had not, after all, come to a bad end. They were also quite anxious to keep their own counsel, or, as old man Martin put it, 'their mouths shut,' until Andrew had properly joined up, which he did at the end of his forty-eight hours.

As he had not forgotten his drills, or his old skill with the rifle, which happened to be about the only redeeming point in his previous career as a soldier, he was sent out to France with the first draft, as Sergeant-Major Cadman had promised.

(Continued on page 745.)

THE POTTERS OF ALBISSOLA.

By J. B. Underwood.

ALBISSOLA, as many who have travelled along the Riviera, say, from Nice to Genoa, know, is situated in Liguria, not far from the city of Savona. Less known, however, is the fact that the name Albissola is applied to three different localities: Albissola Capo and Albissola Marina, which lie directly on the shore of the Mediterranean; and Albissola Superiore, which overlooks both of these places from the top of a little hill all green in the picturesque depths of the mountains. These three districts, especially the second, are associated intimately with an art which was famous in olden times, and one which also made illustrious the neighbouring city of Savona—namely, the art of pottery, or ceramics, the origin of which is almost lost in classic obscurity. It is certain that the glazed tiles of Savona were already in great vogue in

Genoa and other cities of Italy in the fourteenth century. On this subject Professor Vittorio Poggi, in his descriptive catalogue of the Municipal Art Gallery of Savona—of which he is the director—informs us that the Savonese 'in the good old times' used the majolica tiles, in polychromatic designs, not only for their floors, but also to cover, to a height of about six feet, the walls of the porticoes, as they called, and call to-day, the *atria* and vestibules of their palaces. A fine example of this tiling is to be seen in the palace in Savona known as the Vacciuoli, in the street of the same name. The elements of this decoration were not all of an ornamental design; but alternating with ornamental scenes were figured representations composed of many tiles joined together. There still remain some very excellent specimens of these in the City Museum of Ancient Art at Turin, collected at Savona and bequeathed to the museum by the Marquis Roberto d'Azeglio. These products of the Savonese potteries were exported not only to Genoa and to other towns along the coast, but also to the neighbouring province of Piedmont, where, in fact, are still to be found numerous examples.

As at Savona, ceramic art flourished in Albissola. In the first half of the sixteenth century it fell to the painters of Urbino (whose duke was of the Della Rovere family and of Albissolese origin) to teach there the technique of painting on majolica. And the Albissolese learned the art so well that they were afterwards called to teach it in France.

Professor Poggi, describing a valuable French sculpture of the fifteenth century (now in the Savona Gallery), which for many years was attached to the wall over the entrance to a pottery factory at Albissola, where it served the *gamins* of the town as a target for stones, says: 'It constitutes an interesting record of the relations which existed for about a century between Albissola and France, from the time that Louis of Gonzaga, Duke of Nevers, gathered about him a constellation of Albissolese artists to establish in the capital of his duchy a manufactory of Italian pottery. It is well known that in 1578 King Henri III. gave letters of naturalisation to Domenico di Conrado, a gentleman of Albissola, and that the latter, designated in the parochial register in 1602 as a "master potter," was the founder of the Nevers factory. This Domenico di Conrado was succeeded in the direction of the factory by his son, Antonio, who was appointed in 1644 by Louis XIV. as "*gentilhomme servant et fayencier ordinaire du Roy.*" Antonio, in time, was succeeded by his son, Domenico, of whom all trace has been lost since the year 1673.

'The productions of Nevers from the factory of the Conrados, rightly very celebrated, preserved until towards 1660 the original character of the Albissola majolica during the period in which the influence of the School of Urbino predominated. In design and colour they resemble the stylistic and technical manner of the Urbino pottery; the colours, however, are fewer and less vivid; above all, great use was made of violet of manganese and of orange-yellow, as one may observe in the many specimens that are still preserved in the museums of the Louvre and of Cluny.

'The intercourse of the Albissolese majolica-workers with Nevers, and also with several other regions in France, where they carried on their industry profitably, is sufficient to explain the presence in Albissola of an object of art like this.' Thus concludes Professor Poggi.

Albissola, however, is no longer the enviable nursery of exquisite majolica of the time of the Duke de Nevers. The secret of those marvellous artificers died with them, and as testimony to it, in the fertile country which produced them nothing remains at present but a single relic—a magnificent altar-piece in enamelled tile, representing the Manger at Bethlehem, composed in 1576 by Agostino Salomone and Geronimo Urbinato, to be seen in the sacristy of the church at Albissola.

. . . . . .

There are to-day in Albissola two factories for the making of artistic pottery, but they have only been in existence for a few years, and only one of them is dedicated to the imitation of ancient ceramics. The imitation, however, is good, inasmuch as it finds purchasers even in Holland, a country which is famous for its own pottery productions. But it is always an imitation. The true, original, glorious art is dead. And it is certain that one cannot pretend that it has been revived or substituted, however estimable the present industry of common white and coloured earthenware products may be.

There has, on the other hand, arisen and steadily grown in size and importance an industry much more modest, and without any pretensions to art, which constitutes the most striking characteristic of this region—namely, the industry of pots and pans. At Leghorn, Viareggio, Castellamonte, and Pontedibrenta, Ligurian towns all, there are also to be found numerous potteries. But Albissola surpasses and vanquishes them. Albissola is the land of pottery; in Albissola everybody is a potter, and engaged in the manufacture of pottery. The last census gives the number of adult inhabitants as two thousand one hundred and eleven, and one can rely upon it that there are at least two thousand potters, male and female, old and young, distributed amongst the workers of about thirty furnaces. Pottery is the resource of the country. The Albissolese alone manufacture in the neighbourhood over five million pots annually, in addition to over two millions of various other earthenware utensils. This explains the plethora of these humble products in the streets and

piazzas of the place, extending in long rows for the sun to dry. One sees pottery everywhere, in the centre of the town as well as on the outskirts, on the main street and in every little alley, on the banks of the river and along the sea-coast, drawn up like soldiers of a fantastic army in gray uniforms. And if one walks along the principal street, at almost every door and window one encounters in a hundred different forms the homely but useful domestic pot or pan.

In the backgrounds of the shops, the walls of which are covered with scaffolding holding rows of opaque pots, from time to time one catches glimpses of caverns lit by the vivid glare from a furnace. Human forms are discerned. They are the potters at work. Bare feet working a treadle that operates a revolving wheel; hands that stir and knead; water that trickles drop by drop; visions of phantoms moving in an unknown world, in a life of mystery, in an atmosphere of dampness and of silence. No beating of hammers, ringing of anvils, rasping of files, or harsh buzzing of saws; in these strange workshops the wheels turn silently; the barefooted workers make no noise; the ground is deaf. But the work is hard, just the same. Faithful to the primitive systems of pottery-making, everything here is entrusted to the hands and feet of man.

The refractory earth of Antibo, brought hither by lazy sailing-vessels, is first pounded fine with mallets, and then rubbed through a sieve like flour, after which it is mixed with water and worked into a paste. Great piles of this ash-coloured composition are placed in the caverns destined for the work. A woman takes a lump of it, and after a short manipulation with her hands she passes it to the man, who places it upon the wheel, which he causes to revolve with his foot. The earthen lump is transformed; and the hands of the potter, shaping, pressing, smoothing, assist in the transformation; and presently the pot is completed. It goes to join the others on the long boards to dry by the fire or in the sun, until ready for the process of glazing. Thus, from the rising to the setting of every sun, thousands of pots are born, and in squads, battalions, regiments, go to fill the holds of sailing-vessels or the trucks of railway-trains, which carry them far away from Italy to the wholesale and retail shops of other countries, other cities, whence they finally, one by one, reach the arms of the housewife, and fulfil their mission thereafter on the domestic hearth.

THE BURNING OF KULIMEH.

By W. H. Adams.

THE great world war recalls to one's mind many curious incidents, and the following little adventure, which occurred on the borders of Togoland, the first of the German West African colonies to fall to the Allies, may be of some interest.

Some years ago I was commissioner of a district at the extreme eastern end of the Gold Coast Colony known as the Kitta District. It abutted on Togoland, the boundary being marked by stone pillars which ran straight inland from the beach for some miles, then turned at right angles, then bent off again to the right. In the first of these angles, and just within British country, lay a nest of villages known as the 'Poglu Villages,' some half-dozen in number. These were all fetish abodes, and much dreaded by the natives, being an Alsatia for bad characters from both sides of the frontier. Though some thirty miles from my headquarters at Kitta, these villages lay only a few miles from the German capital town of Lome, and the Germans made a point of driving their undesirable characters over the border into them. The intercourse between the Kittas and the Poglu Villages was very slight, though complaints were being constantly preferred against them. But the Government knew it was a very risky matter to try to enforce the law there, and the villages were left alone as much as possible.

One morning a girl arrived at the fort at Kitta in a very bad way. On her head she bore a large block of heavy wood, to which her left hand had been fastened by a rude staple. She was 'in log,' as the natives express it, an efficient manner of custody; for though, while she balanced the block, she could move about, yet if it fell off she was anchored by it. She had a nasty cutlass-slash across her left thigh, and a smaller one below her left knee. When I saw her she was lying on the ground exhausted, covered with dried blood and with her arm badly wrenched by the fall of the log. She was about fourteen, and not at all a bad-looking girl.

When she recovered she told me that she and her mother were slaves to one Bossoo, a sub-chief of Kulimeh, the largest and most important of the Poglu Villages. Being suspected of trying to run away, she had been put 'in log' by Bossoo, who, in his rage, had inflicted the wounds. Nevertheless, she had escaped, hiding by day and crawling along at night. Always balancing her log, and unable to rest except by leaning against some tree, she had reached the fort after three days' tramp.

This was a matter that had to be taken notice of, for the complaint had been publicly made, and the town of Kitta was agog, but I proceeded as diplomatically as possible. I despatched a polite message to the head chief of

Kulimeh through one of the chiefs of Kitta, to the effect that I should be pleased to see Mr Bossoo at the fort, mentioning the reason why, and saying that I hoped further trouble would be avoided. The messenger took his time, and returned at the end of a fortnight. He informed me that he had seen Bossoo, who said he could not come, as he was going for a walk—a reply that amused everybody but me.

I then despatched a native bailiff who knew the villages well. He returned rather damaged in forty-eight hours, having been compelled to eat the letter I had given him and a portion of his official cap as well. The policeman whom I then sent with a warrant was more fortunate; for, having been seen and chased before he got near the town, he had embarked on a long-distance run which had ended only at the fort. This closed the matter for the present. Making war on the Poglu Villages was a serious business, for which the forces at my disposal were quite inadequate. The girl recovered, and at her own request was absorbed into the household of one of the chiefs of the town.

The little incident which I shall now relate seems funny, though it did not strike me as being so at the time. The native bailiff presented himself the day after his return, looking rather peeky and piney. His wife, a very voluble brown lady, produced a large brass button. She stated that the bailiff had been compelled to swallow two of these. One had been recovered at the instance of a violent emetic; the other was still missing. She requested, not that the bailiff's internal arrangements might be further assisted, but that compensation might be given for the loss of the button. This was done to the extent of two shillings, and the bailiff departed with the button, as his wife expressed it, 'yet concealed about his person somewhere.'

About six weeks after these events I left the fort in my hammock with my interpreter, a police orderly, and the usual crowd of carriers and servants, to inspect a road the Government was making directly inland and towards the angle of the German frontier. Its superintendence had caused the death of my predecessor from blackwater fever. The road crossed a dry lagoon, a vast evil-smelling embankment of black mud, straight into the low, hot scrub. My hammock passed between rows of toiling natives digging out the ditches on either side; and at last, after a long and exhausting march, I reached Road-Head, a temporary leaf-made village, where I passed the night. The people seemed perfectly friendly, bringing the usual gifts of eggs and yams.

I had no map, nor was I well acquainted with the lie of the country, though I was aware that I was travelling parallel with the Togo boundary-line, and only some few hundred yards away from it. Next morning I determined that, instead of returning by the way I had come, I would branch off to the left and try to find a way along the back of the lagoon. I knew I must be close to the Poglu Villages, but this did not trouble me, as I had not the least intention of interfering with them, and they certainly had the laugh on their side as regarded Bossoo.

I left Road-Head fairly early, and struck off into the scrub along a track so narrow that the hammock had to be slung sideways on the pole, and I had to tramp it. The country was very rough, the path rising, falling, and twisting till I had lost all idea of direction. The bushes grew thicker and more crowded, till we marched between two walls of green twelve to fifteen feet high. Still, we made good progress, and marched on till past eleven o'clock, when my interpreter pointed to great trees rising above the smaller vegetation, and said we were close to some village, where we had better halt. I agreed, and, rounding a clump of bamboos, we found ourselves in a large 'kroom,' the mud-houses of which were heavily thatched and separated from one another by heavy, coarse mats. In the midst of the open space stood a great baobab—evidently the 'palaver' tree, beneath which the village council assembled—and a small cluster of tall coco-nut trees in full fruit. I sat down under the big tree, whilst the carriers scattered in search of food, and my servant began to prepare breakfast.

It did strike me as peculiar that no one was to be seen, for, though the men may be absent when a white man halts in a village, the women and children flock out to stare at him, and the chiefs and elders are in evidence. But this large and well-kept kroom seemed absolutely deserted. My simple breakfast was soon eaten, and having told the orderly to warn the carriers to be ready in half-an-hour, I was watching my servant, who had placed his boxes on a small mound of sand and hard clay, when a little man suddenly appeared, and crossed the open towards me. He was naked except for a loin-cloth and a peaked straw hat, but carried a long-necked calabash covered with a network of cowries, which he rattled as he walked. He came straight up to me, and, after a good stare, began to promenade backwards and forwards. He was not an ill-looking man, and I was beckoning him to approach, when my interpreter, whom I had not seen since we entered the kroom, touched my arm and asked me if I knew where we were.

'I suppose we are in one of the Poglu Villages,' I said, 'but I don't know which.'

'It's Kulimeh,' he said quietly; 'and that man in front of you is Bossoo, the man we have been wanting.'

Now, there were two danger-signals confronting me, either of which, with my experience, I ought to have read easily—one, the emptiness

of the village, which meant the people did not want to see the white man, and therefore were purposely keeping out of the way; the other, the arrogance of Mr Bossoo. I should have departed quickly and as quietly as I had come. But I lost my temper, and paid the penalty.

'Ask him,' I said, 'if he is Bossoo, and if he is the man that attacked and logged the girl, and was told to come down to the fort.'

To this Bossoo nodded his head.

'And is he coming?'

'No, sir,' said the interpreter. 'He says he has no time.'

'Then why,' I demanded, 'has he come before me like this?'

'He says, sir, he wanted to see what you looked like.'

Most of my hammock-men had come up by now, having been unable to procure food, and were staring at Bossoo, who was quite unconcerned.

'Tell him,' I said roughly—for I was very angry—'that he is now under arrest, and that I shall take him down to Kitta.'

Immediately this was interpreted Bossoo began to walk off. I caught hold of his waistcloth, but he broke away, leaving it in my hands. The policeman then jumped on him, and they rolled over together. Again Bossoo broke loose. He sprang on to the top of the little mound, sending my boxes spinning, and began to shake his rattle.

Then things happened. The open space filled with a mob of howling savages armed with guns, cutlasses, and long sticks. We were surrounded at once, and though the open space was packed, more and more men came pushing out from the houses, where they had been hiding, and tried to force their way towards me. The policeman, who was a plucky man, produced a pair of handcuffs and made another grab at Bossoo. Very fortunately he missed him, and was sent staggering with a blow over the head from a long stick. I saw my carriers, who were standing by the hammock, which they had replaced on the pole, spinning round and round in the press, and I caught a glimpse of Mr Bossoo being slapped on the back by his friends. Evidently he was not destined for the fort that time. So great was the riot that the interpreter had to shout in my ear.

'We must go, sir,' he said, 'if we can get away now; but I don't think we shall.'

When I looked at the furious crowd I was inclined to agree with him. It is difficult in such circumstances to be very accurate, but there must have been between three and four hundred grown men there. I saw one brute hit at a carrier with his cutlass and cut his arm very severely.

I jumped on to the mound, waving Bossoo's rattle, which he had dropped when the orderly had grabbed at him, and which I still possess. 'I'm going! I'm going!' I shouted. 'But I will return!'

The men with the hammock having by good fortune been pushed up close alongside of me, we threw the stunned policeman into it, and started to shove our way through the crowd out of the village.

I believe an Irish mob is not wholly inarticulate, and I understand that Indian rioters can make themselves heard; but for real solid uproar I can recommend an infuriated crowd of West African savages engaged in baiting a white man. Guns were thrust in our faces and sticks fell heavily as we shoved our way to the forest. There was no question of irritating the people to be considered now, so we pushed our way and kicked our hardest. I do not know how we got out, but I think it was due to our having failed to secure Bossoo. Had the policeman managed to handcuff him I feel sure we should all have been killed. At last, however, we reached the mouth of a little track that ran into the bush, and I was hoping that we were through with the worst of it, when a line of men slipped past us, each carrying a gun. One of them hit me heavily on the back, shouting that they were going to ambush us. There was nothing for it but to go straight ahead; and ahead we went, and raced along the track. We heard the voices of the men with the guns shouting and calling, and we could hear the village behind us humming like an overturned hive. But we were not molested, and after a breathless twenty minutes we left our enemies behind us and were clear of the scrub. I called the roll, and found we were all present. Then, after we had recovered ourselves, we made our way, sore and bruised, to the fort.

This business was the last drop in the Poglu Villages' cup of iniquity. The Kulimeh people had been several times reported to different governors, once in particular for shooting a Hausa orderly dead as he stood by his officer's side under the big baobab-tree; in memory of which feat they had, as I afterwards found, erected the little mound on to which I had jumped. Though the outrage was absolutely unprovoked, they had gone scot-free. But the present governor was not a man to be trifled with.

At the end of a very unpleasant week, during which I received many furtive sneers and glances from the Kitta people, a telegram in cipher arrived from headquarters to the effect that a force of Hausas was on its way down, that I was to go up and burn and utterly destroy Kulimeh, to pull down any walls that the fire might leave standing, to use rifle-fire if necessary, and to see that the matter was settled once for all. To this the private secretary had added, '*Delenda est Kulimeh*,' and though his Latinity might be faulty, his meaning was clear.

The next day, accordingly, as I watched the crowds in the busy market-place, and had just

heard the word 'Kulimeh' mentioned with a sarcastic laugh and a wave of the hand by a native who was just setting out for the bush with a heavy load upon his head, a force of fifty Hausas, headed by Native Officer Ali, a fine fellow who had grown gray in the service, and was an extra A.D.C. to the governor, swung into the market-place. The people scattered in all directions, and the gentleman who had alluded to Kulimeh dropped his load and fled shrieking in the direction of Timbuctoo.

It was unfortunate, though not surprising, that I should go down with fever the next day. I had been off colour for some time, and was very much run down. I had a bad time of it, for I dreamed of ambushes and of men shot in hammocks, and my nerves began to go. But the matter had to be carried through, and directly I was better we started off in great style. Each chief of the town sent representatives, and what with the civil police and the hammock-men, and servants armed with weapons assorted, and the taciturn Hausas in their blue knickers and shirts and red sashes and fezes, we made quite a show.

As we traversed the dry lagoon-bed I saw a crowd of men hovering in our rear. These, I learned, were civilian Hausas, armed with sword and spear, who were accompanying their professional brethren in hope of loot. Three times I sent a message that they were to go back; but though they disappeared for a time, I saw them afterwards in Kulimeh.

We crossed the lagoon and the hot, scrubby plain, and stopped as darkness fell at Echi, a hamlet three miles distant from the doomed town. The night with us passed quietly, but there was no sleep in the Poglu Villages. Nemesis was upon them, and I do not think Mr Bossoo was a popular man just then. Drums roared and boomed and horns screamed all through the dark hours. The fetish priests were endeavouring to avert the disaster they had so long courted. What sacrifices were offered in the Poglu Villages that night I do not know.

There being no question of a surprise, we took matters easily, and did not march till eight o'clock. Then came the nerve-trying part, for, though I was sure the people would not face the Hausas, the forest was exceedingly dense, and Dane guns fired at close range are deadly enough. There was drumming in the villages around, but Kulimeh itself was deadly quiet as we approached, though there were movements in the bush on each side of the track, and every minute I expected to hear the roar of the guns. But my apprehensions were allayed when I saw the soldiers were marching with slung carbines.

We entered the village without opposition. The soldiers formed up, and I sat down on the familiar little mound. I had been there some few minutes, when the civilian Hausas whom I had seen at the start and ordered to return suddenly appeared, pushing through the bushes. I then understood they had been acting as beaters on the flanks of the little column, which accounted for the noises I had heard. Three of them entered a house near by, but came out quicker than they went in, one with his hand nearly severed. Two soldiers then went in, and, after a struggle, hauled out the defender and tied him up to a tree. Incidents of this nature were in progress all around me, for, though the great body of the people had gone, some had remained to protect their hearths. The open space became covered with things that were fetched out of the houses, such as stools and clothes, and there was a little puppy, which my servant secured. Drums and horns were going in the neighbouring villages all this time, and old Ali decided to wait an hour to give the people a chance of fighting if they wished to.

I seized the opportunity of taking a good look round. I found that the town was built in a circular clearing, the forest wall which surrounded it being very thick and high. It was a larger place than I had fancied, the houses being very closely packed, and surrounded with great straw mats ten or twelve feet high. After I had finished my survey, I turned to look for Ali, and found him standing by a pile of these mats which the soldiers had pulled down and heaped up as high as a hayrick.

'I shall begin now, sir,' he said. 'There is no sign of the people.'

'They are watching from the forest,' put in the interpreter.

'Jump on to the mound and call Bossoo,' I said.

He jumped up and shouted, 'Ho, Bossoo! Ho, Bossoo! The Government has come for you. Bossoo! Bossoo! Bossoo!'

There was no answer. Two soldiers set fire to the heap of mats, and others ran among the houses with lighted brands. The weather had been very dry, and the thatch caught like tinder. Great masses of sparks flew in all directions. The huge pile of mats ignited with a roar and a blaze. Kulimeh was fairly alight.

Suddenly a great drum roared from the forest, and the concealed natives poured a volley of slugs from their long Dane guns. The soldiers lay down and returned the fire. The noise and confusion were very great; the heavy smoke, which had no room to rise and spread out, began to cover everything. The roaring of the flames as the fire took hold drowned even the noise of the guns and the carbines. Dozens of little red kegs of gunpowder hidden in the thatch exploded like shells, and even the damp evergreen forest crackled and blackened. The smoke grew so thick that it was almost impossible

to breathe and quite impossible to see or move about. The risk of being shot by the natives or the Hausas had compelled me to keep quiet, but the place was becoming a furnace, and I grew alarmed. I could find no one, and my loudest shout was unheard. To make matters worse, the great baobab-tree caught fire, as did the coco-nut trees, waving and bending like enormous torches, and dropping their heavy nuts from a height of fifty feet or so. I threw my coat over my head and shoulders and stumbled blindly forward. By great good fortune I collided with my servant, who was looking for me, and he and a hammock-man helped me into the forest, where I found most of the others assembled. I got rid of my charred and burnt clothes, and after a long drink of whisky-and-water felt revived. Two Hausas and fifteen men of the auxiliaries had been hit by slugs, but none were badly hurt. What damage had been inflicted by the soldiers' fire, of course, we did not know.

When the fire had died down sufficiently we saw the ruin we had caused. Not one house was left intact. The heat had been so great that the thick mud walls had split and crumbled to dust. The great palaver tree was gone, and not a vestige was left of the palm-trees. In fact, so fierce had been the heat in that confined space that the ground itself was powdered and loosened. I walked about among the ruins, pushing down bits of wall that were still standing, when I heard a crying in the forest, and went to the spot, to find a small and very ugly soldier standing over an ancient and very bald man, and slapping his face. When, in response to a smack, the old man's head rolled on one shoulder, the soldier would knock it back again with a bang on the cheek. At each smack the aged man wailed, and the soldier remarked on the slain orderly in memory of whose murder the Kulimeh people had erected the little mound.

Rescuing the aged man, I found he was a sub-chief who had crept back to see what had happened. He told me the people had been gathered together to attack us under cover of the smoke, but the fury of the fire had so terrified them that they had dispersed in panic. Probably he spoke the truth, for all sounds of drumming had ceased. I questioned him as to the whereabouts of Mr Bossoo. He said that gentleman had fled into German territory the previous day.

With a last look at the ruins of the village that had been such a thorn in the side of the Government, we formed up and departed for home. Next day I telegraphed the result of the expedition to the private secretary, and, not to be outdone by him, added, '*Deleta est Kulimeh.*'

But I never got Mr Bossoo.

Togoland was the first German colony to be taken over by the French and the British. The Poglu Villages are quiet enough now, for there is no frontier for the natives to jump over and escape their misdeeds. Perhaps even Mr Bossoo may mend his ways and become a recognised supporter of the British Government, and he may remember with mixed feelings his little adventure when he refused to obey the law and come down to the fort.

THE VISION.

By Lady Alice M. Buckhill.

I LAY me down to sleep; and, lo!
A Vision came:
A great white throne,
And on it seated God: alone.
And, as to earth His eyes He turned,
A righteous anger in them burned.

Below, the nations of the world
Waged furious war
On every hand,
Unceasing both by sea and land.
And God turned to the Christ, who stood
And gazed upon the scene of blood.

'Was it in vain I let Thee go?
For this Thou diedst
And suffered so
Nearly two thousand years ago?
Where all should have been peace and joy,
Men plunder, murder, and destroy.'

Then from the earth there seemed to come
Straight up to God
A people's prayer:
'Hear us, O Father, hear, and spare.'
And God turned to the Christ again:
'Such prayer must never be in vain.

'Some monster hath from hell broke loose
With all his band,
Thinking to be
Omnipotent and conquer Thee.
Send forth my messenger to chain
This monster back to hell again—

'And bring my people back to me
Repentant now;
Just for a time
They had forgotten they were mine;
All careless that the path they trod
Led them *away from*, not *to*, God.'

And then a myriad tongues I heard,
Sending, it seemed,
With one accord,
A great thanksgiving to the Lord.
Breathless I watched, to see it there—
A world upon its knees in prayer.

And as the voice of prayer and praise
Rose on the air
Christ's gentle hand
Touched, as it were, that sorrowing band.
'Nay, weep not for your noble slain;
Their lives have not been given in vain.'

Then in an instant all was dark;
The vision fled.
But in my mind
A holy calm it left behind—
A peaceful trust to lead us on
Till final victory be won.

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SEVENTH SERIES

THE MYSTERY OF ANDRÉE.

By REGIMENTAL No. 5626.

THE brilliant summer of 1897, ever memorable as that of the Good Queen's Diamond Jubilee, is for other reasons memorable also to two widely different spheres of thought, the aeronautical and the geographical; for it was in July of that year that Andrée made his attempt to reach the North Pole by balloon.

To-day the aeronautical world treats the balloon as a mere toy, so rapidly has man acquired the instincts of the birds; and for the geographical world whatever there was of mystery in the North Pole has been dispelled. In consequence, the history of Andrée (which is pitifully short) has mostly been forgotten.

At the north-western extremity of the Spitzbergen group of islands is the tiny Dane's Island, separated from the North Pole by a distance of approximately six hundred geographical miles. From this frozen spot Andrée rose in his gigantic balloon in the month of July in the year 1897. In those days Count von Zeppelin was still an experimenter; so Andrée's balloon was entirely at the mercy of the wind. He rose, then, with a favourable southerly breeze, hoping to cross the Pole. Close to his point of departure he let fall some buoys with messages attached, three of which were afterwards picked up. And that closes the history.

Twenty years ago. It may fairly be presumed that the party perished; and if they are dead, there is not much mystery about them, you will say. Quite so. The mystery is—did they reach, or pass over, the Pole; and where do their remains lie? To that there is an answer. Is the answer true or false?

It must here be stated that the story we are about to relate was told in the Canadian press about thirteen years ago, with what fullness the writer is unable to ascertain. Nor can it be discovered how much attention it attracted at the time, if any; but it would seem to have been very little. It so happens that the present writer has been considerably interested in both aeronautics and Arctic travel for the past fifteen years, and cannot recollect having read a single statement on the subject of Andrée's balloon which pretended to give anything more definite than what has been related—that he rose off the earth, and was never afterwards heard of.

The foreword to Peary's book, *The North Pole*, published in 1910, deals with the history of Northern polar research. In it we find these words: 'Andrée, with two companions, sailed in his balloon toward the Pole in July 1897, never to be heard from again.'

So the following story, if not fresh to all, must nevertheless be so to the vast majority.

It will be understood that the Barren Land of Canada is a land of far distances. Over its vast area are scattered portions of a race, the Eskimo, divided up into tribes, which further split up into groups of families; a proceeding very necessary when it is remembered that the deer, on which these people are entirely dependent for their food and clothing, are as widely scattered as the people themselves. But, man being a gregarious animal, these families are constantly intervisiting; and, further, there is, so far as one can see, an annual meeting of portions of each tribe. This meeting serves a double purpose; for on these occasions the more northerly tribes trade the furs which they have caught during the past season to their southern neighbours, who, maybe a year later, trade them again with their southern neighbours. And so the chain goes on, until the trading outposts of civilisation are reached. So we see that here, as in all other quarters of the globe, the moccasin telegraph is a service of high efficiency.

Andrée, long before his start, had been in communication with the Hudson Bay Company, with the result that all their remote northerly trading-posts knew of the possibility of his landing in Canada. This information was handed on to the Indians and Eskimo who came to the posts, so that the less isolated Eskimo were aware of the possible entry of a white man into their country by the strange medium of the air.

In what must surely be the bleakest and most depressing spot in all the sub-Arctic and sub-Antarctic regions, at the mouth of the long arm of the sea running in from the north-west coast of Hudson Bay, at the entrance to Chesterfield Inlet, there stands a lonely mission station, from which two priests of the Order of Oblates carry on their work. The head of this mission, the Rev. Father Turquetil, was at one time stationed at Reindeer Lake, on the edge of the Barren

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Lands. It was through him that the story about to be related was first sent out to civilisation, and it is through him that the present writer is able to redirect attention to it.

About thirteen years ago, and long after the tragedy, Father Turquetil made a trip by dog-team and sled north of Reindeer Lake. At the edge of the Barren Lands he fell in with a party of Eskimo bringing in a load of furs to the trading-post. They, of course, camped together, and during the evening the Eskimo, whose intelligence is equalled by their curiosity, inquired from the priest what kind of a ship it was in which the white man travelled through the air. Many questions were asked and answered; after which there was a long talk amongst themselves in the rapid, guttural form of speech which they sometimes adopt when they do not wish the white man to follow the conversation. Then they once more approached the priest with their story.

The men who were speaking had, on a previous occasion, gone northwards to trade with some northern Eskimo. Whilst they were in camp a deer passed. An old man of the northern tribe ran out with his bow and arrows—till recently the only weapon of the more remote Eskimo—to stalk and slay the deer. The southern Eskimo, to play a trick on him, let him go; but as soon as he got within the short range required for a kill with bow and arrow, a rifle was brought into action, and the deer shot dead from the camp; for the southern Eskimo, being closest to civilisation, were armed with its weapons.

The old man, returning to his fellows, inquired with much astonishment how the deer was killed from that distance. He was shown the rifle and its working by his amused companions; whereupon he, in his turn, surprised them by remarking, 'Then there was a narrow escape for me when the white man did that at me with a little gun, like that one, but shorter.' He then went on to tell how one day, long ago, he shot a deer with his bow and arrow. As he commenced to skin the beast two white men ran up, and claimed the deer as their own—a statement obviously untrue to the Eskimo, because impossible. A quarrel ensued. The native, fearing the odds (let it be remembered that timidity is at the basis of the Eskimo character), drew his bow and shot one of the white men dead. The other white man, from but a little distance, began to fire with his 'little rifle,' but the Eskimo, with the courage of utter ignorance, calmly loosed another shaft, which found a billet in the right side of the *kabluna*, wounding him mortally. A dog, 'a very little dog, with hair all curly like a young fawn,' ran up to the old man, barking at him. He kicked it away. The old man added that the white men had made a kind of tent out of the bag of the balloon.

From this point the southern natives become the chief actors in the story. They inquired of Father Turquetil if there were things made of white iron (aluminium?) and red iron (copper) in an airship. Had it got this? Would it have so and so? Was there a such and such? All manner of questions they asked; so many that the priest was at length forced to tell them that he had never seen a balloon, and could not answer all their questions, which were extremely technical. They spoke also of having seen a large net which the bag was enclosed in, and of having seen parts of the rigging of the balloon in use on the sledges of the northern Eskimo. So much for the story.

The place where the fatality occurred is somewhere between Baker Lake and Bathurst Inlet, a large stretch of country lying to the north of the centre of the Barren Lands. Father Turquetil, by means of moons and winters, managed to calculate back to the approximate time of the disaster, and this corresponded with the probable time of descent.

Follows a truly native touch. The day after the tale was told to the priest, the leader of the little party came to him, and told him that the whole yarn was false! Later, however, while he was questioning a young man of the party about it, it transpired that the head-man had told them to say nothing further. If they did, he said, the white men would come into their country and kill them all. Of course, no more was to be got out of them after that. If any one doubts the Oriental origin of the Eskimo, let him study the impassive secretiveness they can, on occasion, assume.

There are at least two remarkable points about this story. If it is untrue, a savage has invented a new weapon and a new animal. The Eskimo is intelligent, even remarkably so; but such flights of imagination are beyond the reach of most white men.

But the creative faculty is not the strong point of the Eskimo. How can it be? He has his weapons, long since invented by his ancestors, and the country is so sterile in every resource that invention dies from lack of sustenance. The Eskimo has all that he needs except a plentiful supply of food. And the genius who can invent that has yet to see the light.

The story is too circumstantial to be anything but true. And since it must be true, then the mystery is solved. Andrée missed the Pole by about one hundred and fifty miles, and he and his companions lie silent in a silent land.

JOHN PARDON'S CHOICE.

CHAPTER XI.

AS time slipped along and there was still no sign of old 'Tom' and the phaeton, Pardon began to feel less anxious; his mind strayed to other subjects, and inevitably led back to Joy Powell. Thinking of her, he raised his eyes to the bend high up on Cañon Hill, on the same side of Dry Creek as himself, and above, though opposite, the road by which Mary Patrick might come from Oak Clearing. And, as he looked, suddenly there broke upon his ear a sullen, reverberating roar, a thunderous rattle of loosened rocks and falling earth, and Pardon, starting to his feet, beheld a great yawning scar in the side of Cañon Hill, where tons of rock, soil, and trees had broken loose and fallen into the depths below, causing a perilous cave-in of the road winding along the edge. Staring with wide-distended eyes at this second assault by Nature's forces on the long-travelled road by Cañon Hill and Dry Creek, Pardon muttered to himself, 'Well, they do say "it never rains but it pours," and, sure enough, here's not only the ford clean swep' away, but a "gouge" like the Kentucky Cave in the side of the hill. Can't quite make it out,' he continued, craning his neck and straining his eyes in the direction of the wash-out, 'but I reckon it's pretty well chewed out the road—nothin' but a shelf left. Lucky thing, after all, that Dry Creek is all afloat, for if Mary or any other body *had* crossed the ford'—— He broke off with an involuntary shudder and an anxious glance again up the road by which he felt there was still a chance of Mary coming. No sight of her, however; and once more the keen gray eyes narrowed themselves in a searching look towards the sore red gash in the cañon's side. Then all in an instant, as though some deadly blow had struck him, the man suddenly reeled, caught at an overhanging bough, and with iron will steadied himself—steadied himself to stare, with cracking eyeballs, at an object moving among the trees, slowly but surely, towards that awful, hidden death-trap. Yes—oh God! there was no mistaking the silver-gray flash of a horse glinting among the trees, no mistaking the light figure and the blue scarf fluttering in the sunshine. It was Joy—Joy—Joy—*his* Joy—his sunshine—the darling of his heart—Joy and her silver-gray mare mounting at foot-pace up that sunlit road, moving step by step to an almost certain death! A cry of anguish rent the air as John Pardon, fighting a faintness that nearly overcame his senses, dashed through the bush, wildly—but, alas, how vainly!—waving his feeble little flag. Useless—utterly useless. That dark speck far below in the shadows of the cañon would not, *could* not, be seen. Half-mad with despair, Pardon buried his face in his hands, not to *see*—oh God, not to *see*—— If he could but *pray*. Yes, with parched lips he sent forth the utterance of his whole soul to the 'Good Man,' and there was a chance—just a *chance*—that the wonderful instinct implanted in the horse might hold her back even on the very edge of that yawning chasm. Even as the thought, fraught with so faint a hope, rushed through the man's distracted mind, there was a sudden dip of the mare's fore-quarters. Pardon, unable to keep his eyes from the fearful sight, saw her lose her footing as though she must surely pitch forward—saw Joy bravely pulling on the lines—saw the mare with mighty effort scramble to her feet and recover herself, as her rider, in an insane but utterly self-immolating impulse to save her horse, disengaged her feet from the stirrups, and pitched forward—forward——

CHAPTER XII.

WHETHER it was seconds or hours that had passed when next John Pardon was conscious of a living world around him his dazed mind had no conception, but in an instant the whole horrible scene flashed back upon him, and, staggering to his feet, he forced himself to look. With eyes trained to far-sight by his early years spent on the plains, where a man must sweep dim horizons for dots of missing colts or calves, he now, in an agony of hope and fear, searched the cañon-face, and presently made out the object he sought. Not many feet below the wash-out over which Joy Powell had fallen, a young birch-tree, carried down by the caving earth, was flung forward, outstretched over the abyss like a supplicating arm, yet still clinging desperately by torn roots to its native cliff. There, in the slight cradle of slender bows, the falling girl had lodged—safe for the moment, but, as John Pardon realised only too clearly, still in great peril. Well he knew that at any instant the birch, its feeble hold on the earth weakened by Joy's weight, might altogether break away, and, bearing with it its precious burden, dash to destruction among the rocks far below. The need for instant action recalled him sharply to his senses, and all his powers of mind and body, recently so shaken by shock and suspense, were now braced and steadied. Not a moment must be lost if Joy was to be rescued from her awful position. With utmost speed he must race up that steep hill—must get the long lines from the mare's bridle (he could see her, all-unconscious of her gentle mistress's fearful

plight, browsing quietly on the roadside)—must—must—— His mind rushed forward faster than the feet which seemed to hinder rather than help him as he struggled through the dense undergrowth, and which suddenly seemed to be rooted to the ground as something moving on the opposite side of Dry Creek caught his dismayed eyes. It was Mary Patrick slowly descending the road, steadily urging old 'Tom' towards the well-known ford, where now were only swirling waters.

Desperate at even briefest delay, and scarcely crediting that Mary could fail to understand his signal, he flapped his flag, waved his arms, and shouted with all his strength. Yet on she came—nearer—nearer. Another moment and the old horse would be floundering in the deep stream. For Mary—poor foolish Mary—*had* seen, but, with pique and anger in possession of her heart, fatefully, if not wilfully, misunderstood. Far up the road from Oak Clearing, through a break in the pines, she had chanced to glance across the purple, misty cañon to the opposite side—had seen Joy and the gray mare emerge from a bush trail. Then the dense leafage shut out further view; she knew nothing of the terrible accident that followed a few moments later. So, when, as she neared the sharp abutment of the road upon the creek, she descried John Pardon waving to her, the jealous resentment long smouldering in her mind flared into sudden flame. Without doubt, she angrily assured herself, she had surprised a tryst between John Pardon and the English girl in this sequestered spot; there was no truth in his plea of working on the roads as excuse for not driving her to Oak Clearing; it was all a miserable subterfuge. With a savage cut of the whip she spurred her horse into a brisk run down the last bit of hill, jerked him sharply round the bend, and then—but, alas! too late—realised her own blind folly. Old 'Tom' struggled and slipped, the light body of the phaeton tipped and rose on the flood, and a cry of terror escaped from Mary Patrick's lips. Above the roar of the water Mary's cry of distress reached John Pardon, torn between anxiety for the woman to whom he felt himself in honour bound, and anguished haste to succour her who had become the absorbing passion of his maturer years. But for such as John Pardon there could be but one choice where duty and desire pointed diverse ways. With one last agonised look at the far speck on the scarred face of the cañon, he retraced his steps a bound at a time, tore off his heavy boots, and battling against the swift current, seized the horse by the bridle, with quick strokes of his knife freed the poor creature from the traces, and rescuing the panic-stricken woman from the whirling phaeton, fought his way back with her just as old 'Tom,' snorting and trembling, scrambled up the bank beside them. Although to the tortured man every moment seemed an eternity, he controlled himself until poor Mary, sorely shaken and miserably wet, had sufficiently recovered herself. Then, tersely and in a voice full of such suffering as Mary had never heard before, he explained all the circumstances—how, finding Dry Creek in flood, he had waited there to warn her; of the cave-in on Cañon Hill; of Joy Powell and the terrible accident. 'And now, Mary,' he hurriedly concluded, 'for God's sake, go home as fast as you can! Take the bush trail up to my ranch. You will probably soon meet Michael O'Keefe, for he was to cut poles there this afternoon. Tell him to bring ropes and a wagon. I may need help if'—— He broke off, unable to voice the terrible fear at his heart.

'Oh John, John,' sobbed Mary, now filled with remorse, and completely breaking down, 'can you ever forgive me?'

But John Pardon neither heard nor heeded. He had already forgotten Mary, and with starting eye-balls and ashen face was staring upwards to where a light cloud of red-brown dust floating above the misty depths of the cañon told that the stricken birch, no longer able to retain its precarious hold, had dragged its last anchor and fallen to its doom. Then indeed such a cry of despair rent the air, so cruelly sweet with the thousand scents of spring, that affrighted jays fled screaming from the trees; while its echo rang for many a day thereafter in the ears of Mary Patrick, whose horrified eyes beheld John Pardon tearing his way through bristling bush that guarded the cañon, and vanish from her sight.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF how John Pardon, reckless of sliding earth and rolling stones, accomplished the perilous descent no tale can be told, for from his own memory was every incident blotted out until, with bleeding hands and torn clothing, he knelt beside the still, white form of Joy Powell, lying limp and shattered like some fair flower wantonly plucked and tossed away. Tenderly lifting her in his arms, he carried her to the cool shadow of a giant boulder, and gently laid her down among the vivid green of moss and fern. Then, filled with an awful fear, he laid his head closely but reverently against the full, rounded bosom, listening intently for the beating of her heart. Yes—thank God!—faint, very faint, but still beating. Then surely she shall—she *must* live; else better far that his own life be wiped out with hers, far dearer than his own. Oh for some power to rouse her from that awful stillness—to make the pallid lips speak, the closed eyes open! Cradling in his arms the small head, about which, riding-hat and pins being torn away, the masses of sun-gold hair tossed in bright waves, John Pardon chafed alternately

her cheeks and the slender fingers lying so cold and nerveless in his own hot, brown hands. Still no sign or movement in the slight form resting all-unconscious so close to his strong, throbbing frame, and, in anguish of spirit, John Pardon began calling her: 'Joy! Joy!—darlin' little girl!—it 's me, John Pardon. Open those dear eyes and sweet lips! Speak to me, Joy—for God's sake, speak—I cannot live without you!' A tremor through the light body stretched across his knees, a short, sharp sigh, a quiver of the white lids; then the large eyes opened, so full and dark with pain that their blue was like the distant vault of a tropical summer night. And in their depths poor John Pardon, gazing, beheld—beheld, and in infinite sorrow recognised—such a look as once, years before, he had seen, never to forget, in the eyes of a doe which by some wretched mistake he had mortally wounded. At sight of this look in the eyes of the girl who had become so closely and strangely bound up in his own life, John Pardon's great, loving heart, so long tried, at last broke. With tears pouring down his tanned cheeks, he bent his head, passionately kissing the sweet, pale face.

'Joy! Joy!' he cried. 'Live — live — you *must* live! Don't you know that I, John Pardon, love you—love you, dear?'

Then, as his own eyes, full of mingled love and grief, searched hers for he knew not what ray of hope or comfort, lo! into the beautiful eyes of the dying girl sprang a glad light; over her face, white as ivory, crept a flush, faint and fair as the last pulse of twilight; while an expression of perfect peace and content seemed to envelop her.

Once again the bright smile which John Pardon so well knew and loved curved the small mouth, and upon his ear, straining to hear, fell, very low but clear, 'And I—love—you—John!' The cold white fingers sought and intertwined in his work-roughened ones, tightened their hold, as though seeking support for the last long step, while the fair, bright spirit of Joy Powell, unfettered and quite content, broke away from her lover's close embrace, again to mingle, so it seemed to John Pardon, with the golden sunshine, of which for a brief while it had been a tangible part. Henceforward for him—gray skies and a darkened world; then 'Joy at the last!'

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A few years later than those during which the foregoing chapters are laid, summer tourists, with luxurious motor-cars, *en route* for the mountains, passing through the sun-baked town of Orangeville, might speedily ascend by a well-built, easily graded road that swerves away sharply from the great, misty-blue cañon. Possibly the man at the wheel, fresh from the pages of the 'local guide,' pointing out a ragged line against the cañon-face, might remark above the purr of the engines, 'What do you think of *that* for a road? Understand it was the pioneer trail—cowboys, coaches, and all that sort of thing. Bad accident here. Girl and her horse went over the precipice.'

'Accident! *Suicide*, I should say!' may be the laughing rejoinder, as, quickly dismissing from his careless mind this tragic bit of 'local colour,' the traveller becomes engrossed in the merits of his car.

Now striking the level road, the car glides along through the broad acres of a thriving ranch, perhaps for a brief moment slowing down before a neat modern house, set about with trim flowerbeds and young shrubs, from whose gate emerges the tall, well-built figure of a man in loose shirt and broad-brimmed hat, who, waving a salutation in kindly Western fashion to the passing strangers, crosses the road. Then, while in a swirl of hot, gray dust the car vanishes out of sight, he unlocks the door of an old bungalow with close-drawn blinds, and passing through the empty rooms, steps out into a shady porch, lavishly wreathed about with fragrant honeysuckle and climbing roses. There, baring his head with its thatch of grizzled hair, he stands looking long and steadily towards where the westering sun just begins to touch into gold a pine-crowned ridge of hills. In the gray eyes gazing so earnestly a close observer might have felt puzzled by an expression of ineffaceable sorrow, while yet about the kindly mouth were engraven solely lines of tenderness and gentle humour. Presently, with an abrupt start, as of one who recalls his thoughts from journeying into a forbidden country, he dives into his trousers-pocket, and pulling out some lumps of sugar, utters a shrill whistle. A loud neigh answers the familiar call, as from among the trees of a well-grown orchard there gallops a gray mare with flowing silver tail and mane, and stops short eagerly to accept the proffered sugar and caresses. Then, when, satisfied, she returns to grazing, her master stoops, and with kindly hand fondles an old gray cat, who, hollow-eyed and with shrunken quarters, had followed him through the house, and now rubs herself enthusiastically against his legs. 'Good old "Sal"—poor old pussy!' he croons. 'Wantin' your milk, eh? Come along, then;' and with 'Sally' trotting stiffly before him, he re-enters the house. Taking a dish from a bare shelf, he fills it with milk, and, rolling a cigarette, waits patiently while the old cat slowly laps it up. But when, the milk finished, he leaves the house, and calling 'Sally,' closes and locks the door, his faithful friend remains on the worn mat. 'Not comin' across, eh, "Sal"? Still determined to stick to the old shack? Better come along with me, "Sally,"' he coaxes; but she merely stares at him with a half-reproachful, half-questioning look in her green eyes, then settles herself resolutely in her long-accustomed place. 'Queer beasts cats!' ruminates her master, as

he recrosses the dusty road to the opposite house. 'Never seemed to take to the new place. Well, I don't blame you, "Sally." Can't say I feel quite at home there myself, even yet,' he adds mentally, with softened glance backward at the deserted bungalow and its stoical guardian.

Quickening his step, he goes round to the back of the new house, calling, 'Hallo, Polly! Oh, there you are! Here, give me a hold o' that there basket; it 's too heavy for you;' and with his big hands he lifts a hamper of clothes which, fresh and white as soap and sun could make them, a stout, pleasant-faced woman had been taking from a line and deftly folding.

'Where 've you been, John?' she asks, and, without waiting for an answer, 'Better come along in and have your supper. Guess you must be hungry,' she adds kindly, and with a grateful look in her brown eyes, as he shoulders the heavy basket and carries it to the house. There, in the comfortable kitchen, spotlessly clean, a goodly meal is waiting—fresh-baked bread, butter new from the churn, with savoury-smelling ham sliced ready for the frying-pan. Stepping briskly about, she quickly adds a shining pot of fragrant coffee, and from the cupboard produces a plate piled with cakes of tempting brownness. 'See here, John. I made some dough-nuts for you! My, how you used to devour them in the old picnic days!' and laughing cheerily, she spreads a white apron over her broad lap, and seats herself opposite the man, a look of great content on her plump, round face.

For Mary Patrick, now Mary Pardon, had at length, through sorrow and loneliness, come to the place in John Pardon's home so long kept waiting for her, and having at last wakened to an appreciation of his long-tried devotion and her own cruel selfishness, strove to fill the residue of his days with the comfort and companionship for which he had hungered.

And John Pardon, what of him? Strange and unexpected things, indeed, had the fates woven into the web and woof of this man's life, so spinning their threads that the tragedy on Cañon Hill, which broke his heart and robbed him of its dearest treasure, indirectly wrought for him such an increase in worldly prosperity as had never entered his simple dreams. For the great cave-in on Cañon Hill at last induced the State to build a new, safe road, the survey for which passing through Pardon's ranch, he not only received goodly compensation, but his property thereby became so easily accessible to Orangeville that it was eagerly sought by small householders, and for Pardon the building and letting of houses was a profitable investment. Hence in a very brief time, in that country of rapid enterprise and restlessness, there sprang up a little community in and about Pardon's ranch, where but recently had flourished nought but bush, and the lonely man had neighbours in plenty did he so desire. With little heart, however, for such changes, he continued to live alone in the old bungalow, amusing himself by planning and erecting the new house opposite—peopled, however, by no happy dreams.

But the same turning of the wheel that had carried the fortunes of John Pardon upward had to a large extent reversed those of Mary Patrick. The village of Beestop, left stranded by the wide sweep the new road had taken, soon began to dwindle to insignificance. One family after another, following the new highway, moved to more lively places; the small store closed; finally the post-office itself, for lack of any one to keep it, was shut down. Beestop, like so many of its 'old inhabitants,' was sleeping its last sleep.

Thereupon Mary's younger brother Henry, not relishing the new order of things, suddenly struck out for himself, betook himself to a distant settlement just bursting into life, and, to the surprise of all his old friends, married a young girl from 'back east,' and made a home of his own. Shortly after this poor Joe Patrick was thrown from a loaded hay-cart and instantly killed. Thus Mary, for the first time in her comfortable life, found herself alone, and tasting of the same cup which for such long years she had held to the lips of John Pardon.

Now, it befell one evening, some months after poor Joe Patrick had been laid to rest beside his parents in little Beestop cemetery, that Mary, returning to her lonely home from taking flowers to his grave, came suddenly upon John Pardon at the old familiar cross-roads, now disused and grass-grown. John saw her first. She had been weeping bitterly; the brown eyes were red and swollen; her hair was streaked with gray, her step slow and heavy. Little, indeed, survived in the stout, middle-aged woman in her black dress to remind John Pardon of the merry maiden who had stolen his heart long years ago beside the dripping well. But at sight of her, alone, in grief, all that was chivalrous and noblest in John Pardon's nature answered to the call. Stepping out of the shadows, and, his face all tender pity, looking down into the tear-dimmed eyes, he held out both his hands to her, saying gently, 'Well, Mary?' Mary Patrick laid her own hands in his.

THE END.

CURES FOR PETROL DEARTH.

By the Right Hon. Sir J. H. A. MACDONALD, LL.D., G.C.B.

MANY years ago the late Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley gave an address in Edinburgh on 'War as a Schoolmaster.' His words were weighty, and many of them have demonstration in the present world-wide conflict. But there are new illustrations of his theme which are showing themselves day by day. One of the most important in the practical world is the present condition of road locomotion. On the one hand, the power-vehicle is daily showing its infinite value as an aid to armies, whether the service be on the ground or in the air. Time and again both belligerents have been able to effect war work with a speed and on a scale which would have been impossible in the days when road locomotion was only to be carried on by animal traction, and the amazing feats of the airman far eclipse all that in former wars was accomplished by the non-dirigible balloon. But, on the other hand, this war has, while developing great powers by the use of the petrol-engine, brought about a condition of things which hampers, and in a great degree puts an end for the time to the use of, the power-vehicle in civil life. Necessity has caused restriction in the use of vehicles for passenger conveyance and for mercantile traffic, and this has come now to such a pitch that the use of the autocar for any purpose is much reduced, and its use for pleasure is practically prohibited. The community is bearing all this cheerfully, in view of the great issues for the world that are being fought out. But it is satisfactory to know that once more it is proving to be true that 'necessity is the mother of invention.' It is seen by those who feel the present want that it will not do to sit with folded hands, and hope for things to come right. The scarcity of petrol is not caused by the absorption of vast quantities for war purposes, except to a certain extent. Those who think are awakening to the fact that so long as the supply of means for motive-power has to be imported from abroad, any check on supply, such as is caused by war, must inconvenience the users of power-vehicles, and that any scarcity, from any cause, must inflate the price of the motor fuel, and thus hamper trade, checking the successful manufacture of vehicles, and reducing the facilities for the transport of passengers and goods. At the present time there would be no shortage of petrol, as there is abundance stored, ready for delivery, but for the import being restricted by the want of sufficient sea tonnage to bring the fuel to the market. The price of petrol had been steadily rising before the war, owing to the petrol-tax, and also to the great demand caused by the phenomenal increase of the use of petrol-driven vehicles; and this might of itself have stimulated invention to provide substitutes. Invention was partially successful in producing fuels in similar liquid form; but these fuels are now included in the embargo laid by authority on 'motor-spirit,' and thus afford no relief from the restrictions imposed during the war.

The difficulties which have thus arisen in the development of motor traffic have led to efforts in two directions, which are proving successful. These are, the use of ordinary coal-gas to produce with air an explosive mixture by which the motor-engine can be driven, and the application of electricity as a driving-power by the use of storage batteries. The first of these is simplicity itself. It consists simply in using a gas-engine, such as has been long employed to drive fixed machinery, to drive a wagon or carriage. This can be done by carrying a quantity of gas compressed in a steel cylinder, so as to reduce the bulk, and to pass this gas mixed with air into the engine cylinders, and explode it, as the mixture of the vapour of petrol with air is exploded in the automobile. This mode cannot be easily followed at present, as, in consequence of the exigencies of the war, neither the metal can be provided nor the labour found to construct the steel gas-holders in quantities. Accordingly, ingenuity has evolved a mode by which, in the case of many vehicles, the necessary gas can be stored and carried upon the vehicle. There are already several hundred vehicles on which an oblong gas-bag is fixed on the top, and by gas drawn off from this bag the explosive power is obtained. Gas already takes the place of petrol to the extent of 700,000 gallons of petrol per annum. These gas-cases are being turned out by one firm at the rate of fifty per week, and other firms are taking up the manufacture, the orders being largely in excess of the present power of supply.

This mode of vehicle-driving not only overcomes the difficulty of want of liquid fuel supply, but it is already proved that there is a saving in the annual cost of running a wagon carrying three tons of over £100 if the gas costs 4s. per thousand feet, or of more than £150 if the cost is 2s. per thousand feet. It is calculated that a motor-omnibus, which does a large mileage per day, will cost £1 a day less when using coal-gas as compared with petrol.

There is only one drawback to this mode of carrying fuel. The distance that can be run on one charge of the holder is limited. But this is no disadvantage in the case of most commercial vehicles, as the distance they run in a day is not great as a rule, and one charge is sufficient for at least thirty-five to forty miles.

And as regards business vehicles, it is to be remembered that those running them are entitled to a certain allowance of petrol; so that, if on any occasion the gas-holder is emptied before they reach home, it is only necessary to turn on the petrol, and use a pint or a quart or half-a-gallon to complete the distance. It is also to be remembered that commercial vehicles, whether for passengers or goods, invariably run between populous places, where the gasworks can supply a refill when necessary, and as the gas-bag can be filled in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, the delay is trifling.

Even the private autocar can well be used for many moderate purposes by the use of a gas-bag. Short runs into town and out again, or to and from stations by business men living some miles outside the town or at a distance from a station, could easily be made by the use of a moderate-size gas-bag strapped on behind, and, if need be, supported from below by light brackets. Also, the lady could do her shopping in the forenoon, or her calls in the afternoon. No doubt such a bag might not be considered sightly, but *à la guerre, comme à la guerre*, this need not be considered. In the old days a 'boot' at the back of a carriage was not considered unsightly, because it was useful, and we are quite accustomed to carrying trunks and hold-alls on the back of our cars without thinking of the look of the thing, because we wish to have the contents with us. The gas-bag could easily be made and fitted so as to be no more objectionable than the large tired spare wheel, which is not looked upon as a disfigurement.

Altogether, the gas-bag may be held to be, at least for the time, a solution of the petrol difficulty in a great number of cases, and if this be supplemented by a saving in cost, its adoption will be rapid.

The other substitute for the petrol-driven engine is the electric storage battery. This is not a new idea at all. Several years before the present war, vehicles driven by electric energy were used in considerable numbers in the United States. At first the great difficulty was that the weight of the storage batteries necessary to provide sufficient energy was so great as to cause unpopularity. But since, by Edison's inventive power, the weight has been reduced to about one-half, the progress of the electrically-driven vehicle has been very great in America, and in this country it is already taking its place as a practical tractor. It is not well suited for very long distances, unless there are stages where trays of batteries can be changed, just as the horses were changed in the old stage-coach days. But there are many services for which it is eminently suitable. For any work within the bounds of a populous district, and particularly for what may be called intermittent work, it commends itself as eminently suitable. Wagons delivering and taking up goods, parcel-vans, tradesmen's vans, municipal refuse-vans, watering-vans, and many other 'stop and go on' vehicles can be most satisfactorily driven by electric power, and at an economical rate, both as regards output of power and as regards wear and tear. In proof of this it may be mentioned that in one of the principal and most busy cities of England, the saving in the collection of ash-pit refuse was 1s. 6·2d. per ton, and the saving for the year over the whole city as compared with horse haulage was £1050, 12s. 6d. Such figures speak for themselves. The maintenance cost is also smaller. There is little or no strain or shock in starting or changing speed. There are few working parts, such as valves, pistons, gears, pumps, all liable to rapid wear.

Of course, in large cities, where the electric-supply is in the hands of the corporation, it is an advantage to have an addition to the day load on the electricity works, which must be kept running by day as well as by night.

Where the work to be done is suitable, there are several advantages in electric driving from storage batteries. Apart from the question of wear and tear, there are no starting difficulties, no loss by an engine running loose at short stops, no fuming of engines, no trouble with magnetos, no slipping of clutches, no difficulties of advancing or retarding the spark, no throttle adjustments and questions of rich or poor mixture, no elaborate engine-cleaning, no risk of valves giving way or plugs cracking. The driver has the simplest of duties, and the whole control is practically by one handle. In every way, complication of parts, and the risk of mishandling and breakdown which accompany complication, are avoided.

The gas-bag is a good makeshift, but it may prove to be more than that, unless petrol becomes very much cheaper than it has been for several years, including years before the war. The storage battery is likely to prove a serious rival of the petrol-engine in the work of populous places.

Since this paper was written, the announcement has been made that the price of petrol is raised 1s. 9d. per gallon by the wholesale merchant. The petrol on which the above estimates were made was at 2s. 9d. a gallon. The price now is 4s. 6d. At that price the saving by using gas as a substitute will be proportionately greater.

FROM THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

CHAPTER III.

And through the years, when war shall cease
Upon God's world—pray God it be—
To children's children on our knees,
We'll tell the tale—across the sea—
Of those who fell, so young, so brave,
Of that dear land they died to save,
And glory in the grand new birth
Of love from death in the ends of the earth.

THE months passed. Don Andrés saw service—lots of it—at Ypres, at Loos, at a score of other places whose names will be household words in Britain and beyond the seas for hundreds of years. Of the overseas soldiers—volunteers at that period, like himself—he saw plenty: Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders, for the Third Midshires were brigaded with them; but except for Charlie Brown from Finca Inglaterra, he had not run up against one of his neighbours from the foot-hills of Mount Tacana. Charlie was driving a motor-lorry, and Sergeant Maddick let him pass without a hail. He did not wish to be addressed as Don Andrés or as Mr Martin just then.

His promotion had been rapid. The best-trained man in the draft, which was rather raw, he had received a stripe before he had landed in France, and was a corporal when the draft was shaken into the hard-bitten battalion.

Letters from Jessie he received regularly, which letters, indeed, caused much astonishment in Ditchington, where everybody knew everybody else's business, and generally his or her handwriting, and the postmistress was an ancient maiden lady, and a notorious gossip. Part of her duty was to affix the Ditchington post-mark, which she did, with comments.

'Another letter for Lance-Corporal Maddick. Wherever did Jessie meet him? It's her writing. Besides, I saw her post it. Letter for Corporal Maddick? Dear me! He must be one of the Maddicks from Sudeley. I had no idea that Jessie was acquainted with them. Letter for Sergeant Maddick? Deary—deary me! I wonder, now, if it's the same young man! She writes most every week. They must be engaged.'

Of course, a large number of partly printed cards addressed to Miss Jessie Osborn passed through her hands; but they told her next to nothing, not being intended to tell anybody very much. She spoke to Farmer Osborn about the lively correspondence, but he did not appear to understand her gentle hint. The ancient postman, indeed, egged on by his superior, asked old Martin if he happened to know the young Maddick who was Jessie Osborn's soldier-boy, but was curtly told to mind his own business.

In the Third Midshires several of the called-up reservists remembered that particularly bad egg, Andrew Martin, having served with him, and now and then Sergeant Maddick had to listen to stories of his own delinquencies, which sometimes ended with the remark, 'He was drowned, poor devil!' But Sergeant Maddick never gave himself away, and could never be got to talk of his previous service, or even utter the name of his regiment. Of course, the veteran Staff Sergeant-Major Cadman had remained at the depot.

Opportunities to carry out an old threat to shoot Colonel Malleson were afforded in plenty, for the colonel was a leader; but Sergeant Maddick felt no inclination to make good Private Andrew Martin's promises; indeed, quite the contrary. The old grievances had been effaced. Andrew Martin had seen a lot of the world under more favourable conditions than are generally afforded to a mere private, and—which was exceedingly comforting—Jessie Osborn, instead of being a flirt and a jilter of men, had been, and remained, true as steel.

In common with the great majority of the self-reliant boys from overseas, and far too many of the authorities in London, ex-Private Martin had believed that a year would see the enemy beaten, and the war practically over; but Sergeant Maddick, after more than a year of fighting, knew that the war was only just beginning. From the owner of Finca Bella Vista he had obtained twelve months' leave of absence, but what had happened on that plantation he did not know, nor did it trouble him. Life at the front was far too strenuous. Besides, Sergeant Maddick was debarred from writing to Mexico, and Andrew Martin could not very well receive letters. Had he been able to do so, he most probably would have learned that a considerable number of his German neighbours had contrived to get home through Guatemala and the West Indies, among them Heinrich Henkel.

. . . . . .

It was the autumn 'push' of 1916. Scathless, Sergeant Maddick, now Sergeant-Major Maddick, had fought nearly two years, with an occasional rest behind the lines, but never a holiday home.

The Midshires had gone 'over the top,' their colonel with them, Anzacs to right and left. There was bitter, savage fighting in the German trenches, and no quarter asked for. Sergeant-Major Maddick saw his colonel go down in a deadly 'mix up,' and stood over him, thrusting viciously with his bayonet, foiling every attempt to bomb or bayonet the British officer. It was near the entrance to a big dug-out, and the trench was several times the normal width, all

the space being filled with struggling, writhing, cursing men. But through all the awful uproar the sergeant-major heard his colonel's shout, 'Look out, Maddick! On your left!'

It was the dug-out. A burly German occupied its mouth, firing at him with an automatic pistol, and shouting words which were lost in the din, until a savage push of the Midshires cleared the space.

Then he heard, '*Buenos dias*, Don Andrés! You von't der Kaiser's coronation in London see! Dere, Mr Martin! So! I told you!'

It was Henkel. One of his rapid bullets had found its billet. Sergeant-Major Maddick went down, falling across Colonel Malleson. Henkel's bullet had struck him in the head. But although himself badly wounded, the colonel had got his pistol arm free.

'You won't either!' he shouted, and fired three shots at the exulting enemy, who crumpled up and fell backwards down the staircase. But of that Sergeant-Major Maddick knew nothing until some time afterwards. He was insensible.

About a month afterwards Colonel Malleson, with his left arm in a sling, and limping, entered a certain base hospital.

'Morning, Cathcart!' he called to the R.A.M.C. captain. 'How's my sergeant-major getting on?'

Interested at once, the surgeon put down some instruments he was carrying. 'Maddick? Oh, he'll pull through, I think; but he may be a bit touched. That bullet went mighty near the brain. He doesn't seem to know who he is. Says he's Private Andrew Martin. I've tried to prove to him that he's Sergeant-Major Maddick—shown him his identity disc, &c.—but he seems to have forgotten the name of Maddick altogether. There's something else he says, also. By the way, there's a letter for him this morning—post-mark, Ditchington. That's in your county, isn't it?'

'Yes,' replied the colonel thoughtfully. 'That's queer—what you tell me. Andrew Martin? The German who shot him—a colonel, I fancy—knew him. He called him Don Andrés, also Mr Martin. I'm not likely to forget, for I plugged that German. I was on my back. Maddick had stood over me a good five minutes. Saved my life I don't know how many times. I would like to see that letter.'

'No reason why you shouldn't,' said the surgeon. 'The O.C. will open it. But as the fellow saved your life, I'll tell you something more that he said. He's a deserter from the Third Midshires, according to him, and he's talked a lot about wanting to shoot Colonel Malleson.'

'The devil!' exclaimed the colonel. 'Well, he's had plenty of chances. Sort of Jekyll and Hyde business, seems to me. Sergeant-Major Maddick's about the best non-com. in the battalion. What Private Andrew Martin may be I don't know. Just look inside that letter, and see who his correspondent thinks he is.'

The letter was opened by the adjutant of the hospital, Sergeant-Major Maddick being asleep, and not in his right mind when awake. It was from Jessie Osborn, was properly addressed to Sergeant-Major Alfred Maddick on the envelope, but the letter began, 'My dearest Andrew.' It also contained family news, references to various Martins. That the name of Sergeant-Major Maddick's father was Martin was made perfectly clear.

'All right,' said the colonel. 'Andrew Martin is his name; but Maddick must get the medal, I suppose. Let me know when his brain's clear, if it ever is; and keep this quiet, please.'

One of the Third Midshire officers, Major Burroughs, had been in the battalion from his sub. days. As he also had been wounded in the push, and was get-at-able, the colonel asked him if he remembered a soldier named Andrew Martin. The major thought for a while, racking his memory.

'Andrew Martin?' he said presently. 'Yes, I remember him. I was in charge of the squad who searched for his body. He was drowned—at Ilfracombe, I fancy—somewhere in Devonshire, anyway. He was a pretty bad lot.'

'Ah! Thanks! Did you find his body?' the colonel asked.

'No. It was washed out to sea. His uniform was found on the beach.'

'Thank you, major; I'm very much obliged,' said the colonel, and that was all he did say at the time. He also remembered Private Andrew Martin.

A few weeks later Captain Cathcart sent a message to the colonel commanding the Third Midshires, who was back with his battalion. It was brief: 'Maddick's all right in his head. Seems all right, anyway. He doesn't remember any Andrew Martin. I resealed his letter. He has had two or three more from Ditchington. I didn't look inside them.'

Colonel Malleson laughed to himself. He paid another visit to the hospital shortly afterwards. As Cathcart had written, he found Sergeant-Major Maddick much better, though feeble, but perfectly sane.

'Pleased to see you're getting on all right, Maddick,' he said, as he shook the sergeant-major by the hand. 'I suppose you'll be off to Blighty pretty soon? I've brought you a bit of ribbon to take home with you.' He produced the ribbon of the Military Medal. 'I might have got you the V.C.; but as there's such a dashed lot of publicity attached to it that you might not care about, I didn't put in for it. Here you are.'

'Thank you, colonel,' said the sergeant-major, as he took the ribbon.

'I thought you might also like to know about

the German officer who plugged you?' the colonel went on, smiling. 'I wiped him out. Hit him twice. I made inquiries. Your company cleaned up that dug-out, and buried him with the others.' He paused. 'By the way,' he added presently, 'the fellow seemed to know you. Spoke to you in Spanish. What was his name? Where did you meet him?'

The sergeant-major answered without hesitation: 'Heinrich Henkel. He was a neighbour of mine in Mexico. Wanted me to come home as a spy for Germany. I came home, all right.'

'And joined up with your old regiment—third battalion—served under your old colonel, and made good—very good. I know who you are, Martin—know what you were. You take that medal as Sergeant-Major Andrew Martin, my lad. As you are not likely to be fit again for a long spell, I can fix it up, and, if you would like it, get your discharge. Good-bye now. Don't say anything, or you may get a temperature, and I'll have Cathcart on my track.' The colonel marched away, still smiling.

Sergeant-Major Andrew Martin did not say anything, being incapable of speech just then. He was able to think, however. 'I wanted to shoot him!' was one of his reflections.

How Colonel Malleson worked the oracle is hidden in a mountain of red tape; but it was Sergeant-Major Andrew Martin who was gazetted, and who married Jessie Osborn some two months afterwards.

And it was Sergeant-Major Andrew Martin who returned to Mexico with his wife, and a couple of the boys from Mount Tacana, also invalided, a little later still.

THE END.

LIFE ON THE GERMAN FRONTIER.

A VILLAGE IN AARGAU.

THE tumultuous Rhine is a curiously narrow border between the acute suffering of the German people and the untroubled daily life of their Swiss neighbours. Little villages of Aargau that face their sad and silent counterparts in Baden are all but untouched by the war, and go about their farming and gardening, while the opposite bank of the river of strife swarms with frontier troops, every daybreak bringing the last volley fired over some officer's grave, the only music to speed the dead, for all the bells have been removed to make fresh cannon for the slaughter. Yonder are the twin steeples of the old church of Saeckingen, but only the big bell, whose voice has called good Catholics to prayer these three hundred years, is left, for its lesser brethren went into the melting-pot early in June.

In this riverside hamlet of Aargau, which faces Murg, a notable centre for the manufacture of asphyxiating gases and other devilment, there may here and there be some little grumbling against war prices, some shortage of butter and meat and sugar; but, compared with the conditions under which life is supported across that narrow strip of moving road, we live in surfeit. The Swiss peasants know it, and go forth to reap their harvest or gather their cherries singing as blithely as the little brook that here finds peace in Mother Rhine. Many of their sons and daughters formerly found work and wages in the ribbon-factory of Saeckingen; but the food is so bad, and the customs inquisition so irksome—every one is stripped to see that no papers are carried that might tell the outer world of Germany's straits—that the Swiss prefer to earn less and live more comfortably at home.

All through, the Frickthal life pursues its even course untroubled by the guns booming out there in Alsace. During the first two summers of the war the people did, it is true, forgo their beloved singing clubs. They have two passions, these burghers—part-singing and mountain-climbing. The first is the outcome of the second. All the best natural part-singing is found in mountainous countries, and it was probably suggested by the echoes. But two seasons without the Sunday *Gesangverein* were sufficient for a Swiss lifetime, and this year once more the men and maids go the old round with brave banners and flower-decked hats, making the villages ring with the old folk-songs. Our village was their chosen rendezvous one Sunday in June, and their songs attracted little groups of wistful women and children to the farther bank.

The Frickthal is the 'Valley of Rest.' Battles that rage within a day's march of its meadows and orchards leave it at peace. It has had its share, and was, indeed, the last district hereabouts to free itself from the Habsburg yoke. So recent was the bondage that to this day any veteran sufficiently behind the times to criticise the new machinery for the cider-factory or any other innovation is contemptuously dubbed an 'Austrian.'

Here and there the scene is marred by the smoking stack of a boot-factory or a ribbon-factory; but for the most part the Frickthaler are agriculturists, and never were there more untiring tillers of the soil. Many a fine June night they shoulder their scythes in the moonlight and go forth in the small hours, men, women, and children, all tramping to the land. Even babies are wheeled in little barrows, since they are too small to leave at home and can sleep as well in the fields. The home-coming at sunset is easier,

for the women and their little ones then ride on the fragrant stack of hay piled high on the cart drawn by two white cows. As smallholders these peasants of Aargau can have few rivals. The postmaster, the stationmaster, even the village dominie, have their patch of orchard or kitchen-garden, their poultry, their bees; and the orchards yield not only fresh fruit in abundance, but a surplus for the manufacture of cider, *kirsch*, and apple-brandy.

To these little villages, so near Baden that we can see the birds flying over trees in the Black Forest, the Kaiser's subjects, who swarm in Bâle and even as near as Rheinfelden, rarely penetrate. Perhaps they know how cold a welcome would await them. In time of peace their commercial travellers came and went freely; but these German-speaking Swiss hate their overbearing neighbours across the water, knowing well that they themselves were the objects of a contempt so thinly veiled that whenever a German had an idle day he would say to his friends, 'Let us cross the river and rob the stupid Swiss!' He has not held his hand even in war-time, but is still the master-robber, and, under the guise of 'compensation,' which the unfortunate Swiss must give in return for coal and iron, he is not only stealing their purse, but also robbing them of their good name as neutrals. That is the hardest blow of all.

DÉBROUILLEZ-VOUS.

A STORY OF THE FOREIGN LEGION.

By Captain T. P. Sutton-Page.

'*MAIS débrouillez-vous, mon gar; débrouillez-vous!*'

It was about the thirtieth time since reveille that I had heard this injunction addressed to one member or another of my squad. At last it had come my way, to mark the culminating point of a lengthy harangue hurled at my head by the section adjutant.

Now, of the regrettably numerous list of French verbs not included in my vocabulary when, a couple of weeks before this, I had joined the ranks of the famous *Légion Étrangère*, the one I had found most difficult to understand, despite its constant reiteration, was *se débrouiller*. Every one, from the commandant downwards, seemed to have the word everlastingly on his lips, and always, apparently, with a new meaning. Captains absolutely revelled in the use of it, our own chief generally making it the text for the strenuous lecture in which every morning he tried, with the aid of much stamping and shouting, to teach us some section of the art of soldiering. As for the adjutants, they used it as often—and this was very often—as they did '*Nom de Dieu*' or '*J'm'en fiche;*' while the corporals repeated it quite as forcefully and almost as frequently as they rapped out their more startling substitutes for these terse expressions of the mighty.

Eventually I should probably have discovered its meaning, as I did that of most of the other argot-jargon words of the Legion, through inculcation. The finely turned sample of cursing I had received that morning because I had failed to *me débrouiller*, however, whetted my curiosity, and I resolved to seek an explanation from an English-speaking Belgian in my squad.

'*Se débrouiller*,' he drawled, 'has a thousand and one meanings, as you would say. The adjutant who very naturally cursed you just now for not having a cover to your *képi*'——

'But I have never had one issued!' I expostulated, still smarting from the slanging I had undergone.

'Exactly,' continued the Belgian; '*il faut se débrouiller*. You must make one—and perhaps not return it, you know!'

'Oh, it means to steal on this occasion, does it?'

'Well, yes, more or less. But it does not often mean that. Look here; its literal meaning is "to clear up the fog." Perhaps that makes it clear.'

It did. I began to understand, or, at any rate, to think I understood.

But later on I knew it was only a beginning; for I had a long way to travel and much to learn before I was to come to a full realisation of the meaning of *se débrouiller*.

. . . . . .

In the fullness of time we were slung off to the front, closely packed in cattle-trucks which, by order of some unconscious humorist, had been labelled, '*40 hommes—8 chevaux*.'

It was a long journey, Avignon to Noisy-le-Sec, Noisy to Épernay, whence we foot-slogged our way to the trenches.

At first I devoutly wished I had been born a horse. Then, a Polish comrade having commenced to occupy more than his legal share of truck-space, I punched him into servility, and resumed my seat—and his. I was learning at last, I told myself, to *me débrouiller*.

Of course, I was really doing nothing of the kind. 'Fog-clearing' was still, so far as I was concerned, a more or less unknown art.

It was Jean Marteau, our new *caporal*, who drew my attention to this fact. Poles, he explained, were not at all bad chaps on the whole, and, anyway, it was not wise to fall unnecessarily foul of them.

'I'll teach you how to clear up the fog,' he

concluded; 'that is, if you really wish to learn. It has taken me some little time to pick it up, but I'm becoming an expert now.'

And from that day onward Caporal Jean Marteau, *matricule* 13442, took me under his wing, and taught me, among many other things, the whole science, and some certain amount of the art, of fog-clearing.

At that time I knew very little about the *caporal;* and even to this day, much as I know of Marteau the *Légionnaire*, I still know practically nothing of the Marteau of pre-Legion days.

I know that in those days his name certainly was not Marteau, for he was an Englishman. But what his real name had been I not only never knew, but never asked. In the Legion he was Caporal Marteau, with four years' service, eight campaigns, and four medals to his credit. Whether he had anything to his credit or discredit out of the Legion was not my business; and one does not ask indiscreet questions in that corps, especially when one is only a volunteer *engagé pour la durée de la guerre*, and the other person concerned is a full-blown *Légionnaire engagé pour cinq ans*. To do so would be more than impolite; it would be dangerous.

For three long, weary months Marteau and I grubbed together, worked together, and fought together, and throughout it all he was not only my guide, philosopher, and friend, but my hero, my *fidus Achates*, and a veritable supply-depot all rolled into one.

Both his example and his precepts, Marteau once or twice reminded me, must be looked upon as instruction in fog-clearing. 'But, of course,' he added, 'it's only elementary instruction.'

This was true. The advanced stage was to follow.

. . . . . .

We had been seventeen days in the trenches, alternating between the passable sport and the frequent casualties from rifle-fire of the first line, and the inexpressible boredom, and the much more frequent casualties from shell-fire, of the second; and, in accordance with the method of the Legion, four more days had yet to be done before another battalion would march in to take our place and thereby allow us to retire to V——. At V—— for the space of some six days we should enjoy what it pleased the authorities to call *repos*.

The *repos* would in reality be merely a series of guards, pickets, and patrols in and around V——, with probably one or two 'aeroplane ambuscades' thrown in, this diversion consisting in sitting and shivering on the roofs of the village and waiting for German aeroplanes which probably would never come. If they came we fired at them—and missed. 'Looking for aeroplanes when we should be looking for lice,' Marteau used to call it.

Nevertheless, the *repos* would be welcome, for it meant a change from our troglodytic filth, and a break in the sickening monotony which war always becomes after the gilt is once worn from the gingerbread. There would be opportunities, too, of washing ourselves and our clothes, of smearing ourselves with fresh supplies of camphor-oil, and of indulging in various other orgies of cleanliness not possible in the trenches.

Hence we were looking forward to the relief; and when, on this seventeenth day, with four more days to go, we heard that, for some mysterious reason, the greatly desired liberation was coming that very night in the form of two newly raised battalions which had been pushed up to the front, there was much rejoicing all along our line, and the clay-plastered and unwashed savages whom we were wont proudly to describe as '*Nous Autres*' felt happier than they had done since the last advance.

As soon as I heard the news I paddled my way along the slimy trench to tell it to Marteau.

'*Repos!*' he roared almost before I had time to speak. 'Confound their rotten *repos!*'

Evidently he was extremely annoyed. Marteau swore all his casual oaths in French. English curses he looked upon as works of super-excellence, and when he used them it was a sure sign of considerable emotion.

'What's up?' I asked.

Without answering, Marteau turned on his heel and stalked off, the image of disgust and irritation, down the *boyau* (communication-trench) leading to the second line.

I did not see him again until a little while after daybreak the following morning, when I found myself standing at a loophole cursing the consummate ass who had started the false rumour about our premature relief.

Marteau approached with a grin widespread over his face. Fumbling with his right hand in the folds of his *capote*, he produced a *bidon* of hot coffee, very liberally flavoured with *tafia* (rum).

'Have a gargle, *mon vieux*,' he said, thrusting the bottle into my hand.

Before I had recovered from the shock of this bolt from the blue, Marteau was well under way with his story.

'When I left you last night,' he began, squatting down on the muddy *banquette* where I stood, 'it was because an *espèce de cochon* of an adjutant had warned me to go and conduct one of the relieving battalions from the Guichet.'

The Guichet was the entrance to our *secteur* of the trenches, and was so called because some facetious *Légionnaires* had there erected a notice-board bearing the inscription: '*Le Théâtre de la Guerre. Admission libre. Ce soir et tous les soirs une comédie autorisée par l'arch-cochon Guillaume, en plusieurs actes par jour*' . . . and so forth.

'Well, I set off, feeling about as fed up as a *foie-gras* goose, for there was a fellow up in

Compagnie D 4 who had just got a packet from Paris, and had invited me to the inauguration. In time, however, I forced myself by D 4's turning and—— Here, hold hard, *mon agneau;* you 're not a bally decanter; too much *tafia* will make you ill, sonny.

'*Merci!*' he continued, as he slipped the *bidon* once more into the fold of his *capote.* 'Eventually, then, I got to the Guichet. Just as I turned the corner on to the railway to have a look round I nearly tumbled over old Parducci. You remember him—a one-eyed Italian cuss who used to be motor-cyclist to *Nous Autres?* He left us a while back, you know, because he was too friendly with our Greek bugler, whom he afterwards tried to knife when we were up at the Haricot. Well, I asked him for news, of course, and fag-papers, and most of the other commodities which are the chief *raisons d'être* of a motor-cyclist, and learnt that he had become cyclist to *Bataillon A* of the *3me Regiment de Marche,* the crowd which ought to have relieved us last night. He was on his way, he told me, to our commandant's bureau with a message to the effect that all moves in our *secteur* had been postponed for twenty-four hours, and therefore his battalion wouldn't be on show in our lines until to-morrow morning.

'Like a fool, I went back at once to the adjutant and told him the move was off *pro tem.*, and asked to fall out. It was old Pinard, who, as you know, is a *voyou de première classe.* He slung me *quat' jours'* prison for coming back without permission, and another *quat' jours* for asking if he wanted me to return and wait for a battalion which wasn't coming till the morning after next.

'There was nothing for it but to return to the Guichet—or, at least, I imagined so. But on the way back I bethought myself of the parcel I 'd promised to help to unpack. The dug-out where my friend was was on the way down, and so I decided to call.

'I was just in time. He 's an *apache,* is my friend, and gets the usual *apache* comforts from his *petite amie,* who has migrated, it appears, from Belville to the Boul' Miche, where she is able to do herself—and him—very well, don't you know.

'It 's remarkable,' he continued meditatively, 'what an extraordinarily fine taste in liqueurs is possessed by the species *gigolette.* Grand Marnier, by gad!'

'The education of the Boul' Miche beginning to tell,' I suggested. 'But go on with your yarn. There 's no need to lick your lips in that reminiscent and totally vulgar manner!'

'*Oh, là, là!* Is the little man envious, then—even after being allowed to swipe most of my share of the *tafia?* Well,' he continued, 'when I 'd finished the bottle—Grand Marnier was like giving a peach to a rhinoceros as far as my friend was concerned—I wandered on down the *boyau.* I was still magnificently wet through, of course, and it was beginning to snow. Adjutant or no adjutant, a night *à la belle étoile* wasn't good enough. Might have caught my death of cold, don't you know, sleeping in the snow with a bellyful of Grand Marnier.'

He smiled reflectively, probably recalling the number of times he had risked death from more or less similar causes.

'Well, what did you do?' I asked. 'You didn't come back to our dug-out.'

'Come back to the dug-out! My dear child, I 'm not a plurry lunatic. Old Pinard, I am told this morning, sent at least five scouts to find out if I had done so. He 's not a real *Légionnaire,* you know. Came to us from a convict prison, and fancies he knows a thing or two because he was a chief warder. Lot of use that is to him in the Legion, ain't it?—poor unsophisticated ass!

'Down in the second line, which I had to pass to get to the next *boyau,* I found *Bataillon C,* who were also waiting to move. They are comparatively new to trench-work, of course, and so they were waiting, poor devils! with blankets rolled, *sacs* packed, and everything ready placed on the ledges outside their dug-outs. Now, old Parducci had told me all the moves were cancelled, you understand?'

'M'yes,' I said. 'Suppose you borrowed a blanket and made yourself comfy in a tunnel—what?'

'I suppose I did nothing so darned sloppy,' Marteau retorted. 'Don't you understand? There were fifteen *sacs* and fifteen blankets, my son, all getting beastly wet through, and fifteen poor little *dureés-de-la-guerre* all huddled close inside the dug-out trying to keep warm. I thought I 'd like to help 'em, so I hopped inside and cuddled up too. There was plenty of room in the corner.'

'I think I should have borrowed a blanket,' I said.

'Yes, probably you would. I unstrapped and borrowed eight of 'em, and after the best night's sleep I 've had for months, got up an hour or so ago, and left 'em in a heap in the corner.'

'Humph!' I exclaimed. 'A fairly saucy trick. Didn't they twig what was going on?'

'Did they what? You wait a bit, my son. When I cleared out I thought it would be good tactics to walk down as far as the Guichet in case old Pinard came down to see why the new battalion hadn't turned up. It proved to be an excellent idea, for I hadn't been there five minutes when the old devil arrived. I reported that though I had waited all night, I had seen nothing of the battalion; and I also hinted that the weather had been a trifle humid. By Jove, the old savage became quite remorseful! Gave me a two-sous cigar and cancelled the eight days' prison.

'He then went on to the village, and I proceeded slowly and contentedly homeward. So far, I'd had a first-rate outing. But the real sport was to come.

'Just as I turned the corner once more into the second line I heard the most infernal row. "*Espèce de salop . . . espèce d'abruti . . . espèce de* various other things!" My laddie, but the dear little *durées* of *Bataillon C* are learning to curse, if they're learning nothing else. You should join their school!

'Every blighter in the squad I had visited was giving it mouth for all he knew—all accusing each other of unstrapping the *sacs* and sleeping in the blankets. The chap who seemed to be getting it in the neck worst of all was the Spaniard I had for bedfellow last night. I knew it was the same fellow, because quite inadvertently I'd trodden on his face in the middle of the night, and he had cursed me for at least ten minutes. So I recognised the voice—and the swears.

'Of course, the poor devil was getting the blame because he had been dossing nearest my heap of blankets. Eventually a couple of them went for him bald-headed, and he was precious near being knifed by a hulking Italian.

'However, it quietened down after a bit, and so, thanking 'em for the entertainment—I wasn't indelicate enough to mention the lodgings—I cleared.

'Altogether it was an amusing night—a most amusing night,' he concluded. 'Have you got any bread? I'm as hungry as a horse.'

'Here you are,' I said, as I handed him a half-loaf of stale bread. 'But where did you get the *tafia?*'

'Oh,' he replied, 'that was a gift from the Spaniard. No, no, I didn't pinch it. He gave it to me for outing the Italiano, just as the latter artiste was letting him have the point of a stiletto. . . . The Italiano's in hospital now.'

'You're a first-class bally old rascal,' I mused, as, his story told to our mutual satisfaction, he sat munching the bread and washing it down with the remainder of the *tafia*.

'*Il faut se débrouiller, mon ami,*' replied Marteau with his mouth full. 'And, anyway,' he added, handing me the *bidon*, 'the *tafia's* good, *n'est ce pas?*'

And so it was—extraordinarily good.

. . . . . .

Some weeks later, in consequence of a 'ministerial decision' which ordered my transfer to the British Army, I left the Foreign Legion.

In many ways I was glad—almost overjoyed—when the day of my liberation came. Good food, good clothes, baths, and many other creature comforts had, much more often than not, been sadly lacking in the Legion; and all these and many other blessings would soon be within easy reach. Further, I should be serving with men of my own race—in itself a great consideration anywhere, and, above all, in the field.

However, for other reasons I was not glad—indeed, I was quite the reverse—to leave the Legion. True, in our ranks we had hordes of *apaches*, Russian revolutionaries, Italian bravoes; indeed, the devil only knows what we had not. But whatever this human flotsam and jetsam had been before it was whirled into the swift-flowing and not-to-be-escaped-from waters of the Legion, there it had proved itself good, sound material, and just the material that France in her sorest hour of trial had most needed. Those I had known and served with had shown themselves to be brave men and steadfast comrades; and a few of them, I had begun to find out, were very dear to me—closer and more loyal friends than I had ever known before.

All adverse circumstances, of course, will teach you to value your friends, but life in the purgatory of the Legion trenches teaches you much more. It teaches you that most of the things you formerly regarded as the essentials of friendship are very tiny and negligible, after all; that even the most miserable and absolute outcast may have all the qualifications that really count. It teaches you, too, that there is a friendship which—whatever the Good Book may say—is greater than even the great love which prompts a man to lay down his life for his friend. For the real friend there is he who will stand by you day in, day out; who is patient, forbearing, and true to you right through the misery and terror of it all; who keeps staunchly by your side right through the Valley of the Shadow—and the Valley of the Shadow is much more terrible than Death itself.

This was the kind of friend Jean Marteau had been to me. And he was being left behind—a five-year *Légionnaire*, and therefore ineligible for transfer.

As I looked into his big red-brick face—to the uninitiated eye so rough and case-hardened, but to mine so loyal and so honest—grinning at me at the end of the *boyau* whence I was making my exit from '*Le Théâtre de la Guerre*,' I felt sick at heart, and I knew then that I would have thrown all the creature comforts in the world to the dogs—would even have renounced my race and thought nothing of it—in exchange for permission to remain, to be still one of '*Nous Autres*,' with Jean Marteau.

Poor old Marteau! I should never see him again—of this I felt certain. Sooner or later, in those 'lean locked ranks' of the Legion, the fog would become too thick even for him to *se débrouiller*.

. . . . . .

But in the Great War the only thing certain is the totally unexpected; and so it came to pass that I did see Marteau again.

It was in hospital at B——, whence a sister

had written to me saying that an old pal of mine wanted to see me.

I found Jean lying in his cot, his dear old face grinning as it always grinned when the fog was thickest, but so pale and pinched that I was scarcely able to recognise him. The explanation lay hidden beneath the white bedclothes; one of his legs was gone, the other shattered.

How we greeted each other does not matter; and, anyhow, I forget. But a few minutes later he was telling me a story; not his story, but how one day in the early spring, near La Bassée, the Legion had attacked the German positions, and taking them by surprise, had in the space of an hour pierced through three lines of trenches and advanced three kilometres farther than the enemy's last line.

'We captured over two thousand men, old boy, two batteries of 77's, and twenty machine-guns; and we killed their blasted brigadier *à la baionette*. *Nous Autres* went right over the heads of the Germans without stopping, every company detaching twenty men with hand-grenades and revolvers to clear out their dug-outs. Most of the blighters were still in their dens, some five yards below the ground, and were caught like rats in a trap.'

Thus he chattered on, his face lit up and that strange dark flash in his eyes—'the Legion look' it is sometimes called—that told of his intense, yet only half-revealed, passion—the *Légionnaire's* passion for fighting. He had clean forgotten his wounds. It was the Legion—ever and only the Legion—the immortal '*Nous Autres*.'

'Even the Jews, dam'me! of whom I'd never taken much count, fought like fiends. Do you remember that little devil, Kio Chiqot—used to be *ordonnance* to our lieutenant? He was only sixteen years old, but he kept on fighting though twice wounded, and at the end brought in twelve prisoners! . . .

'A few days afterwards the general came to see us, and told us the feat of arms we had accomplished was the greatest since the battle of the Marne. . . .

'Of course,' he continued, 'we got it in the neck pretty badly, especially our old company . . . . machine-guns placed in the villages on our flanks. Our old Colonel Pein, who was acting as brigadier, was killed; so was the commandant. De Montgomerie had his face blown off; Junot was shot through the lungs; Svarti, Nowakowski, Dognon, Theodoresco, Matheos, Giordano, Phillipides, Belkasim—all killed. I don't know how many of *Nous Autres* were blotted altogether, but out of the four battalions there was considerably less than two left. The old company went in two hundred and twenty-five strong . . . and came out seventy-three. A bit thick, yes . . . *mais c'est la Légion, ça!*' . . .

'But, old man,' I asked when he paused, 'your wounds?'

'Oh, I'm lucky, really. I ought to have been in Kingdom Come,' he laughed.

'But how did it happen?'

'Oh, there was nothing much in it. I was in a bit of a hole . . . and managed to get out—like this. That's all.'

'Tell me all about it, old man,' I begged.

'Well, if you must hear, I was one of the grenade-party told off to clear out the dug-outs. By chance I tumbled into a cave full of Boches. They had me covered, so it was no good trying to turn back. . . . So I just heaved a percussion-bomb against the roof and blew 'em—and my legs—to hell. There wasn't a Boche left alive when they dug us out. *Il faut se débrouiller*, you know,' he added dreamily.

. . . . . .

Late that night I left the hospital, promising to come again next day. But next day my regiment had to move, and it was nearly a fortnight before I could obtain leave to visit B—— again.

As I entered the hospital I was met by one of the sisters.

'I'm afraid you can't see poor Marteau,' she said. 'However, I'll ask the doctor.'

A few minutes later I was ushered into a separate ward containing only one bed. I knew—and Marteau knew—only too well what that separate ward meant.

'Good-bye, old boy,' he murmured as he slipped his poor, withered hand into mine. 'I knew you'd come.

'It *is* good-bye, you know,' he mumbled on. 'But you're the only one left I want to say good-bye to. . . . There weren't many at any time . . . but since that day last spring . . . I told you about it, didn't I? . . . two thousand prisoners and three lines of trenches. . . . Show your regiment what the Legion was, boy. . . . Teach 'em to SE DÉBROUILLER. . . . It's great to clear up the fog. . . . That's our job . . . the Legion's job . . . TO CLEAR . . . UP . . . THE FOG.'

The quavering voice ceased, and the poor, weary eyes closed.

Jean Marteau had given me my last lesson. He had cleared up the fog once and for all.

PARTING.

You did not say good-bye, dear, when you went
Upon your outward way.
Oh, did you think that I could be content
Without a word until the close of day?
Did you forget that I should wonder why
You did not say good-bye?

You left me with a weight of things untold
That I had meant to say—
Gone unaware when I had thought to hold,
Leaving a memory where you would not stay:
Oh, tell me from the deep, beloved, why
You did not say good-bye.

ARTHUR L. SALMON.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By HENRY LEACH.

LONDON, *Yesterday.*

IN latter days two or three men, particularly noticed, have been seen striding along the streets in different parts of the middle of London. We have just noticed them in the Haymarket. Even in the strange London of to-day, where are collected all the types and transformations of war, and where few things cause wonder now, the passers-by turn their heads and look with a touch of admiration and even affection upon the square, flat backs of these retreating figures. These men stand out distinctly—and with a significance that strikes the senses of the beholder without a moment's explanation—from all the other forms of busy humanity that are about. We know at a glance who and what they are, and not merely by their uniforms, though these give an indication. They are black naval uniforms, and on fine days these smart officers have been wearing the usual white caps. Certain stars may be observed on the uniforms, and the jackets are cut rather shorter and are tighter to the figure than those of our own naval officers. A peculiar thing about these men, as we have seen them in Whitehall, the Strand, and Pall Mall, is that on most days their hands have been covered with dark gloves, and even when the sun has been shining they have carried umbrellas, which, at a hasty glance, have not seemed conspicuous for any close and neat folding. The carrying of umbrellas is doubtless a wise and commendable precaution; but in the circumstances there appears for the moment to be a touch of incongruity in it. We have seen numbers of gentlemen in this uniform about the town since July, but these three in particular—sometimes reduced to a pair—cross one's track from time to time, conveying an impression of being 'hard among it,' so to say, and one remembers them. They have a stern set of countenance upon—in the case of two of them—round, clean-shaven faces, and they look neither to right nor to left. It is that peculiar, confident, and daring expression often found upon the faces of Americans, which can best be described as a 'sitting-tight' expression. This is the stolidity of the sphinx, with a small suspicion of a twinkle in the eye. Again, two of the trio are rounder and thicker of body than our young naval officers, and their tight-fitting uniforms accentuate the fact. They walk along the streets with a long, solemn, and somewhat heavy tread, keeping themselves carefully in step. You see a difference when there flashes by one of our own young captains or lieutenants, so lithe and tripping on his toes, for of all the men who skip about in town in these times none is nearly so conspicuous for agility as the naval officer. One but points out differences of nationality and service, making no comparisons for classes of merit, for it is hardly to be indicated in these ways. And even if such indiscretion seized a man, he would find more and more to admire and be thankful for in that staid and solemn gait, that solid and dignified tread, of these officers, our good and real American friends; for you will have guessed that these three officers—and we have liked it when there have been three of them, for they have helped romantic fancies and the imagination, bringing to mind old sets of triple heroes from the naval romance of Marryat, the Three Musketeers, and other gallants of world fame—are officers of the United States Navy, here in British and French waters with their ships, doing their country's business and that of the world's best peoples. Of course, there have been comparatively few of them about the town; the many are otherwise and very considerably engaged elsewhere, a circumstance which has assisted us to make special note of this small group. In particular we have remarked that while there was a clean-shaven man on one side, and another bare-faced officer on the other, the middle man wore a beard, which is very unusual in an American naval officer. But his features were none the less keen, and his eyes gleamed. At a glance you knew him for a man of deep purpose and stern resolve. He seemed to be not of the type of our Jellicoe or Beatty, but yet he had sharp, angular features, like the former. This bearded officer is a very important man, for he is Admiral Sims, on whom the British Admiralty conferred a unique and indeed almost incredible distinction by placing him in the command of our own naval forces in an emergency in the Irish Sea soon after his coming over.

* * *

There is much to say of him; but let us tell you first why Admiral Sims, unlike most other American naval officers, wears a beard. The

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story, in its significance, may mean something to the future, and even to the progress of the war. He was only a young lieutenant—or he may not have been as high as that—and daily shaved his face quite clean, like his brother-officers. But once his father borrowed his razor, and two days passed without his returning it to him. Then said young Sims, 'Father, if you do not give me back my razor in the morning I will never shave again.' The elder Sims did not return the razor in the morning, and his son has never shaved again. I liked to remember this story when I saw Admiral William Sims advancing up the gentle brow of the Haymarket. The American ships have work to do, as much and great as the American men, for the saving of mankind, and they can do it well. Four years ago, when crossing the Atlantic, I sat on deck one sunny afternoon alongside an American naval officer, who told me something of the service in which he was engaged, of all that had been done since the affair with Spain, of the keen sense for experiment and advance, and a certain invaluable independence they had over European navies, which were to some extent closely occupied in copying each other's example. The teachings of Mahan, his naval philosophy, had been an advantage. My friend of that voyage assured me that if opportunity came, as seemed no very likely thing, the navy of the United States would do something that would make a deep impression upon other peoples; and he invited me to pay him a visit on one of their biggest ships in the yard by Philadelphia.

* * *

This Admiral Sims, in command of the naval forces of the United States in European waters, is a remarkably interesting man. All the great characters of the war, fate fastening so much upon them, are necessarily figures for curiosity and consideration; but some of these Americans, having our own blood and ideals in them, and yet having made of themselves a new race with special characteristics, are fascinating subjects now, and one can scarcely tell why so little has been told in our country about such stimulating men. These personalities, indeed, are not good material for our almost universal secrecies. One cannot know too much of such men; there is nothing about them that does not hearten. The British Government, at the same time that it imposed new restrictions and turned the screw one twist further upon the people, should have told us the human tales of Sims and Pershing, who then were coming along to help us, to show us what manner of men were glad to be of us, for then the people could bear many more twists of those departmental screws. What I know and have heard of Admiral Sims has come from abroad, and one of the things told me, in the way of characteristics, is that this stern man, cold to the look, of steely inflexibility of purpose, a man who, as we shall see, has in a special way improved the art of necessary killing to a high point of perfection, is incapable himself of shooting game or angling for fish, and so, if you wish to phrase it that way, he cannot be an active sportsman. The idea of inflicting death upon any beast or bird or other living thing—not considering human enemies in battle—is deeply repugnant to him; and more than that, he recoils from it. That is interesting, but perhaps it is not wholly unique; and it is reasonable, after all, as some will feel after a little reflection. Some of the greatest soldiers have been the gentlest men; they see such sincerity and innocence in the other creatures of God as, alas! are not often to be found in the human kind. The recreations, then, of Admiral Sims are of the simpler sort. If there is one of them that, for his devotion to it, is much more conspicuous than all the rest, it is—you could not guess it in a thousand times!—the composition of that peculiar form of verse embracing surprise, discovery, and usually some quaint satire, which we call limericks. This leader of the United States Navy, having a considerable load laid upon him now for civilisation's sake, is also the laureate of the limerick. He dabbles in humorous verse of other kinds, but the limerick he likes most, and it is said that he has composed hundreds and more hundreds of them. One would experience no surprise on being informed in a whisper that such material substances for satire as Wilhelm, Tirpitz, and others of the German crew have already served their purpose with him. I am told that one night, while the American fleet was lying at anchor in the bay of Guacanayabo, the officers assembled, and were discoursing eagerly upon all manner of naval and other subjects, when it was noticed that Sims was leaning close down upon a table and applying himself most earnestly with pen and ink to the paper before him. They did not disturb him; they thought the Admiral was occupied with an important order or despatch. But at the end of an hour he handed to each officer a slip of paper with a limerick written upon it bearing on a subject that he had just been discussing.

* * *

One is accustomed to the curious, the irregular, and the unconventional in great and successful careers. Genius is ill harnessed to convention; it meets with rebuffs and difficulties, and keeps its own way of salvation and victory upon an independent course. The career of Admiral Sims, forced by an iron will and enormous energy, is still conspicuous in the group of the great personalities of the war. Some of the best American qualities seem to be intensified in him in a remarkable way; the main facts of his story are delightful. He is a farmer's son, and he rose originally in Canada—that is to say, at Fort Hope in Ontario. He was not brilliant as a boy; much the opposite. He had the reputation of being slow and careless as a pupil; it was his greater

pleasure not to learn. Those were days in Pennsylvania, and he was sent along in due course to the Naval Academy at Annapolis. Here there was a strange and sudden awakening of moral force. Young Sims failed piteously at his examination; it seemed that he was doomed; his neglect had found him out; he had not noticed that the hour of responsibility had struck; but now he knew it. He begged of the examiners that a second chance might be given to him, and they agreed. They gave him a month, and at the end of that time he was examined again, and this time with success; but not, as it is averred, without much pain. Thus he came to graduate in 1880. There were two forms of study for which he had a most special aversion, but they were two which it was highly desirable he should like and be assiduous upon. His dislike of them was curious, and weighed heavily against him. He hated mathematics, and yet one needs mathematics as one needs the alphabet for calculations of the most essential kind at sea. It is by mathematics that we apprehend unmeasured distances, by the angles and sines of mathematics that ships set courses and reckon times and places of their meeting. Admiral Sims had some difficulty in curing himself of his repugnance for mathematics; but it was done. The other aversion was the French language, which is very desirable if the young officer has ideas of treading upon the higher paths where a little official diplomacy walks in arm with simple ship command. Realising the necessity, he adopted the most drastic measures. He went to Paris for a year solely to learn the language thoroughly, and at the end of the term he could speak it as well as his own. It has been said of him that he was to the American Navy what Sir Percy Scott was to ours, the organiser of naval artillery. There is something peculiarly interesting in this matter. Sims had met Scott in Asiatic seas, and at once experienced a great admiration and friendship for him. At that time the ideas entertained by Sir Percy were regarded as revolutionary, but Admiral Sims adopted them. They both maintained that superiority of shooting was the secret of success on the sea. Admiral Sims at once began to let Washington know of his newly rooted and vigorous views, and Washington was not at all impressed. Having prepared a scheme of his own, he sent a statement of it to headquarters, and pleaded for its adoption. There was no answer. He begged, he supplicated, that his system of instruction in target practice should be put to the test; but it seemed that the high authorities would not listen to him. At length he determined to go to the Navy Department and press the matter in person. When he arrived he found that his letters and statement had been placed in a packet without having been opened. Thereupon he began a vigorous campaign in favour of his system, but the chief result for long was that he set all the leaders of the old school against him, and they were men of influence and power. He suffered for it; but at length his insistent criticism exasperated the Navy Department, which determined to make a shocking example of him and to discredit him utterly by carrying out a practical demonstration of the fact that the American Navy knew how to use its guns. An old lightship, long since out of service, was fixed up as a target in the offing at Newport, and a portion of the navy was brought along to fire at it. They did so merrily for long and long. It was good business. At the setting of the sun they brought the old lightship in again to have a look at it, and, lo! it bore the mark of but a single hit, the result of a projectile fired from short range. There was nothing to say. Sims was justified. Some of the old gang looked for a place of seclusion where they might rest their weary heads, while others made confession and adopted the creed of Sims. Everywhere there was a violent movement of opinion in his favour. He was appointed inspector of target practice, and was set to institute his own system. This was based on constant practice and incessant firing at long range, on the principle that the number of shots fired a minute is an essential factor in the efficacy of the fire.

* * *

Clearly this is a man of imagination and resource; he is a fine man for war, for his method is to do that which is necessary, and consider some of the niceties of expediency afterwards—without, of course, meaning that he is for any unmoral system of 'necessity knowing no law,' as favoured by the people of central Europe. What is meant is best indicated by the anecdotal method. When war broke out between the United States and Spain upon the Cuban question our friend was naval attaché to the American embassy at Paris. The United States Government in this crisis was badly short of munitions—as is a common thing with nations when they go to war—and it placed an order for a million dollars' worth with a Liverpool firm, at the same time moving Sims on from Paris to Liverpool in order to hurry on this affair and superintend the shipment. When the order was completed, there came the news that the Spanish fleet, under Admiral Cervera, had set sail for America. All at once a serious risk arose, and the Liverpool firm which had supplied the munitions, and the owner of the ship which was to transport them, refused to let ship and goods take the water until the total value of both had been guaranteed to them. Time just then was one of the most valuable things in the world, and Sims would stop at nothing in gaining it. In a tranquil manner he declared that he would be personally responsible on condition that the ship was on her voyage before sunset. Since those memorable days Admiral Sims has frequently asked himself how long it would

have taken him to pay off the million dollars, and the value of the ship, if the vessel had been sunk.

* * *

He was inspector of target practice of the navy with the Bureau of Navigation for his department for seven years. His intense specialisation on ordnance, gunnery practice, and the mechanism of watching, recording, and shaping the shooting skill of a fleet or a navy's marksmen has been of immense value to the United States Navy, and incidentally of service to himself. His ideas, his convictions, his knowledge, and his experience are good factors for the Allies at present. In 1913, when the Atlantic fleet torpedo flotilla was formed, he was put in charge. He has had more experience of craft built to combat the submarine than any other American, and he has shown a remarkable inventive skill in devising methods for accomplishing special and unexpected objects. He looks a stern man, one who attends to his business and thinks everything of it; and that is what he is. But, as we have seen, there is a light and happy side to the character and disposition of Admiral Sims, and let it be added that he has the finer social graces, which assist him in his peregrinations and his duties in the European capitals. These were latent in him when he came to marry a charming girl in the daughter of Ethan Allen Hitchcock of St Louis, who assisted in his most excellent development on the social side. And, all in all, one might say, in a form of expression that is sung in chorus at some American gatherings, that Admiral Sims is all right, that so far as nations and governments can discover at a period when their perspicacity is most intense and their standard most exacting, there is nothing at all the matter with Admiral Sims. We think of this trim figure striding along Whitehall and Pall Mall, and some of us think of it again as a strange emotion twitches at the heart on first observing an American warship in our British waters, Old Glory at her mast-head. You must see this thing to know the emotion; it is one of the rare delights of man, knowing the best of the world is with him as he goes fighting on.

'BATH-BUNS.'

By 'ÆSCULAPIUS.'

I.

THE *Alcibiades* had actually become a 'good-morning' ship! How different from those dreary winter-times when she was attached to the northern base! Then officers came in to breakfast looking glum, fed-up, and choleric. With averted eye, they snatched up a paper or a magazine, not so much for the readable items in it, but because having it in front of them at table was an excuse for ignoring their messmates.

Chatting early in the morning presupposes a feeling of lightness in one's vitals, which they sadly lacked. Close confinement, potted air, and indifferent food had done them in the eye in that respect.

To say 'Good-morning' was to ask for trouble, and everybody knew it. Poor defunct Mackellar was rash enough to make the experiment. In the early days of his life on board, he persisted in inflicting that ill-starred greeting on the torpedo-lieutenant. Finally the much-tried 'Torps' so drenched him in a torrent of acrimonious verbiage that Mackellar never repeated the offence.

II.

On this particular morning, when the *Alcibiades* steered a southerly course, and the wardroom was bright with the flowers the first-lieutenant had brought back with him from Cornwall, it was 'Good-morning, pay; good-morning, commander; 'morning, O'Brien;' and so on, through the whole gamut of officers.

The engineer-commander did not say, 'I'll have a pot of tea this morning,' in a loud voice, the moment he entered, as if the smashing of the Hindenburg line depended on his momentous decision. Rather was it his gracious pleasure to wait until the marine servant politely broached the fateful question, 'Tea or coffee, sir?' and he astounded the whole mess by not complaining it was too strong for him. Neither did the staff-surgeon, who detested tea in the morning, drop dark hints to the effect that his coffee reminded him of a certain murky river he had once visited in the East.

The corporal of the servants, whose felicity depended on the moods and fancies of his officers, exulted in their changed demeanour.

'They 're eatin' out of my 'and,' he told the pantry, speaking metaphorically of course, because the *Alcibiades* had made good all crockery defects during her extensive refit at Devonport. 'Goodness knows, too, it 's about time,' he reflected, sneaking a little Devonshire cream for the strawberries he had stowed away in the ice-chest. 'There ought to be a spirit of give-and-take in the wardroom, anyhow,' he murmured, eating his berries with great relish; 'otherwise it 's hell. On their bad days they seem to forget we men of the royal corps are not brought up as ruddy waiters. After all, it 's our genius for compromise

that 's made us Turkies great, isn't it, "Stripey"?' he asked the sergeant of marines, who looked in to tell the sceptical wine-steward the staff-surgeon had said he might put him down for a beer later on in the day, and was much too busy looking after his own interests in this direction to mind what his understrapper said. 'I say, it 's the glorious art we have of adapting ourselves to circumstances that 's made the royal corps what it is,' the corporal of the servants concluded; 'else how could I, a soldier, carry on flunkeying?'

III.

It was perhaps the new spirit of complaisance that made it possible for the wardroom officers to bear up cheerfully under the exceptional hardships of that self-same July morning. The bathroom plumbing had broken down during the night, and the metal baths which are suspended, canopy-like, over officers' heads in their cabins came into their own again. While their masters were still wrapped in slumber, servants stole cautiously in, and releasing these glorified soup-tureens from their fasteners, laid them gently on the deck of the cabin. As soon as they had filled them with the proper proportions of hot and cold water, they woke up their gentlemen.

'Bath 's ready, sir,' they informed them before stealing back to the marines' mess.

A few minutes later officers were already entrenched in a posture suggestive of happy babies in soap advertisements, when a horrible discovery was made. They could not find their sponges!

'Sentry! Sentry!' a dozen distressed voices cried out in quick and startling succession.

'Yes, sir; yes, sir,' said that dazed individual, darting from one to the other like a hen in search of her favourite chick.

'Send my servant to me at once,' was the agonised command.

The servants responded in none too good a spirit, and no wonder, seeing they were being disturbed at their breakfast. In fact, Private Barlow met O'Brien's piteous look with the stony glare of a marine on parade.

'I knows nuthin' about it, sir,' he said emphatically in reply to his master's frantic inquiries respecting the defaulting sponge. 'I missed it meself this morning, and thought you had thrown it away. Yes, sir, I really did,' he murmured, softening, as if he felt in duty bound to pay a last tribute in passing to the memory of the emaciated sponge in question. How pygmean it was compared with that of his other gentleman, the first-lieutenant's! Now, that was some sponge.

'There ain't no more on board, sir,' was Barlow's outward response to the staff-surgeon's suggestion to 'take up' one for him in the ship; 'the canteen-manager ses as how we 're going to a country of sponges, he didn't take on any fresh stock.'

'Tell the canteen-manager from me,' O'Brien said, getting on with his bath, 'he oughtn't to sponge too much on possibilities.'

'I must say I thought it rather odd, sir,' Barlow went on, somewhat mollified by this sally, 'that the first-lieutenant's was also adrift; and his ain't no small one to get away with, as you know, sir,' he added, scarcely able to repress a snigger when he thought of how the water-laden missile had once brought down the staff-surgeon. 'Not only his, sir; but from what I heard at breakfast, there 's been a general weeding out of sponges on this flat, and all the orficers are complaining.'

IV.

This was not by any manner of means the only fly in the ointment of the mess's happiness. There was another trouble, which cast a gloom over them before divisions were sounded off. Direful tidings had reached the wardroom regarding Nicholas III.'s illness.

Ever since the recall of Stoker Struldbrug's pet, the revered tortoise, the *Alcibiades* had not possessed a real mascot. It is true, a black ram had scampered about the decks for a time; but he soon died, under chloroform, while the staff-surgeon was amputating his ungainly tail. Dogs were too common, for does not every halfpenny paper contain the picture of such a one? The officers and ship's company generally brooded in vain over their need in this direction, until a happy opportunity gave them a truly ideal mascot.

During their stay at Devonport, H.M.S. *Cheeryble* had come in to 'pay off,' after doing a commission in the White Sea. Before leaving that icy station, the Czar Nicholas II. had not only decorated them, but presented their mess with a fine young bear, whom they had christened Nicholas III., in commemoration of his imperial donor. On their arrival in England, however, his future became somewhat of a problem. Many of the *Cheeryble's* disbanding complement would have liked to take the bear to their new ships, but quarantine regulations stood in the way of his being landed at all, so it was decided to hand him over to the *Alcibiades*.

V.

Nicholas III. came on board in a blaze of glory, and the details of his nocturnal exploit made every living part of the ship vibrate with ear-splitting guffaws. It seemed that Nicholas III. had landed, after all!

The *Cheeryble* people, loath to part with their mascot, kept putting off from day to day the fatal hour of his departure, until Nicholas III. ended the intolerable stalemate by going off, all on his own, in the dead of night.

H.M.S. *Cheeryble* had docked in a slip abutting the park-like grounds of the Royal Naval Barracks. The ruminating eye of the bear must have dwelt on this charming vista of green when

he stretched his legs on the after-bridge. The wonder is that Master Bruin did not choose to gambol on its grassy softnesses in the brilliant light of a summer day.

The great outstanding feature happens to be that, under cover of darkness, Nicholas III. left his snug billet on the boat-deck of H.M.S. *Cheeryble*, and ran the gauntlet of half-a-dozen sentries, for the sole purpose, it would seem, of breaking into the art-reveries of Temporary-Surgeon Newcome, R.N.

VI.

Surgeon Newcome was attached to the sick-quarters of H.M.S. *Vivid*, as the Royal Naval Barracks at Devonport are called, and it was part of his duties to make rounds somewhere about 4 A.M. whenever he had a 'day on.' Most of the other young doctors had an awful moan over this unearthly-like-hour visit; but Newcome looked forward to it with complacence, and he was even known to anticipate the time.

For one thing, the doctor was inordinately fond of anything relating to either Greece or Rome; and was not the path between the officers' quarters and the sick-wards literally strewn with statuary of all kinds, in the shape of dismantled figure-heads which had once stretched themselves becomingly under the restless bowsprits of anything from a frigate to a three-decker?

Walking through these grounds in the uncertain light of early morning was almost as pleasurable to this day-dreamer as a visit to the Vatican galleries, with the bucolic charms of the Villa Borghese thrown in. It is true, the *Vivid* collection lacked anything so sublime as a 'Laocoon,' but the place bristled with gods and goddesses of all kinds. The mirthful Bacchus was there, looking askance at his kinsman Juniperus for hobnobbing with the dusky Angostura; while Neptune's brow was dark and scowling, as if meditating revenge on the usurping under-water boats.

VII.

Newcome had gone out of his way to commune with the awful Cerberus. The light was fitful enough for him to use his electric-torch in contemplating the monster which had once embellished an early H.M.S. *Vigilance*. That is just where Nicholas III. came in. The bear loved torches. Had not the officers often surprised him by flashing one in his sleepy eyes on the boat-deck of the *Cheeryble*? What more natural than to steer a course straight for the doctor? Up to a certain point, his 'seamanship' was most proper, but as he came within the sphere of Cerberean influence it degenerated into a series of jerky zigzags, one of which brought him into violent collision with the 'stand-easy' legs of Surgeon Newcome. That officer toppled over, and as he was brought face to face with Nicholas III., the baleful light gave him the impression that one of the three Cerberean heads had come to life. Without pausing to think what a strange transformation the dog-like commissionaire of the infernal regions had undergone, the horror-struck young doctor up and ran as if for dear life, with the playful bear in close pursuit. Newcome uttered a fearful yell when he discovered the frolicsome animal was leaping after him, and the attention of the sentries being directed to the unusual scene, they promptly joined in the chase.

The temporary-surgeon got in all right, but the person of Nicholas III. was apprehended on the hallowed steps of the officers' quarters, and he was put in the 'lock-up' for the night.

VIII.

The incident was referred to the R.N.B. commander, who glared fiercely at the animal.

'According to his identification disc,' the master-at-arms said gravely, looking at the oval-shaped silver plate on the bear's collar, 'this prisoner's name is Nicholas III., and he's a supernumerary on board H.M.S. *Cheeryble*.'

'What has that got to do with me?' the commander asked irritably. 'What's the *raison d'être* for his being here?'

'Date, sir?' ejaculated the master-at-arms, catching at what was to him the only intelligible word-sound in this irrelevant question. 'Why, it's the 7th of July, sir.'

'You silly ass,' the commander exploded, 'what I'm trying to get at is, why have you brought the brute before me?'

'He was found loitering in the grounds and creating a disturbance early this morning, sir,' the master-at-arms replied mechanically.

'What the blazes is he doing ashore, anyway? Do they think we're running an animal-canteen here?' fumed the commander.

A corporal of marines from the *Cheeryble* fell-in before the commander. 'Nicholas III. has never been ashore before, sir. It's just like this, sir; last night being his last one on board, sir'——

'What do you mean by "his last night"?' the commander interrupted him.

'Nicholas III. is in process of being transferred to the *Alcibiades*, sir. Them are the exact words of the captain of marines'——

'Oh, I'm sick of all this infernal twaddle!' the commander roared. 'Will no one rid me of this pestilential beast? Do you propose taking him back to the *Cheeryble*?' he asked more calmly.

'No, sir. I've been ordered to escort him on board the *Alcibiades*.'

'Is there any one here to back up this statement? I mean, from the *Alcibiades*? What assurance have I they'll take him at all, and that this tomfoolery will not be repeated?'

'I'm from the *Alcibiades*, sir,' responded a petty-officer, stepping up smartly. 'We'll take

him all right, sir, and I 'll see he 's kept under restraint until we sail, which will be to-night, sir.'

'What 's your name?'

'Grease, sir.'

'Well, be careful he doesn't slip through your hands, with a name like that,' the commander cautioned, going on to his defaulters.

IX.

Nicholas III. arrived on board the *Alcibiades*, therefore, with a lurid past, and, as Petty-Officer Grease put it, the loss of at least one good-conduct badge.

The bear became at once uproariously popular, and the news of his sudden illness, coming so soon after, filled the mess with genuine sorrow. This became acute when the bald-headed chief-yeoman of signals, that harbinger of good and bad tidings, came up to Staff-Surgeon O'Brien, just as the latter officer was finishing his breakfast, and said, 'Beg pardon, sir, but would you mind seeing Nicholas III.? He 's getting worse, sir.'

O'Brien went along with him to the starboard battery, where Nicholas III. was lying on his back near one of the six-inch guns, surrounded by a number of commiserating marines.

'Give Nicholas III. hair,' Corporal Bassett called out.

'He 's got too much as it is, for this hot weather,' the marine barber grinned.

'Gangway!' the sergeant of marines ordered, as the staff-surgeon appeared on the scene.

O'Brien made a careful examination of the bear, who was in a very inflated condition, and apparently suffering great pain.

'Nothing seems to ease him except drinking water, sir,' the sergeant of marines remarked. 'If he goes on like he has been, he 'll drink our fresh-water tanks dry.'

The staff-surgeon sent for'ard for the best and strongest pill the navy produces. Alas! Nicholas III. was beyond all medical treatment, and within half-an-hour the poor fellow had made a painful exit from this vale of tears.

Luckily there was a taxidermist on board, who had joined up 'for hostilities only,' and he undertook to stuff and mount the bear, so that he might be placed on a pedestal in the captain's lobby, as an eloquent reminder of the mess's appreciation of his brief sojourn on board.

X.

Staff-Surgeon O'Brien assisted the process by performing a post-mortem, which proved illuminating to everybody, including Ship's-Corporal Grubbins, who had come for'ard to the sick-bay on an errand connected with the missing sponges.

Sick-Berth Attendant Pickles walked in his sleep, and on the occasion of his last bout of somnambulism he had visited certain officers' cabins, and abstracted medicine-bottles therefrom, stowing these commodities away in one of the dispensary lockers. The sleuth-like Grubbins had, therefore, come hither in search of his quarry.

The result of the staff-surgeon's post-mortem examination, however, disabused the ship's-corporal of his plausible theory, and completely exonerated the somnambulistic Pickles. The bear had died of pressure on the heart, caused by a greatly distended stomach.

As O'Brien said, 'Nicholas III. might have got away with the others, but the first-lieutenant's was too much for him.'

This referred, of course, to the spongy state of the organ in question.

'I think that 's mine,' the A.P. said, pointing to one which was curled up in a *cul de sac;* 'it always had a funny colour.'

'You 'll have a funny colour, and a thick ear in the bargain, my lad, if you make light of my scientific investigations,' the staff-surgeon warned him, handing over the remains of Nicholas III. to the taxidermist.

The mess was betwixt tears and laughter, when a cipher message came through from the *Cheeryble:* 'Trust Nicholas III. has not misbehaved himself. Forgot to tell you he is passionately fond of sponges, which, like a true sportsman, he seeks in their natural habitat, officers' cabins. So beware. *Au revoir.*'

THE SOLDIER PIONEERS OF SINAI.

By Herbert T. Grant.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with those great events in France which see the Allied armies at last coming into their own, the operations of the British Expeditionary Forces farther afield have again sprung into the limelight. Possibly the presence of a British force in southern Palestine came as a surprise to many people. What is it doing there, and whence did it come? The first question will in due time answer itself, but on the latter hangs a tale of soldier pioneering successfully completed, but so far unsung.

It is a tale of very human men who for a weary year faced without a break the rigours and privations of a climate and a soil where only the lowest forms of animal and vegetable life survive; a tale of the victory of science and civilised perseverance over the waste which swallowed up the Children of Israel for forty historic years, and where nomad peoples wander

still as primitively and more aimlessly than did those seekers after a 'Promised Land;' a long tale, a plain tale, a tale of drudgery and weariness of the flesh, unguessed at and unpraised, rather than the blazoned deeds of violent war.

Turkey's entry into the war and the German machinations to rouse our Moslem dependencies to a 'Holy War' were a cause of the gravest apprehension in those latter days of 1914 when the tiny British forces in the field were fighting for the very existence of our Empire; and nowhere was the danger greater than in Egypt, where the seizure of that greatest of all our imperial communications, the Suez Canal, would have been an incalculable menace to the assembly of our power, both military and economic. Turkey, with undisputed possession of Egypt as the prize to lure her on, greedily assented to act as Germany's cat's-paw in the undertaking. Most of us can remember how, the arduous crossing of Sinai accomplished, the Turkish expedition, bearing all the paraphernalia necessary to drive the British out of Egypt, actually launched its pontoons upon the coveted waters of the Canal, only to be driven back, broken and disordered, by English Territorials and our Antipodean contingents. It was a far-seeing policy, this making of the burying-places of the Pharaohs the training-ground for the Australian and New Zealand troops. So far, Egypt had been saved; and the attempt to force the Dardanelles, although a failure in itself, served, in addition to other military reasons, as a means of protecting Egypt from further invasion. Thus we kept the Turks with their hands full defending their own territory until the final evacuation of Gallipoli in January 1916. And now we come to the phase when Egypt once more lay open to invasion.

The Suez defences at that time consisted of a rough system of trenches on the *western* side of the Canal. It is perfectly obvious to any one, no matter how little versed in military affairs, that, had the Turks succeeded in establishing themselves in force within striking distance of the Canal, though we might have prevented them from setting foot in habitable Egypt, any position from which their guns could have commanded the Canal would have rendered it, as a practical waterway, to all intents and purposes *non est*. The new G.O.C. had at his disposal only the battered remnants of a few of the divisions which had fought on Gallipoli, men so weary and overwrought with the privations of that short but heroic campaign that only the imminence of danger could justify the curtailing of their much-needed rest. The flooding of the country east of the Canal limited the possible points of attack, but at every vulnerable section the troops were set to building an adequate system of defences. At various points advanced posts had been established, and light railways and metalled roads were quickly run out over the desert from Kantara and Ismailia, on the Canal, towards these posts. These operations were in direct relation to the establishment of a permanent first line of resistance at the Romani Oasis, twenty-five miles north-east of Kantara, and, to ensure the soundness of our communications on the adoption of this new position, a route for a standard-gauge railway was surveyed and construction work commenced. Behind the scenes, too, all was activity. Recruiting was going on apace for those new and invaluable branches of the service, the Camel Transport Corps and the Egyptian Labour Corps, both drawn from native sources, with British and Colonial officers and N.C.O.'s in charge. At the same time that fine fighting force the Imperial Camel Corps came into being, formed, as its name implies, from volunteers from British, Australian, and New Zealand regiments. By April the Kantara defences had been completed; so, when the Turks made their brilliant but futile raid upon our advanced infantry post at Dueidar, twelve miles away, and the covering yeomanry screen at Romani and Katia, on Easter Sunday, part of the Kantara garrison was early transported to the rail-head, then in the vicinity of the old Roman fort of Pelusium, twenty miles out in the desert. A strong force of mounted Anzacs was also despatched to this area to relieve the yeomanry; and from that time onwards, throughout the tedious mastering of Sinai, these superb horsemen and dashing fighters were ever scouring the country in advance of our operations, tirelessly guarding the main body against surprise, and in frequent contact with the enemy.

Hard put to it though our troops had been while encamped by the Canal, they were now to experience real hardships. The country in which they found themselves was a tumbled waste of yellow sand, bare and forbidding. The hot season was well under way, and, engaged as they were holding a hastily assumed line in case of further Turkish activity, they had to lie out shelterless, exposed to the pitiless sun by day, and drenched at night by heavy dews. But worse was yet to follow. The Turks had retired upon their bases before our mounted troops, leaving the way open to the execution of our plans to make the Canal impregnable. Pushing on ahead of the railway, the infantry established themselves on a front of several miles, along the line from Mahamdiya on the coast, south through the Romani Oasis to Katib Gannet. Distant though this new line was from our bases on the Canal, its natural advantages rendered it peculiarly suitable for our purpose. Before Mahamdiya lies the western limit of that vast inundation, Bardawil Lagoon, which extends roughly in the form of a razor-blade to within a few miles of El Arish, outpost of resuming civilisation, eighty miles ahead. Rapidly drying though this area was under the scorching summer sun, when, in

time, it would yield a rock-like bed over which even the heaviest guns might pass, its barrenness and salt-encrusted surface would make of any advancing force such a target as could not live in the face of artillery and machine-gun fire. Inland from Mahamdiya a ridge extends, culminating in the lofty sand-peak known as Katib Gannet; and outwards to the east and south of this lies an immense tract of scrubby plain, broken here and there by a few clumps of palm-trees, to where the far-flung strip of the Katia Woods fills the horizon. More important still, our new positions commanded the point where any hostile force, following the watered and only practicable route from Syria, would break off to attack any point on that half of the Canal between Port Said and Ismailia, thus enabling us to concentrate our strength to the best advantage.

Wherever our men had to entrench, it was in soft, heavy sand. Under these circumstances the shovel proved mightier than the pick; but let those who might imagine that trench-construction was an easy matter dispel that idea from their minds. Every foot of bay and traverse of fire-trench and communication-trench had to be revetted—that is, built up with sand-bags from top to bottom—a tedious process, and one requiring an almost incredible width to be shovelled clear to permit of the even laying of the sand-bags to form a trench three or four feet wide. The work on the new line was urgent, and daily every available man spent five or six hours in the fierce summer heat, by this time at its height. No hotter summer had been experienced in Egypt for twenty years. The thermometer rose to 125° in the shade in this abomination of desolation where shade was not, and the *khamsin*, that blasting wind which blows annually from the desert fastnesses of the south, filled it with an added misery. One can gain some idea of the nature of the *khamsin* when one pictures our men in that oppressive heat, huddled in an ordinary bell-tent, with curtains down, sheltering from its withering breath. Water-bottles were given the place of honour around the tent-pole, and then those who were lucky enough to be first on the spot crowded in, in as small compass as they could, till they were packed like herrings in a barrel, by no means enjoying the acme of comfort, but better off than those who found no entrance and had to shift for themselves outside. A shortage of water was the crowning infliction which made life almost unbearable. The precious liquid had to be brought by rail from Kantara to the water-tanks at the rail-head, and transferred from them to *fanatis* (galvanised copper tanks holding from ten to twelve gallons), and slung one on each side of the camels which carried it to the various units. The railway was working at full pressure bringing up engineering material, rations, guns, ammunition, horses, tents, and the thousand and one things necessary for an army in the field; and even with the water-supply at a minimum, the troops had to give of their scanty allowance to establish a reserve in case of breakdown, so that a quart, and sometimes only a pint, per day per head was all they had to drink. Poor water at the best, by the time the sun had worked its will upon the unprotected *fanatis* it was hot enough to make shaving, under happier circumstances, a luxury. It served, indeed, to keep body and soul together, but it gave scant relief to parched tongues and craving stomachs.

Fortunate were those the scene of whose labours in these trying days was Mahamdiya. The sea was a veritable godsend, and the daily bathe became a solemn rite which even the delighted revellings of the Tommies as they dived and splashed in care-free abandonment failed to rob of its portentousness. Full advantage was taken of such a healthful recreation-ground by shifting the troops about as much as possible, so that all might reap the benefit of it in turn.

The regulation dress consisted of sun-helmet, drill-tunic, and shorts; but all parades were done in shirt-sleeves. The wearing of the sun-helmet from dawn to dusk was strictly enforced, a most necessary precaution, for in the first hours of sunshine the heat was as intense as at noon. Owing to this, cases of sunstroke were rare; but, in spite of the suitability of their costume for the climate, a large number of our men were prostrated by the heat. The end of June saw the Romani positions fully consolidated, and preparations were forthwith made to give the troops a well-deserved rest. A splendid rest-camp was established at Sidi Bisher outside Alexandria, to which several hundred men were despatched at a time for a full week's holiday, free of all parades. Those who got there made the most of their freedom, but all were not fortunate enough to enjoy this period of change and recreation. Abdul was bestirring himself again, and advancing upon our outposts in force, and many a disappointed Tommy cursed him for the loss of that precious promised holiday, in a way he had never thought of doing in the grim reality of Gallipoli, as he climbed upon the train at Kantara to return, with eyes and senses unrefreshed, to the drab scenes of those weeks of heavy toil. On the 4th August the Turk struck his blow at Romani, only to be met with a reception which cost him half his force in killed and prisoners. Estimates of the Turkish strength on this occasion range from 14,000 to 18,000 men. The Turk is no fool when it comes to war, and it is extremely doubtful if this were intended as a second determined attempt to take the Canal. Possibly our strength was underrated, but one can hardly conceive of any responsible commander expecting to accomplish such an end with so small an expedition. More likely it was nothing more than a German

exploitation of her subservient Ally to influence us in keeping our Egyptian Expeditionary Force from furnishing reinforcements for the Somme. Support is given to this theory in the light of the report that the German officer who led the attacking force was court-martialled for the fiasco on his return to Constantinople.

Various irresponsible writers in the press had up till now been earning a tainted livelihood by ignorant criticism of the waste (*sic*) of men on so unimportant a front as Sinai. The battle of Romani was as much a lesson in restraint to them as an eye-opener to the Turks that their dream of ever winning back Egypt had vanished like a castle in the air. The policy of silence, which had been pursued in respect of our progress in Sinai, had brought no reward to our men except an inward satisfaction in work well done, and to the higher command an invaluable base when the time should be ripe for further operations. The day was now approaching when we would be able to attempt the advance which would reclaim all that part of Egypt, valueless save from military and political standpoints, which the Turks had made a marauding-ground since the commencement of hostilities, and carry the war into Turkish territory.

How futile words are to describe the peculiar attributes of Sinai! All that immensity of space between the vivid blue of heaven and the glaring sandy floor beneath is, in the almost never undimmed sunshine, a maddening, quivering film of light, which makes the dusty, stringy scrub and the straggling, shadeless palm-tree a mockery to the aching eye. Even the unladen back is bent as the feet sink gropingly for the stable foundation which they never reach; and on the march the head falls forward, and the soldier stumbles on beneath his load, blind to even the ceaseless panorama of death-like landscape in the hypnotism of the 'river of feet' which flows hour by hour before him. Only an actual residence in Sinai under campaign conditions can give one any idea of the difficulties with which we had to contend. In the cooler weather conditions would be more bearable, but nothing yet discovered could render these unfathomable sands any easier to march over.

The regulation full marching order of the British Army was an impossibility, so the kit was wisely reduced to a haversack on back in place of pack, containing the soldier's small kit, with the tunic strapped on underneath. All other personal necessities, greatcoats, blankets, &c. were carried on camels in rear of the desert column. Later the pack was readopted, as the haversack was found not sufficiently capacious to receive the various little odds and ends which every soldier carries about with him. At the same time (October) a general order was issued laying down the ordinary service dress of serge tunic and long trousers as the winter wear. Perhaps the wail which went up to heaven reached the ears of the G.O.C. on his throne in this lesser and more doubtful kingdom where he held undisputed sway. At any rate the Tommy was allowed to retain his beloved drill shorts, and the serge tunic found a resting-place in the daytime in his pack. Wide rims fitted to the wheels of guns and limbers made them less liable to sink in the sand, but very large teams of horses or mules were necessary to pull them even with this expedient.

Not a single well lay on our route from Kantara to Romani. From now onwards the ancient caravan-trail, with its occasional wells, marked the scene of our activities; but the water they yielded, even the best of it, would wreck the constitution of the average British soldier. Therefore, though they proved invaluable for watering our horses and camels, they could not be reckoned as suitable for human use except in cases of emergency, and for this contingency each man carried a small bottle of steriliser. Even the horses did not always find the well-water palatable, and in more than one instance they would not touch it unless they were excessively thirsty. Curiously enough, this brackish water is not always salt in taste. It is, indeed, frequently sweet and cloying, but, while refreshingly cool and sparkling, revolting to the stomach. Our somewhat barbarous enemy was less difficult to please. Throughout all his operations in Sinai he made constant use of the wells; but then he could advance to action in bare feet, by order, as he did at Romani, across those blazing sands—a performance which would have landed half our men in hospital—so he must be looked upon as a different animal entirely. A pipe-line, however, had been laid by this time from Kantara to Romani to provide drinking-water, and this was extended and pumping-plants erected at various points as we progressed, so that hereafter there was never any lack of water.

Our men were all eagerness to get started. They had had a fair experience of the desert, and had not found it altogether to their liking, but that spirit of enterprise which has made the British flag known in every corner of the earth was stirring in them, and would not be denied. A waste of awful miles lay between them and their goal, but that name sacred to the British Tommy, which had carried him through more than two years of war, and saw him fighting towards it still, was replaced by one older far than his religion, and more sacred yet! The Holy Land! What inspiration, what romance, did it not hold for him? There was indeed 'a long way to go,' and for all he knew there might be many a hard-fought action ere a footing was won there. He had yet to learn, too, that romance is apt to die an early death in the face of realisation, so he had no thought of evil on the morrow.

It was a magnificent sight to see the troops as they marched out from Romani in the bright

sunshine of an October morning, spread out over many miles of country in artillery formation, with yeomanry screens in front and on flank, and the guns bringing up the rear of the fighting forces. Many of the men, since the day when they sailed for Egypt in the early days of the war, or direct to the ill-fated shores of Gallipoli, had never spent a single night under a roof. From now on they had not even a tent to shelter them, as our movements had to be hidden as much as possible from aerial attack and reconnaissance. Makeshift bivouacs consisting of blankets hung on poles or palm-sticks formed their only shelter. The woods of Katia, where they spent the first night, provided the last patch of green which would meet the eye for many a day to come. Beyond Bir-el-Abd, some fifteen miles ahead, there is an extensive palm-grove, but this lay some distance south of the route we followed. The palm is rarely seen between this point and El Arish, and the much-prized oasis is only a few holes in the ground in an uninviting region of sand and scrub.

The salty solitude of Bardawil, too, now lay between them and the sea, and every step would take them farther away from it until they swung north again on the last stage of their journey to El Arish, and its wadi which marks the eastern boundary of Sinai. Next day they marched away through the thinning trees, crushing beneath their feet the dates which lay rotting in untold millions for want of their usual Bedouin harvesters. It was hard for those who had seen the dates gathering on the palms, from their first appearance as tiny green pellets upon a slender stalk, gaining bulk as the months rolled by, green giving place to red, and red to yellow, and who had visioned many a tasty addition to their unpretentious rations when a hue of golden brown or black should proclaim them at maturity, to have them tabooed by the medical authorities when the prize lay within their grasp. As it was, many a surreptitious handful found its way to the mouth of the irrepressible Tommy. Never before had he tasted the fruit fresh pulled, and he pronounced it good. Try to imagine the wonderful organisation and indomitable spirit which conquered little by little a desert as unchanged as at the dawn of history: huge gangs of native labourers of the Egyptian Labour Corps at work on fill and cutting for the railroad grade on which the Engineers were laying the steel as fast as it rose clear defined from the surrounding dunes and dips; others joining up the water-pipes which would rob the arid sands of half their terrors for the camel caravan of future years; convoys of the Camel Transport Corps, winding here and there by devious and trackless routes, bearing water, rations, and supplies to the infantry engaged in consolidating each fresh advance, and past the infantry to where, far ahead, the yeomanry and Anzacs were driving back the Turkish outposts.

It would be tedious and unnecessary to go into detail regarding the marches from point to point. One stage was like another, a deadening, almost progressless, plodding from dawn till dusk; a throwing out of outposts of exhausted men, who sometimes spent half the night digging themselves in, only to leave their hardly excavated trenches in the morning to resume their march. As a rule the route lay over a tumbled assortment of ridges and basin-like depressions. The topping of one ridge would give perhaps a momentary glimpse of some more outstanding ridge ahead, and, spurred on by the hope that at the foot of this would be their bivouacking-ground for the night, down, down they would go in a stumbling slide, with the sand rising half-way to their knees, to a world confined to the sand-walls which encircled them; a bitter struggle up the farther side—the ridge they had expended a last effort to attain gained at last; and then—alas for their vain hopes!—on again through a like succession of miles.

Sometimes the way lay along the actual caravan route. The path of the caravan route is naturally ruled by the position of the wells, but between these every advantage is taken in the way of the easiest grades and a natural feature of the country—the *sabkhet*. The *sabkhet* is a species of salty swamp, which when dried up furnishes a solid and welcome foothold after the surrounding sands.

It is a noteworthy fact that the health of the troops, in spite of the hardships, was excellent. A writer in the early days of the war remarked that the path of the German troops was marked by empty bottles, and that of our own men by bully-beef tins. Cholera and para-typhoid inoculations would be severely tested under an Eastern sun by these conditions, but they exist not, wherever circumstances permit, under the eagle eye of an A.D.M.S. and his red-crossed staff.

Now the men from Lancashire went on ahead, again 'the Jocks,' and each in turn built and held defence lines, and sent out listening-posts at night, and patrols which groped about in scrub and valley in the chill morning mists for any signs of Abdul, whenever a lengthy halt was called. Parties of Turks and Bedouin families, with their camels and flocks, now and again slipped through the cavalry cordon to the infantry posts. It was pitiful to see the Bedouins, with their toddling youngsters, herding their few miserable sheep and goats through sun and dust, crying out, '*Moya / moya /*' ('water') when they saw our men. Those who learned to know Sinai like a book by harsh experience can vouch that it requires no additions or subtractions of the chronicler to emphasise its hardships, and it is but right to state that in that portion which concerns this story the nomads whose home it is would no doubt be surprised to read of the only land they know as lacking in that first necessity of man—water. Our cavalry, however, were in

possession of all the wells, and it was doubtless in an endeavour to avoid falling into their hands that the Bedouins who penetrated our lines were reduced to such dire straits before they were discovered and their distress relieved. Nevertheless, it is difficult to reconcile the thirst-producing effect of dates, which form their staple diet, with conditions which demand the carrying of a large water-supply whenever the Bedouins migrate. Many weeks passed sometimes without a move, for we were advancing with the steel; and surveying and constructing a railway practically mile by mile was no enviable problem for the Engineers to grapple with. During these periods the troops in reserve were busy preparing for the day when at last the Turks would make a stand. Field-days were the regular order of things, and ranges were laid out at various places for musketry practice. Save for almost daily visits from the ubiquitous *Taube* (every make of hostile aeroplane in these parts, by the way, is a *Taube*, or, rather, *Tawb*, to our men) with the intent to bomb the dumps, all was peaceful enough.

One landmark, and one only, broke the monotony of the dreary landscape. Away to the south-east the bulk of the Maghara Hills loomed above the horizon. The Blue Mountains our men called them, and the passing of them meant as much to the British soldier as these same 'blue hills of Judea' must have meant to the wandering children of Israel so many thousand years before. For the rest, each halting-place provided nothing of interest, nothing eventful; just so many milestones passed on the laboured way to happier campaigning-grounds ahead. The forging of each fresh link meant no further severance from pleasant pastures. Hope lay ahead, and it were better to meet a soldier's death and sleep eternally amid those wind-swept wilds than ever to retrace their steps across the nightmarish miles which they had come. Pelusium, Romani, El Rabah, Aby-el-Affein, El Abd, Gannadil, Tilub, Mazaar, Madaan, Bittia—these are but some of the names which will conjure up memories in after years for the men who tramped across Sinai. Already stone station buildings are springing up at some of them; of others, temporary dumps and reservoirs, the day is done, and no stone is left to mark the place to the globe-trotter of the future.

The culmination of the whole undertaking was the occupation of El Arish. It was expected that the Turks would make a stand there, and our men accordingly pushed on ahead of the railway to give them battle. A march of twenty-four miles by stages from Mazaar, over as terrible a piece of country as they had yet encountered, brought them there at noon on the 23rd of December. On the way word was passed back by the Anzac reconnaissance patrols that the Turks had evacuated their positions, and our infantry passed the eastmost town of Egypt unopposed to the long-craved relief of sea and palm-grove. Thirty miles still lay between them and the frontier post of Raffa, but their further progress was through a country in which the desert wages a losing war against hard ground and cultivation. For our troops the crossing of the Wadi-el-Arish meant a signal victory over nature in one of her most forbidding aspects, and for the general and his staff a triumph of careful preparation and faultless execution. Various expedients had been tried to make things easier for the infantry on the march, such as canvas boots and sandals of wire-netting on the principle of a snow-shoe; but none of these had been found of much advantage.

Fresh troops have made the Sinai crossing, but only those who won through it in its primitive state are qualified to share the honour of the undertaking. In advance of the rail-head, as our army was at El Arish for some little time, they were dependent solely upon the wells for water. These were the best wells as yet encountered; but then El Arish is a town boasting a considerable community more or less civilised, and the water was found quite drinkable. New wells dug by our men on the shore within a few feet of high-water mark, it is interesting to note, supplied water which was constantly used throughout our stay at El Arish. It was transferred from the wells to tanks and chlorinated before issue. Varying from day to day in salinity, it was nevertheless always quite wholesome.

Other armies have made the passage of Sinai. The hosts of forgotten ages have poured across it from Egypt into Syria, and from Syria into Egypt. The Romans, Napoleon, and the Turks in the present war have all made the arduous journey, with what privations we shall never know; but none of them have left their stamp upon it. Of the ancient occupations no vestige remains. The crumbling ruins of a few Roman forts furnish nothing of value except to the antiquarian in the shape of broken pottery and coins; the traces of Napoleon's 'Old Guard' have vanished as completely as their footmarks have been swallowed up in the ever-changing sands; a telegraph-line and a few rude windlasses on the wells are the only improvements that two years of Turkish domination accomplished. It remained for the unassuming, unimaginative Tommy to render a lasting service to mankind by paving the way for those twin lines of steel which now make the fearsome desert route from Africa to Asia as easy of accomplishment as any hundred-mile journey in his settled homeland.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

NEW BRITISH SOURCE OF THE MINERAL NEEDED FOR MAKING GAS-MANTLES.

THORIUM is a most important mineral product in that its oxide is needed for the manufacture of gas-mantles. It is interesting to note, therefore, that beach deposits of monazite sand containing this metallic element have been discovered in Ceylon. Tests made upon samples of the sand by the Imperial Institute have given such promising results that the necessary machinery has been ordered by the Government of Ceylon, which intends to work the deposits. The mineral survey by means of which monazite sand was discovered has shown that the island also contains several other minerals from which thorium can be extracted.

RED CROSS AMBULANCE-LAUNCHES ON THE TIGRIS.

As the fighting in Mesopotamia has proceeded along the banks of the Tigris, this river has inevitably formed the chief means of communication between the front and the sea. Water transport of the sick and wounded affords marked advantages over conveyance by road or rail, for journeys by water involve none of the jolting or vibration which often cause such pain to seriously wounded men. A special type of ambulance-launch has been devised for the British Red Cross Society, which has over forty launches in service in this part of the world. In the kind of launch referred to a cabin 'right forward' houses the engine, and contains sleeping accommodation for the two men who form the crew. The remainder of the boat, which is open save for a double awning and side-curtains, is available for stretchers and 'sitting cases.' Thirty-six 'sitting cases' can be comfortably accommodated, or eight stretchers and sixteen 'sitting cases.' An interesting account of the operations carried out by these launches recently appeared in *The Times of India Illustrated Weekly*, from which it seems that the first of them were put into service towards the end of 1915, the others having been sent out at intervals since. Their main duties are to act as feeders to river and sea-going hospital-ships, to transport sick and wounded to hospitals along the river-banks, and to evacuate the wounded from the advanced dressing-stations to the field ambulances.

A MACHINE-GUN WHICH FIRES CONTINUOUSLY.

The war has demonstrated the value of the machine-gun in no uncertain manner; consequently great efforts have been made to improve this weapon, and many new types have been put into service by the belligerents. Hitherto ammunition belts or drums holding about two hundred and fifty cartridges have had to be put on by hand at intervals to take the place of those used up. A new American machine-gun, according to *Popular Mechanics*, is capable of firing continuously, ammunition being carried in an endless belt which is automatically filled from a container holding any number of cartridges up to ten thousand. The barrel of the gun is cooled by a jacket in which water is circulated, the hot water leaving the outlet being pumped into a spiral radiator through which air is blown by a fan, thus cooling the water ready for use again. Naturally a machine-gun of this type is more cumbersome than the ordinary pattern. On the other hand, it has certain important advantages besides the ability to fire continuously. For instance, in trench warfare the gun can be mounted on a special electric carriage and made to proceed across 'No Man's Land,' while the operator remains in the trench and controls both the movement and the firing through electric cables. Another method of using the gun is to mount it on a tripod from which the controlling cables lead to a protected position several hundred feet to the rear, where the gunner controls the direction and speed of the firing. This gun should also be of great value when mounted in aeroplanes, motor-boats, armoured cars, or motor-bicycles, where its mechanism can be driven by the motor.

VALUE OF REINFORCED CONCRETE AS A PROTECTION AGAINST SHELLS AND BOMBS.

The resistance to high explosives of concrete reinforced with steel bars is discussed in an interesting article recently published in *The Times Engineering Supplement*. From it we gather that structures built of this material have 'stood up' to shell-fire better than those made of steel. Reinforced concrete was first exposed to the fire of heavy guns at Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese war, where it proved very successful in resisting the impact of high-explosive shells. Moreover, experiments made by the Italians on steel and reinforced concrete armour-plates of equal weight are stated to have resulted in favour of the latter. The Germans were the first of the belligerents to use reinforced concrete for trenches, gun-emplacements, block-houses, and other protective structures. Especially successful have been the block-houses, shells simply ricochetting off the cupolas which formed the tops, while steel cupolas have been blown to pieces by similar punishment. An instance is given of a German block-house with eight observation-chambers and a tower which withstood a bombardment that destroyed all the surrounding fortifications. Ordinary buildings, also, constructed of reinforced concrete, and situated in the battle area, have often stood up against heavy bombardments which have destroyed all brick and steel structures. Further evidence of

the resistance of reinforced concrete to high explosives is to be found in the difficulty of destroying bridges built of this material, masonry and steel bridges being far more easily demolished.

NEW METHOD FOR UTILISING HOUSE REFUSE.

Alcohol can be produced from practically all vegetable matter, a fact which indicates the possibility of manufacturing spirits from house garbage. With this end in view a process has been patented in the United States by means of which both grease and alcohol are obtained from house refuse. The garbage is first treated with sulphuric acid and steam, which transforms the starch into dextrose, a form of grape-sugar. This process is followed by the separation of the grease, and the neutralisation of the acid to allow of fermentation, which is carried out by adding yeast. Alcohol is thus produced from the dextrose, and recovered by distillation in the ordinary way. A ton of garbage is said to produce about four and a half gallons of alcohol at a cost of a trifle over seven shillings.

NEW 'HIGH-SPEED' STEEL FOR METAL-WORKING TOOLS.

One might well be excused for supposing that every possible kind of steel for tools had already been tried, and either adopted or rejected as valueless. Such, however, is not the case, and a new tool-steel for which valuable qualities are claimed has been recently placed on the market. Of late years metal-working tools have been mostly made of 'high-speed' steel, so named from the fact that drilling, turning, and other operations can be performed with it at far higher speeds than were possible with the old-fashioned tool-steels. In fact, the tools heat up to a dull red and still remain hard and tough, whereas the steels previously used became soft at far lower temperatures, and were more or less brittle at all times. The main advantages of the new steel, which will also cut at high speeds, when compared with the original high-speed alloy, are that it hardens at a lower temperature with less liability to deformation and cracks, and that castings made from it possess all the good qualities to be found in rolled bars. Cobaltcrom is the name of this new brand of tool-steel.

PROJECTED RAILWAY ACROSS THE ANDES IN PERU.

Among the few parts of the world which have not yet been opened up to trade by railways or other means of communication are certain portions of South America, where fertile districts rich in minerals and timber have scarcely been 'scratched.' One such area will shortly be connected with the Pacific seaboard by a railway four hundred miles in length which is to link up the Peruvian portion of the river Amazon with the port of Paita, on the Pacific coast, thus providing rail and water communication right across the continent. This development is expected to shorten by a month the journey between the rubber district of western Brazil and the ports of North America. The new railway will have to cross the Andes at an elevation of sixteen thousand feet, so that the difficulties of construction are likely to be considerable. According to the plans, work should already have begun. It is estimated that the line will take three years to complete.

NEW UNSINKABLE SELF-RIGHTING LIFEBOAT.

The risks caused by German mines and submarines to those who make sea-voyages have given an immense impetus to the invention of all kinds of apparatus for saving life at sea. As regards lifeboats, some might suppose that every practicable form had long since been tried; but this is by no means the case, a new design having been recently tested before the Steamboat Inspection Service Committee in the United States. The hull of this craft is built of galvanised steel, and it is entirely closed in except for apertures provided with water-tight covers through which the crew enter. In fine weather these apertures are kept open, but should a storm come on they can be closed, when no water can enter, although special apparatus admits fresh air. An iron keel weighing one thousand pounds causes the boat to right herself at once should she be capsized, and she can be rowed by six oars projecting through water-tight ball-and-socket fittings in the sides. A mast and sail are provided for sailing. This boat is authorised to carry twenty-five persons, and weighs, complete, two thousand six hundred pounds.

MOTOR ATTACHMENT FOR HARVESTING AND THRESHING.

Any contrivance that will reduce the amount of labour needed for harvesting corn will be welcomed in all belligerent countries, where farmers are experiencing great difficulty in finding enough helpers for reaping and threshing their crops. An American invention whereby harvesting and threshing can be carried out by apparatus attached to an ordinary motor-car should be of some value in this connection. No attempt is made to gather the straw, the cutting arrangement in front of the car being adjusted at such a height as to cut off the ears of corn only, which are carried by a conveyer to a threshing-tackle at the back of the car. Here the wheat is separated from the husks, and the latter are thrown out as the car proceeds, so that only the actual wheat is carried. The apparatus can be quickly installed on almost any make of car, the chief alteration being the replacement of the back-wheels by others suitable for gripping soft ground. Such an equipment would undoubtedly reduce the labour of harvesting and threshing to a minimum, but

the rejection of the straw, which is a valuable by-product, would be considered a serious drawback in this country.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE OIL REGIONS IN ARGENTINA.

Side by side with prophecies that the world's supply of petroleum will be exhausted in the comparatively near future are announcements of new sources of this now indispensable commodity. It is not so long ago (April) that reference was made in these notes to the probability of considerable supplies of petroleum being obtained in this country. Recently, according to an article in the *British and Latin American Trade Gazette*, a great development in the yield from the deposits in Argentina has been projected, the Government having reserved a large area for this purpose. Oil was discovered in the republic nearly ten years ago, and the yield from the partly developed area close to Comodoro Rivadavia amounted to nearly two thousand tons in 1911. Since then development has proceeded rapidly, and the output for 1916, based on the rate of increase up to 1915, is estimated at one hundred thousand tons. A marked feature of the oil is the small petrol content—5 per cent. —when compared with that extracted from oil found in other parts of the world. This, however, is not a serious drawback, in view of the general tendency to adapt all kinds of oil-engines for the use of the heavier petroleum derivatives, some progress having been made even with aeroplane motors, which can use paraffin, or still heavier oils, instead of petrol. Besides the area already referred to, three other petroleum districts are known to exist in Argentina, so that there is every reason to expect a large output of oil when further development has taken place.

GOVERNMENT BILL FOR REGULATING PROSPECTIVE ENGLISH PETROLEUM INDUSTRY.

Our readers will remember a note in our April issue suggesting the possibility of considerable quantities of petroleum being found in England. So important is this supply considered that a Bill has been introduced to give the Government 'the exclusive right of searching and boring for and getting petroleum within the United Kingdom,' the meaning of the word petroleum being defined as 'all petroleum and natural gas and their relative hydrocarbons (excluding coals and bituminous shales) existing in their natural condition in strata.' After the war those desirous of carrying on this industry will be authorised to do so under schemes approved by the Board of Trade, and they will pay royalties to the Government at the rate of ninepence a ton on the oil raised, and a penny for every ten thousand cubic feet of natural gas. The Government in its turn will compensate the landowners and tenants affected. If this measure, known as the 'Petroleum Production Bill,' becomes law next session, as in all probability it will, boring will be commenced at an early date, and the whole matter will be pressed forward as quickly as possible.

NEW POWER SCHEME FOR NIAGARA WHICH WILL NOT AFFECT THE FALLS.

The proposed scheme to harness the whirlpool-rapids at Niagara would have the advantage of yielding a million horse-power without interfering with the amount of water passing over the Falls. This is an important desideratum, as the volume of water now taken from above the Falls for power purposes has already appreciably reduced the amount available as a display, and the consumption of the American and Canadian companies is already limited to sixteen thousand and three hundred and forty-eight thousand four hundred cubic feet a second respectively. The whirlpool-rapids being below the Falls, these limits would not be affected by the proposed scheme, and the fall of one hundred and four feet in the run of seven miles to Lake Ontario should be enough to produce the power anticipated, in view of the immense volume of water available.

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH IN THE COTTON INDUSTRY—A SPLENDID EXAMPLE.

This country has never lacked scientists of the highest possible attainments, but it is undoubtedly the fact that she has lagged far behind some other countries, and notably Germany, in forming that close alliance that should exist between science and industry. Many industrial processes can only be satisfactorily and economically carried on when placed on a scientific basis, and for this purpose a staff of trained scientists and technologists is essential. But this staff must not be so immersed in the routine of insuring regularity of production and in the solution of difficulties which daily present themselves that no time is left for the pursuit of fresh knowledge. Some members of the staff must be free, during at least a part of their time, to conduct research-work, if the most valuable and the most lasting results are to be obtained. Bearing these facts in mind, a wise decision has been arrived at by a leading firm of cotton manufacturers, which has determined to set aside £10,000 a year for the next five years for the carrying out of patient and systematic investigations into the scientific details affecting their own business, and for promoting the education of their younger employees. In embarking on the latter project the firm is anticipating the compulsory scheme of part-time schools which forms a section of the Bill recently introduced into the House of Commons by the Minister of Education, for it proposes to establish a works school in which part-time instruction will be given during working-hours. Pupils showing outstanding ability will be encouraged

to prosecute their studies more thoroughly; and in approved cases opportunity will be afforded for securing whole-time education at a technical college or a university. It is sincerely to be hoped that this attempt to benefit both the business and the workers will be abundantly successful, and that the splendid example thus set will be largely followed in other branches of industry.

THE NUTRITIVE VALUE OF MUSHROOMS.

Because analysis shows that mushrooms contain a relatively large proportion of nitrogenous compounds, it has commonly been assumed that they form a highly nutritious article of diet. *The Journal of the Board of Agriculture*, however, points out that this by no means follows. To be of value as a foodstuff, the nitrogen must be present in the form of protein, the valuable flesh-forming constituent of such foods as lean meat, fish, beans, peas, cheese, &c. Now in mushrooms a considerable part of the nitrogen present is not in the form of protein at all; moreover, of the protein which they do contain only a portion can be digested, and thus become available for the nutrition of the body. As compared with other vegetable food-substances, mushrooms contain no more protein than do cabbages or potatoes, and in total nutritive value they are far inferior to these on account of the much smaller quantity of carbohydrates which they contain. At the same time, they are not entirely without value. They are useful for flavouring purposes, and they afford a pleasant change of diet; but if the body is to be adequately sustained, it is necessary that more nutritious foods should be eaten along with them. From the food point of view, purchased mushrooms are not usually worth the money paid for them; but when they can be gathered or obtained very cheaply, they may serve a useful purpose in giving an agreeable variety to the menu.

A NEW SOURCE OF POTASH FOR FERTILISING PURPOSES.

The lack of potash fertilisers is by no means the least of the difficulties with which the farmer has had to contend since the outbreak of war. During the previous thirty years the whole world had learned to look upon the extensive deposits occurring at Stassfurt in Germany as its one source of supply, and British imports had steadily increased until in 1913 they amounted to 22,000 tons. The sudden cessation of these imports, while inevitable, has been a serious handicap to the farmer in his efforts to increase the nation's supply of food. Attempts have been made to remedy the deficiency of potash by the use of seaweed, the burning of hedge-trimmings, and in other ways, but these expedients are by no means sufficient for the needs of the situation. Fortunately, however, as is pointed out by Mr Harold T. Cranfield, agricultural chemist to the Midland Agricultural College, in a recent number of *The Journal of the Board of Agriculture*, we have in our own land an important source of supply which has hitherto been neglected. The gases driven off from iron blast-furnaces and the dust which accumulates in their flues contain an appreciable percentage of potash, and Mr Cranfield estimates that if this storehouse is properly investigated and controlled, it may in the future satisfy at least half, and possibly three-quarters, of our agricultural needs. The matter has been taken up by the Potash Production branch of the Ministry of Munitions, which is calling for returns as to the rate of production and the stocks of flue-dust which the blast-furnaces have in hand.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

A MANSE GARDEN.

In shade of moss-grown, lichen'd wall,
Bright columbine and foxgloves tall
  Lift pink and purple heads;
The lily of the valley sweet
Twines snowy bells around their feet,
  And o'er them fragrance sheds.

A wealth of tulips, white and red;
Of perfumed thyme, a purple bed
  Where bees hum all the day;
Of clove-pinks sweet, a border white;
While poppies, in the glad sunlight,
  Flaunt scarlet pennons gay.

And in my cherished garden fair,
Her perfumed beauty everywhere,
  Is summer's Queen of Flowers.
Sweet roses, crimson, white, and red,
Smile forth from many a garden bed,
  And ramble o'er my bowers.

Below my garden, all day long,
A streamlet croons its endless song,
  As down the glen it flows;
Upon its banks, so fresh and green,
Are dancing blue-bells, meadow queen,
  Gay broom, and pink wild rose.

A shelt'ring wall, beyond the stream,
Like drowsy giants the mountains dream,
  Their summits in the skies.
My heart's delight, this scene so sweet,
Hills, stream, and garden, cool retreat,
  My earthly Paradise!

B. DUNBAR DEY.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

4*th*. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.

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Chambers's Journal
SEVENTH SERIES

'THEIR HEARTS' DESIRE.'

By ISABEL SMITH, Author of *Vain Threads*, *The Romance of Mutby Workhouse*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

'NOW, Aunt Naarah, my friend Mr Twitty has got your will all ready, and it only needs the signature. If you will just sign here, please;' and Mr Herbert Knowles (Lawyer Knowles, as he was called in the Essex town of Crabtree, where he practised) pointed invitingly to the sheet of thick foolscap which lay on the table of a dingy office in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

He was a man of early middle age, clean-shaven, with small, keen eyes and a sallow complexion. He served on several committees in his own town, and carried round the bag at church on collection Sundays.

'Just here, auntie,' he added persuasively, as his client made no attempt to comply.

Miss Naarah Knowles, a grim, gaunt woman, with her scanty gray hair dragged off her high forehead in such a deliberately unbecoming fashion as to suggest the principle of the Jewish matron's wig, sat bolt-upright on a faded leather chair, the hunted, despairing expression of a captured animal in her prominent eyes. It was a dreadful moment for her, and she felt as if she had been urged to sign her own death-warrant. All her life—that is, after the one brief romance of her youth was ended—money had been her absorbing interest.

Money—how to keep every penny possible, even at the price of half-starving herself; how to increase it by safe yet profitable investment (always under the guidance of her devoted nephew Herbert)—that is what Aunt Naarah lived for; and—now—to realise that she was to will it away—that one day. She was roused from these sombre meditations by the voice of Mr Twitty, who, as his friend was interested in Miss Naarah's will, had drawn it up for her, so that there should be no chance of its ever being judicially set aside.

'Perhaps Miss Knowles would like to read it through again first,' he said in tones as dry as the numerous parchments reposing in dusty bundles on the office shelves. He handed her the document as he spoke, and Auntie Naarah withdrew her gaze from a row of deed-boxes, and took the fatal document.

It was short, as short as legal prolixity could make it, and it bequeathed all her worldly possessions (with the exception of a legacy to her faithful servant, Jean M'Intyre) in equal portions to her nephew, Herbert Knowles, solicitor, and her three nieces, Ellen, Priscilla, and Mary Knowles, spinsters. There it was, inscribed with terrible clearness, the future disposal of her property. Tears of self-pity came to her eyes.

'And now,' said Mr Twitty, 'please sign.'

He replaced the will on the table, and gave Miss Naarah a pen.

Herbert, surreptitiously biting his nails by the fireplace, watched the proceeding anxiously. Suppose even now his aunt should refuse to sign it! The old proverb of 'a horse being brought to the water' came into his mind.

However, Aunt Naarah, who, after so much patient effort and persuasion, had been prevailed upon to make her will, now completed the business by duly signing it. At that moment, Mr Twitty pressing a button, a clerk appeared with such promptitude that he might have been waiting outside the door, and they both added their signatures.

'There it is, Miss Knowles,' said Mr Twitty lightly. 'All in order. Signed by the testatrix as her will in the presence of us present at the same time who in her presence and in the presence of each other have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses,' he added, quoting the final attestation clause.

'That will do,' said Miss Naarah curtly. She felt she had borne enough, and did not want any more of her last will and testament, which was forthwith handed to the clerk to be stowed away in an underground cellar with hundreds of other like documents, some of which had been there for half-a-century, and never been claimed.

'You will feel it a relief to your mind, Aunt Naarah,' said Lawyer Knowles. It certainly was a relief to *his*.

'Not much of a business after all, was it?' chimed in Mr Twitty. 'Wills? Why, since the war began we've hardly done anything else but make 'em. Men going out to the front, you know.'

But Aunt Naarah had no thought beyond her own affairs.

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'I wish, Herbert'—she turned fretfully to her nephew, who had picked up his hat and was anxious to get away—'I wish you had let me leave Jean the hundred pounds I meant to.'

'Oh, my dear aunt, that, I think, would have been excessive for a person in her station of life. Half that amount I consider ample, generous. But'—Herbert looked at his watch—'we are trespassing on Mr Twitty's time.—You have an appointment, I believe, Twitty.—Come, aunt; I will see you to your cab.' Regrets, he felt, were dangerous. The sooner he got her out of the lawyer's office the better. He breathed more freely when they were downstairs and once again in the bustling city street.

'And now I think the best thing we can do will be to go and get some lunch before you go to the station,' he said. 'You are determined to go back to-day?'

'I should hope so,' Miss Naarah snorted. 'I should be sorry to stay the night in this dirty, noisy London. Why, I shouldn't sleep a wink.'

Lawyer Knowles sympathetically agreed. He chatted away on different subjects till they came to a quiet restaurant which he knew.

'Now you must have a good lunch, Auntie Naarah, as my guest,' he said, studying the menu. 'And, waiter, bring a half-bottle of Moet & Chandon,' he added, feeling that this was an occasion which warranted a little extravagance, seeing how comfortably his own and his sisters' future was assured.

Auntie Naarah almost gasped at the order. She was accustomed to nothing but water on her own table. Indeed, when rare visitors came to a meal at her house, they were always asked if they would take water or (if they were not abstainers they hoped the alternative would be something stronger) *hot* water.

However, she sipped the champagne much after the manner in which a chicken drinks, her cheeks and her long nose, with its inward-turning tip—sign of an inquisitive disposition—reddening in the process.

The wine cheered her, loosening her tongue. 'I hear that Edward Strachan has joined Lord Kitchener's Army,' she observed presently.

'Young Strachan?' Lawyer Knowles's keen little eyes hardened. 'A good thing, too,' he added. 'The discipline and regular life will knock the nonsense out of him. That, I think, is the benefit of a big war. It rakes in all the riff-raff, and sweeps them off.'

'You would hardly call Edward Strachan riff-raff, Herbert,' remonstrated his aunt.

'Well, perhaps that is not quite the correct term,' amended Herbert promptly. 'The ne'er-do-wells, spendthrifts, those who think of nothing but pleasure—the army is all right for such.'

'Some of the finest gentlemen that ever breathed have been in the army,' retorted Auntie Naarah. Her nephew began to think the wine would make her quarrelsome. 'I am sure this young man's father, Major Strachan, was one.' Her face glowed a more vivid crimson as she uttered this tribute to the departed soldier.

'Oh, Major Strachan, I dare say,' said Lawyer Knowles quickly. 'But—well, his son, from what I hear, is quite a different type. Gambles—bets on horses—never sticks to his job more than a few months. "Everything by turns, and nothing long,"' he quoted disparagingly.

Auntie Naarah drained her glass with a prolonged sip. Then she shook her head, which might mean anything.

'A young man,' continued her nephew skilfully, 'whom it would be a sin to help, and indeed a folly; something like trying to fill a sieve with water.' He reflected that though his aunt had made her will so satisfactorily, there was nothing to hinder her giving money away in her lifetime.

Aunt Naarah nodded. 'Don't you let me lose my train,' she said irrelevantly.

Lawyer Knowles looked at his watch, and beckoned to the waiter.

'That would not do,' he said briskly. 'And I must be getting back to Crabtree.'

Outside the restaurant he took a taxi; it was a day of extravagances, and in a few minutes they were at Waterloo, and Auntie Naarah was safely in a third-class compartment of a slow train which stopped at Tussocks, the village where she lived.

'Good-bye, Herbert. I am obliged for your kind attention,' she said, giving her nephew a peck on the cheek. 'My love to the girls, and I hope one of them will come and stay with me as soon as possible. I think, under the circumstances,' she concluded meaningly, 'the least they can do is for one of them to be always with me. I'm not getting younger, and I need cheerful companionship. Don't forget.'

Herbert, a little doubtfully, knowing his sisters' averseness to burying themselves at Tussocks, promised to give them the message.

. . . . . .

Two men talking at the corner of Crabtree High Street as Herbert passed on his way home that evening paused a moment in their conversation.

'There goes Lawyer Knowles,' said one to the other. 'Looks rare and pleased with himself, don't he?'

'Done a good stroke of business likely,' was the reply. 'He's a cute one, he is. You'd have to get up very early in the morning to get the better of him.'

His companion laughed, taking his pipe out of his mouth. 'You're right,' he said. 'Ah, well, lawyers are a deep lot at the best!'

'"The devil's own," don't they call 'em?'

'And not far out either, I'll stake my bottom dollar,' said his friend forcibly.

Meanwhile Lawyer Knowles had reached his

own front-door and inserted his latch-key. He lived in one of those ultra-respectable-looking red brick houses which are to be found in all country towns. It stood flush with the pavement, and its long, narrow windows were screened from the vulgar gaze by wire blinds which gave those inside the rooms the advantage of looking out without being seen. The edge of the pavement in front of the house was guarded by short posts supporting iron chains, and by reason of this relic of the past the lawyer's abode was called 'The Chain House.'

In the comfortable low-pitched dining-room the cloth was laid for the evening meal, as it was modestly called, and the three Misses Knowles were seated round the fire with knitting—or, rather, one was knitting, while another held a skein of wool on her hands, and the third wound it. They might have been the three Fates spinning human destinies; and, indeed, they were at that moment concerned with their brother's future. He had lately employed a girl typist in his office. She seemed a harmless, quiet little thing; but, as they agreed, one never knew what designs she might have. It is true, they thought the same of every woman of Herbert's acquaintance, but in this girl's confidential capacity they felt there were particular dangers.

Their brother's key sounded in the door, and, a little guiltily, they all sprang to attention.

'Herbert!' they cried in chorus; and Ellen, the eldest and most practical, pressed the bell, a signal for the servant to dish up. Mary moved Herbert's slippers a little closer to the fire, and Priscilla, who rather adopted kittenish ways, ran to meet her brother.

'Well, Bertie, is it a *fait accompli?*' she cried vivaciously, 'or has Auntie Naarah jibbed at the last minute?'

Herbert shook his head non-committally. With his natural caution, strengthened by his legal training, he seldom, if ever, answered a question directly.

'Let me get my boots off and have something to eat before you put me under cross-examination,' he said, bustling up to the hearth. But his cheerful air reassured them. The sisters exchanged smiling glances.

The maid brought in hot dishes, and the next minute they sat down to one of Ellen's economical hashes, where there was very little meat and a good deal of seasoned hot water, and sippets of toast.

Herbert was allowed to satisfy his hunger. Then Priscilla the irrepressible turned to him eagerly. 'Did you manage all right?' she asked.

Herbert nodded. 'There has been no hitch,' he replied. 'But it was a great business for Auntie Naarah. She had worked herself up so over the affair, she seemed almost to feel as if she were *giving* her money away. However, it's done. I'm glad I managed to persuade her (in this I had Twitty's co-operation) to delete a few uncalled-for legacies. The minister, I found, she had put down for one hundred pounds simply because he was a good man and poor.' He laughed. 'As I pointed out to Auntie Naarah, people ought not to expect to be paid for being good, and most parsons are poor—they get used to it, like the eels.'

'Oh Herbert!' They all laughed in rather a shocked way.

'Well, it's true, isn't it?' went on their brother. 'And then Jean's legacy I halved.'

'I'm glad, Herbert,' cried Mary. 'Jean is a detestable woman. She would like to boss the whole show.'

'Mary! Mary!' reproved Ellen, who, although only the senior of the others by four or five years, had never lost a sort of elder sister authority over them.

'So she is,' retorted the chidden Mary. 'I am sure when we stay at Auntie Naarah's she seems to resent the slightest interference, and, indeed, to treat one as an interloper.'

'Oh, by the way,' said Herbert as soon as the pudding course had been cleared and they were nibbling cheese and biscuits, 'that reminds me—Auntie Naarah is wishful for one of you to go and stay with her now. She put it pretty plainly that, considering her property is left to you all, it is your duty to be with her in turns, in perpetuity.'

There was a dismayed chorus: 'Oh Herbert!'

'Fact,' said Lawyer Knowles comfortably, since *he* had not to go, companionship to a fidgety and querulous old maid being one of the thankless tasks which do not fall to his sex's share; 'and really, you know, girls, I think auntie has reason.'

'Well, it's not my turn,' said Ellen; 'I went last.'

'And I can't go because of the Red Cross concert,' said Priscilla triumphantly. 'There's a heap to do in arranging that, and I have all the accompaniments to play.'

'Then that leaves it to Mary,' said Herbert calmly.

Mary looked decidedly sulky. It was rather a family failing. The Knowles family did not blaze out into sudden fury, which burnt up evil humours in a wholesome purifying flame, leaving the mental atmosphere sweeter afterwards. They said 'catty' things to one another and sulked. Sometimes for days two of the sisters would be 'not on speaking terms.' Rather an awkward situation, seeing they were all shut up in the same house, with nothing particular to occupy them. On these occasions the two at war addressed all their remarks to the neutral sister.

'I can never get on with Auntie Naarah,' said Mary.

'You mustn't be all angles, Mary,' said her brother judicially. 'I grant you, poor auntie is

rather a trial, but there it is; and'—encouragingly—'as the old hymn says—doesn't it?—"Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long"—Auntie Naarah can't last for ever.'

This, however, seeing that at present Auntie Naarah was sound in wind and limb, was but poor consolation.

'Neither shall we,' rejoined Mary moodily.

'It is impossible for *me* to go,' said Ellen, 'for it is my turn to preside at the mothers' meetings; and, besides, there is the autumn house-cleaning.' She looked round the table as if to say, 'Here I have a good case. None of you can manage these things so well as I can.'

'The only way is to put a good face on it,' said Herbert.

'That's all very well,' sulked Mary. Then suddenly her heavy countenance lightened. 'I can't go,' she cried emphatically. 'I've just remembered Stella Cooper is coming to stay next week on her long-promised visit; and if I were not here she wouldn't enjoy it a bit!'

'Thank you, Mary,' returned her sisters.

'Well, it's the truth. Stella is my schoolfellow, isn't she?'

'Then it means none of us can go,' said Ellen tartly.

Herbert looked protestingly. Women, or *ladies*, as he invariably called them, would fight, he knew, but it was tiresome that they should turn awkward at this crisis.

'One of you must!' he said with an air of authority which dismayed them.

And then Mary had a brilliant inspiration. 'What about your typist, Miss Brooke? Could you spare her just for Stella's visit? I'd go then. You could get a temporary one, couldn't you?'

'Oh, really, I don't know.' Herbert objected to the tables being turned on him. 'It would be very awkward,' he said.

But the sisters, remembering the conversation before he came in that evening, exchanged meaning glances. Mary's suggestion seemed to them the very thing. Mary was about to urge it forcibly, but Ellen, who had lived long enough to realise that the awkward male objects to being bossed, and can best be managed by cajolery, interposed hastily.

'I know it is awkward, dear Herbert,' she said soothingly. 'But if you could manage the week or two Stella is here, I know a nice person at the Y.W.C.A. who would be glad to take Miss Brooke's place *pro tem.*, very quick and capable,' she added.

Herbert grunted. 'I will think it over,' he conceded grudgingly.

(*Continued on page 787.*)

'ICH DIEN.'

By G. R. Glasgow.

IT is a pity it is German, but there it is—a royal motto, and not a badge of slavery; very easily translated into plain English—'I serve.'

There are alarmist rumours abroad—almost as persistent as were those of the Phantom Army—as to the position of women after the war, and the attitude towards domestic service that they mean to adopt. A book has been published under the pseudonym, 'An Old Servant,' which has been scornfully repudiated by the merry maids of the present, who resent the implication of service, and announce, in eager letters to the papers, that for the future they will smart under no such stigma, but intend to work for only so many hours a day, and have the evenings to themselves. Like the servers in shops, they will sleep out.

But I do not think that the general public need feel very much alarmed. The lure of domestic life is inbred in many women, and to them the coming and going caused by restricted hours of work would be tiring and distracting. They are of the large majority who, having begun a job, like to see it through, and who would, in their secret hearts, rather reserve to themselves the right to say, 'This is not my work,' than lie under the yoke of any trades union. In every rank of life there are the born home-makers, the natural organisers, the peaceful, and the orderly, who flourish in an atmosphere of homely content, and who are not always on the look-out for grievances. They are of those who take a pride in their work; to whom the family they serve with a beneficent tyranny is always exceptional, and the house of their allegiance a second home. To these the idea of a six-hours day would be ridiculous and repellent. If you had to do your daily task, and then move on and move out, leaving its completion to the afternoon shift, it would, to many minds, add a new terror to life, and make what was meant to be a time of recreation a restless and recurring nightmare! For, to people of the domestic type, satisfactory work, deftly and efficiently done, is an end and aim in itself, and they take as great a pride in the home machinery of which they are the *hub* as a soldier does in the care of his rifle.

I think I am right in saying that every woman would keep a servant if she could afford it, and it is those who best know what *they* would expect from a servant who best understand what a mistress is entitled to ask of *them*, and who also realise that, though there are certain services which cannot be bought with

money, there are a great many which are certainly included in wages, and which it is dishonest not to offer to the last farthing's worth. I am talking of quite ordinary households, small and big. In the case of the smaller, the atmosphere is generally friendly and homely; kindness is offered and accepted; loyalty to 'the family' is very usual; the mistress knows the work, and expects it to be more or less faithfully done; there is order and intelligence in the division of labour, and in its acceptance. There is affection, and very often love, on both sides; and in an earlier generation the servant often lived and served and died in the same family.

No one expects, or really wants, that now. The facilities of travel have given a larger horizon to the young of every class, and they want to see more of the world; whilst the mistress is rather relieved not to have the care and responsibility of aging dependants who have outgrown their activity, just when she herself wants the young and active and cheerful to do for her the work she has hitherto enjoyed doing for herself.

In larger establishments there must always be less scope for individual care and friendship, and more need for rules and regulations; but, on the other hand, there is an extra degree of liberty and comfort, and a wider society—perhaps too much comfort and luxury to foster initiative and independence, except in strong characters that are not inclined to take their colour from their surroundings. The work is too clearly defined to allow of overlapping, and though it is not in the bond, the manner of work and its distribution does very nearly approach the modern idea of a so-many-hours day and so-many-hours off-time. Sometimes one wonders what a housemaid gives a husband for dinner, or how a parlourmaid manages to bring up her children; and one feels that the ideal butler who marries the cook has very much the best of the bargain. One somehow feels that good cooking is a very secure foundation! Servants have always one tremendous advantage in life. If they find a crumpled rose-leaf in their bed, they can give notice next morning, with the full and calming consciousness that they need never be a day out of a situation, but can sweep off in a taxi to their next place, leaving a distracted household behind. Each new place is only a new adventure.

One of the lessons learnt in the war has been learnt by V.A.D. ladies in the pantry and at housework. They have gone out valiantly, unpaid and in many cases overworked, and learnt efficiency in various departments, through grinding toil and under adverse conditions. They know quite thoroughly how much a mere woman should be asked to do in the way of house-work, and under what conditions she works best and most willingly; they realise *why* mops are better than scrubbing-brushes, and have learnt the use and misuse of a cap! But they also know what amount of work they ought to expect from a trained and efficient servant, well paid and well fed, and it will not be so easy to hoodwink them in the future as it has been in the past.

I knew one servant who gave the devoted love and service of more than sixty years to four generations of the same family. She had too much self-respect to call herself by any name that she considered 'new-fangled.' 'I *am* a servant, love,' she said, and that ended the matter. After that no one in the family dared allude to her as a 'maid'! She never neglected or forgot her own family ties and loves and duties; but, as years passed, and they slipped from her one by one, the children and grandchildren, and even the great-grandchildren, of the house took their places naturally in her affections, till she counted them as descendants of her own, and, like the Scotswoman she was, wove them into a clan. Their sorrows and their joys, their triumphs and their defeats, were always her own; and when she was torn between love and truth, as one so often is in this perplexing world, if she could not conscientiously say to one of her children, 'You are very beautiful,' she could at least say, 'You are very lady-like, love.'

She met her children at the gate of birth, and received them with ever-open, ever-welcoming arms. Sometimes, with reluctant but never rebellious love, she stood by another open gate, and watched them out of sight. Death had no terrors for her, and always, willingly, she would have bartered her life for theirs; but it is not given to all of us to die for those we love. After the storms and calms of a chequered life, she sailed at last into a fair haven, and her epitaph covers all her service: 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.'

So, when one comes to think it over, perhaps there is something of humility in the modern maid who refuses to be called a servant. Such service is not *bought;* it is given generously, with open hands, and, as the French say, '*Donner, c'est quelquefois semer.*' It is a faint reflection of One who said once, long ago, 'I am among you as He that serveth.'

No, I do not think we need trouble much about our future service. There will always be a certain number of women, young as well as elderly, who appreciate settled conditions, and home life, and intelligent supervision—who like a port in a storm, and don't care to have their little craft left on the high seas for fortune to bring in; and there will always be just and conscientious mistresses to recognise and appreciate efficiency in service. And I also think there will always be a good number of ordinary human beings who would rather be called an *old servant* than an *old maid!*

THE AGENCY AT SOLLER.

By W. Victor Cook, Author of *Anton of the Alps, A Wilderness Wooing*, &c.

THE shadows cast by the lantern moved to and fro to the swing of the vessel as Donald Bruce sat in the tiny cabin of the Spanish fishing-boat, poring over the message which he and his companion had been ordered to hand in at the telegraph-office at Barcelona.

Donald Bruce was the confidential clerk to the well-known wine firm of M'Ilroy, M'Ilroy, and M'Allister, of London and of various ports of Spain. He was neither in khaki nor in blue, but he was engaged in doing his 'bit' (with the full approval of his employers) in the manner which seemed to him most in accord with his particular opportunities. His proceedings, it should be added, were strictly unofficial. Donald Bruce's companion was the tall and bony old Catalan smuggler who was notorious along the coasts of Spain under the name of El Pajarillo, or 'the Little Bird.' The Little Bird, who had lost a brother in a torpedoed trading-steamer, was pursuing a vendetta in his own particular fashion against the nation which he persisted in regarding as his brother's murderers.

By virtue of an understanding between the two gentlemen mentioned, every time a German submarine was disappointed of a cargo of oil and other necessaries through the foresight and private information of El Pajarillo, a sum of five thousand pesetas transferred itself from the coffers of Messrs M'Ilroy, M'Ilroy, and M'Allister to the possession of the Little Bird. To explain how Donald Bruce and El Pajarillo came to be rocking at midnight on the Mediterranean, it should be said that exactly an hour before this tale begins they had kept an appointment with a U-boat which ought to have been kept by a certain compatriot of the Little Bird's. By means of an adroitly conveyed hint to that gentleman that British destroyers had got wind of his intentions, they had succeeded in post-poning his trip; and at the same time, with a really brazen effrontery, the Little Bird had earned the gratitude of the U-boat's commander by imparting to him a romantic story of how, at the last moment, his expected supplies had been seized by the Spanish customs, and by warning him confidentially that the neighbour-hood of Valencia was for the time being most unhealthy for his craft. In return for this kind action, the U-boat's commander had entrusted to El Pajarillo the message which Bruce (dressed like a Catalan fisherman, and wearing a piratical-looking Robespierre cap) was at that moment puzzling over.

It was written in fair Castilian on a page torn from a note-book. Being translated, it read: 'Frankenfest, Soller. Our representative will honour himself by calling on you on Saturday about one o'clock to inspect your stock with view to important purchases. Retnu & Co.'

Bruce came out on deck, and went to where the lean figure of the Little Bird sprawled at the tiller. 'Pajarillo *mio*,' said he, 'how long will it take us to make port?'

'With this head-wind, señor, six hours at the least.'

The Scot repeated to him the message he had just read. 'Do you know a firm of the name of Retnu?'

'*Hombre!* What a name! I never heard of it before.'

'I thought not. Suppose we spell it back-wards. We get *unter*, which is Boche for "under," Little Bird. The message means, I take it, that at one o'clock on Saturday Señor Underwater and his friends will try to get from this Frankenfest fellow at Soller a cargo of stores such as we have just stopped him from getting at Valencia.'

'Clearly,' agreed the Little Bird.

'It is a head-wind for the mainland, but it is a fair wind for the Balearics, is it not?'

'Very true, señor.'

'If we could contrive to put a spoke in the wheel of this Frankenfest, it would be another five thousand pesetas in your pocket, Pajarillo.'

'Under the terms of our agreement, that would be so,' said the Catalan. 'But I would beg you to observe, Señor Bruce, that it is a long way from here to Soller. It would take us three days and nights of sailing if the wind holds fair. And we are not provisioned for so long a journey.'

'We have enough to drink,' said the Scot; 'and there are fish in the sea.'

'But there is also the German submarine in the sea. Suppose our fine captain sights us going east, whereas he told us to go west? In that case it will be the fish which will get us, and not we the fish, Señor Bruce.'

'Very true,' said Bruce. 'And yet, Pajarillo, five thousand pesetas'——

'Señor, do not misunderstand me. I am only indicating that difficulties exist. The cause is a good cause; and a good cause, supported by five thousand pesetas, will always command the respectful consideration of Pablo el Pajarillo. Mind the boom, señor—I am going about.'

The Little Bird pushed the tiller down as he spoke, and a minute later the boat, her big lateen sail filling before the favouring breeze, was heading due east to where the horizon was already paling for the dawn.

The boat was an ancient craft, but seaworthy enough, and the westerly wind followed them loyally for a couple of days and nights, during

which they took alternate tricks at the tiller. They caught little fish, being anxious to get on their way without delay, and by the evening of the second day they were both pretty sharp-set.

'I could make a fine verse about a plate of soup,' said the smuggler, who had a queer addiction to the making of poetry without any provocation.

'How far do you reckon it to Mallorca?' asked the Scot, as they sat smoking while the sun went down. Fortunately they had plenty of tobacco.

'Fifty miles.'

'The distance from London to Brighton,' muttered Bruce. 'They serve a good meal on the week-end Pullman. Suppose the wind drops, Little Bird?'

'Then we will fish.'

'I could eat a whale,' said Bruce. He took a look round the waste of deep-blue sea, and suddenly stood up. 'Look, Pajarillo! There is a steamer yonder to the eastward. If we shift a point or two she will pass within hail. Perhaps she will give us a few loaves.'

The Catalan shrugged. 'More likely she would take us for a decoy, and show us a pair of heels. *Madre de Dios!* what is that?'

An awful detonation came across the sea. Where the steamer had been, three or four miles away, a dense black cloud, shot through with crimson fire, rose from the sea against the paling eastern sky. It lifted slowly, and showed the steamer still there, but with one mast instead of two, and belching smoke and flame.

'Torpedoed!' shouted Bruce. 'Quick, Pajarillo—to the rescue!'

'I think we are like to want rescue ourselves if we go that way,' said the Spaniard grimly. 'But it shows you read the telegram aright.'

Without more ado he shifted the helm, and they sailed towards the burning vessel.

Bruce was watching her intently. 'She won't last till we reach her,' he groaned. 'God! Look at that!'

As a diving porpoise throws up his tail, so the stricken steamer suddenly threw up her dismasted stern and plunged bodily beneath the waves. A great cloud of mingled smoke and steam hung for a few moments above the place of her disappearing, and then the sea rolled cold and empty in the dusk.

No, not quite empty. Straining their eyes, they perceived a tiny black spot. 'A boat!' said the smuggler, gray-faced in the fading light. 'Yah! If I had that sea-murderer's throat in my two hands!'

The black spot grew slowly clearer as they sailed towards it. Of the murderers there was no sign. By-and-by they reached the boat, and lowered sail for the rescue.

Half-a-dozen nerve-shattered men were in the boat, one with his leg broken; three women; a child of four with a crushed arm; and two dead bodies singed with fire. These were all that were left of a ship's company of threescore. They had not an ounce of food or a drop to drink among them.

The two adventurers helped the poor creatures on to the fishing-boat, and towing the ship's boat, made sail again for the Balearics. The ship was an Italian vessel, coming from Naples to Valencia. There had been no warning. They had not even seen their murderers.

On through the starry night sailed the Spanish craft, the westerly wind still filling her sails, and the sea sparkling phosphorescent in her wake.

At midnight Bruce was at the tiller, steering a course which the Little Bird had set him by the stars. Suddenly a blinding light enveloped the little vessel. Several of the shipwrecked Italians sat up on the deck where they had been stretched, their faces white in the dazzling ray. As swiftly and silently as it had flashed on them, the light vanished. For a few minutes they held their course. Then came a swishing sound close astern. A low black shape raced up alongside, churning the water white with her railway speed ere her engines slowed, and through a megaphone a hoarse voice challenged in French, and ordered them to heave to.

Pajarillo the smuggler emerged from the cabin, where he had been nursing the injured child, and lowered sail; while Bruce pulled in the boat towing astern, and went aboard the destroyer to tell his story. He came back with a lieutenant, a surgeon, and a case of stores.

Before the two officers returned to their ship they shook hands with extreme cordiality both with the young Scot and his companion, and the lieutenant said some things which made Bruce glad of the darkness to cover his blushes. The lieutenant had approved the fishing-vessel's programme, but had pointed out that this was Thursday night, and that there was no time to lose. '*Bonne chance!*' said he. 'We also shall try to be at the rendezvous. You may not see us, but you may hear us if we have good hunting. *Après la guerre*, Little Bird, you shall fly to visit me in Paris.'

Again the sea churned white as the black shape sped away into the night, and the smuggler hoisted sail again for the islands. The breeze held steady through the night, but lost its force at dawn. There was a haze over the sea as the sun came up, but El Pajarillo, shading tired eyes with his wrinkled brown hands, said he saw the mountains of Mallorca. Sure enough, another hour's sailing brought them well in sight of land.

El Pajarillo called the mate of the Italian steamer, who was among the rescued, and—Bruce interpreting—asked if he wished to avenge the loss of his ship and men. The flash of the eye and the fierce gleam of teeth between the black moustache and beard were answer enough.

'I am going to steal your boat, *amigo mio*, but I am going to leave you my little ship. Sail her into Palma yonder. Our Mallorquins are hospitable. Tell them how the cursed Germans sank your ship. It will do you no harm to hint that they came up from behind a deserted Spanish fishing-boat—this boat of mine—and that you who survive were able to get on board and make for Mallorca. It is giving the murdering Jonahs more credit than they are entitled to, but my friend and I, *por Dios*, will set the balance right for you if we can. Above all, let none of you breathe a word of the French warship. So shall your dead be avenged. Do you swear it?'

His right hand on his heart, his left outstretched to the blue sky, the Italian vowed compliance. Then, with the tears running down his face, he kissed his rescuer on both cheeks ere the Little Bird climbed down with Bruce into the smaller boat.

This, too, had a small mast and sail, and before midday El Pajarillo, who knew the rocky island coasts like the palm of his hand, brought her to land at a lonely spot not too far from their destination.

Then, through the hot, vine-clad hills, the two adventurers made their way to Soller. They came to that pleasant valley about sundown, and as they went down towards the village they fell in with a goat-herd driving in his flock for the evening milking. With this youth the Little Bird opened conversation, and confided, among other things of less account, that his name was Juan de Roca, a sailor from Valencia. Now Juan de Roca, as Bruce very well remembered, was the name of the man whose efforts to supply the German U-boat with its needed stores they twain had, only three nights ago, frustrated by a notable piece of bluff. For the Little Bird calmly to appropriate his luckless countryman's name and address struck the Scot as a very neat piece of impudence.

Having regaled the admiring goat-herd with several fantastic tales such as the sailors of all nations are addicted to telling, El Pajarillo asked him casually, 'And do you happen to know if there is still in Soller a fellow named Frankenfest, a German?'

'Why,' said the boy, 'it is he who keeps the store at the corner of our street.'

'In that case, little friend of mine, it will be easy for you to earn five pesetas.'

The lad's dark eyes gleamed.

'God helping you,' said the smuggler, 'you might, as a sharp lad, make ten. The point is this. My friend and I have to get back to Palma with the least possible delay. You have only to take this message'—here the Little Bird produced the scrap of paper the German captain had given him—'and deliver it into Señor Frankenfest's own hands. His own hands, understand; not his wife's, or anybody else's in the world.'

'I understand, Señor de Roca.'

'Very well. Here is five pesetas. Can you read?'

'No.'

'No matter. Having delivered the paper, you will ask Señor Frankenfest for another five pesetas, though you will not be so great a fool as to tell him you have already received any. Probably he will offer you less, but he will certainly ask you from whom you had the message. It is then that you will use your wits, little one, and tell him no more till you have the money in your hand. See?'

'Perfectly, Señor de Roca,' grinned the boy.

'Then, *adelante!* We will part here. In case you would like to know what is in the paper, I will tell you, since you seem a sharp lad, that it informs Señor Frankenfest that a client intends calling on him to-morrow on important business. So now you know as much as I do. *Adios!*'

As soon as the goat-herd had disappeared with his charges round a bend of the road, El Pajarillo, instead of setting out for Palma, sat down by a hedge of flowering cactus and calmly lit a cigarette. 'It is about one o'clock on Saturday,' said he between his puffs, 'that the precious representative of this precious under-water villain will do himself the honour to call on Señor Frankenfest to make his important purchases,' he observed. 'The question is, *amigo mio*, which one o'clock?'

'I should say one hour after midnight, Little Bird.'

The smuggler nodded. 'From now till one in the morning you and I must watch this Frankenfest as a cat watches a mouse. Something tells me we shall spend a busy night, Señor Bruce.'

'The busier the better, Little Bird,' smiled the Scot.

They smoked a cigarette each, and went on quietly to the village. It was quite dark when they reached the *plaza;* but in Soller, as in many another village of that Spain which some think so backward, there is a sufficient service of electric light, and in the glow of a lamp over Frankenfest's store they had the satisfaction of seeing from a little distance their goat-herd in altercation with a stout man in the doorway. After a few minutes the lad departed, putting something in his pocket.

'That is a sharp lad,' said Bruce. 'Do you suppose the German suspects anything?'

'Why should he?' the Little Bird demanded. 'He is an agent for this submarine fellow, and he has his employer's signature. What more does the villain want?'

It was a little after nine. As they stood smoking and watching the store from the convenient shadow of a fig-tree, a civil guard approached. They engaged him in conversation, explaining that they had missed the last train

back to Palma by the little island railway, and inquiring as to a cheap *posada* in which they might pass the night. Both still wore the fisherman's dress in which they had embarked from Valencia.

Suddenly Bruce noticed the stout figure emerge from the store and walk away down the road at a smart pace. The Little Bird did not seem to have observed the fact, being apparently entirely engrossed in discussing the comparative merit of two houses which the guard had mentioned. In vain Bruce sought to catch his comrade's eye, and his impatience increased each moment as the German became gradually lost to view in the darkness. Only then did the old smuggler seem reluctantly to make up his mind, and with what seemed a needless profusion of thanks, and the deferential offer of a cigarette to the guard, he took a polite leave, and the two friends started very deliberately down the long street.

'Pajarillo, we shall lose our man! He went down the road while you were arguing with the guard,' said Bruce the moment they were out of earshot.

'Not so fast, my friend,' chuckled the old *contrabandista*. 'You are a good Spaniard for most purposes, but you have not learned that in this country one must hasten slowly, and not omit the little ceremonies of life. Now I must go into the *posada* and arrange for our night's lodging, in case our friend the guard should take it into his head to look in for us. I shall explain that we have a call to make before supper.'

'But meantime our man has disappeared.'

'We shall find him. Look you, Señor Bruce, while I am in the inn you will follow this German. There is no turning from this road till you get near the sea. You will sight him before he can turn aside; and you will follow him. Whenever you come to a turning, you will drop a bit of paper at the entrance of the road he has taken. He will go eventually to the sea—we know that—and when you have tracked him to the end of his journey, you will wait for me. In a quarter of an hour I will be with you.' He glanced behind. 'It is safe now—you can run.'

Bruce ran in the direction the German had taken, his feet, on which he wore the rope *alpargatas* of the Spanish peasant, making no sound. Very soon he sighted his quarry walking stolidly towards the sea. But instead of going straight down to the tiny rock-encircled port where the fishermen of Soller moor their boats, the German presently turned from the main road and followed a track which led up on to the cliffs, away from the town. Bruce dropped his guiding paper, and as they left the lights behind, drew nearer to his man.

For a couple of miles the German walked along a rough byroad, which became little more than a mule-track; then he struck off the track altogether, and made straight across a terraced vineyard on the hillside in the direction of the Mediterranean. It was so dark that Bruce had little hope of El Pajarillo observing any guiding signs; but, in conformity with his instructions, he scattered several pieces of paper at the edge of the mule-track, and then laid a thin straight line of them in the direction taken by the German.

Suddenly the cliff dropped away at his feet. He had come to a steep cleft running inland from the sea for several hundred yards. The secret agent had disappeared down the rugged face of the cleft. Searching about in the darkness, which the faint light of the rising moon was beginning to make less dense, the Scot found a practicable descent, and with infinite caution began to go down. He reached the foot of the cliff and the sea-beach with less difficulty than he had anticipated, and found himself on a tiny stretch of white sand. Of his man there was for the moment no sign.

Bruce crouched still and listened. There was no sound but the sighing of the little waves along the rocky shore. He realised that to leave the shadow of the cliff would be to risk detection. For what seemed a long time he kept silent in the shelter of the cliff. The moonlight strengthened gradually, and at length Bruce crept to the margin of the shadow, and held his watch in the light to see the time. It was past eleven.

He was creeping back to the cliff-side, when the firm grasp of a hand on his arm made him start violently. Next moment, with a profound astonishment, he recognised his Catalan companion. A whisper came in his ear: '*Por Dios*, Señor Bruce, we shall have good hunting to-night! Do you know the caves of Manacor?'

'No.'

'They are on the other side of Mallorca—great stalactite caverns that go far under the shore. Every Mallorquin knows of them, but few know that there is also such a cave within an hour of Soller. This Frankenfest is clever! Never mind. Set a thief to catch a thief, and an old smuggler to catch a secret agent. Now listen to me. We have nothing more to do but to wait here in the shadow till this fellow's confederates come ashore. Then we must do what we can to preserve the neutrality of Spain, and earn our five thousand pesetas. The cave is a little way up the gully yonder. A signal flashed in the gully can only be seen from the sea. Do you watch the gully, and I will watch the water.'

They watched steadily for half-an-hour.

Suddenly the glare of an electric torch shone down the gully so powerfully that the two men crouched low against the bottom of the cliff. The beam was shut off. Within a few seconds there was a red light visible far to seaward, which vanished almost immediately. Then three

short flashes from the gully were answered by three red flashes from the water, and darkness fell again.

'This bit of sand is the only landing-place for miles,' muttered the smuggler.

Another half-hour of waiting passed. Then above the faint plash of the wavelets they caught the low, rhythmic sound of oars working in muffled rowlocks. A boat, all painted white even to the oars, with sailors dressed also in white, appeared as if suddenly on the sea close to the shore.

The Little Bird gave a low chuckle. "By night all cats are gray," he quoted. 'But cats in a white fur show least in a faint light against the sea. Oh, these fellows are no fools, Señor Bruce.'

The white boat grounded on the white sand, and as she did so the stout figure of Frankenfest emerged from the gully. He shook hands with the officer of the boat, which contained half-a-dozen men. The whole party, with the exception of one, immediately walked up the beach and entered the gully.

'*Hombre!*' muttered the Catalan. 'We could not have arranged it better ourselves. Can you run?'

'I used to run for my college a few years back,' said the Scot. 'Shall we rush that fellow in the boat?'

'Precisely. It is five hundred yards from the cave, and a roughish path. But I warn you, Señor Bruce, they may shoot.'

'They may miss,' said the Scot.

'Bravo! Can you pull an oar?'

'Pretty well.'

'*Bueno!* See! the boatman is looking seawards. When they are right into the gully, we will run like the wind for that boat. The first there will deal with the man, and the other will seize the oars, and pull for the point of the bluff yonder. It is only a few hundred yards, and then we shall be out of range round the corner. *Coraje!* Are you ready?'

'Ready!'

'Then go!'

Like two dogs loosed on a hare the companions raced forward across the narrow stretch of sand. The younger man was leading by half-a-dozen yards when they reached the boat, and not till he sprang over the gunwale did the German sailor in the stern become aware of their presence. He turned with a wild shout, but before he could put hand to weapon Bruce was on him, knocking him backward over the thwart with a lightning blow between the eyes. The Scot fell on top of his man as the boat, already three parts in the water, was shoved off by the lusty arms of the old smuggler, who tumbled, dripping, aboard, and in a moment had seized the oars and was thrusting seawards with swift, strong strokes.

'Get down low, and take the tiller!' cried the Catalan, though he himself stood fearlessly in his gaunt height, working the oars.

Bruce was obeying, when the stunned German, recovering from his knock-down blow, sat up. '*Kamerad!*' he gasped.

'*Kamerads* all ashore!' retorted the Scot dourly, and without more ado he tipped the man bodily over the side into the sea.

Urged by the smuggler's nervy arms, the boat was making progress towards the bluff. Out of the corner of his eye Bruce saw the crew come running to the water's edge. A revolver cracked, and a white splinter flew from one of the oars. The revolver cracked again, and Bruce felt his left arm, holding the tiller, go numb. He shifted to his right.

'Faster! Faster, Pajarillo!' he cried.

More shots followed, flying wide, and the Catalan's breath came hard as he leaned to and fro to his work.

Far out to sea a shaft of light swung round the horizon.

Donald Bruce was feeling horribly faint. He pulled himself together. He saw the German seamen run along the shore, and heard the revolver-shots cracking again. But out to sea he saw the shaft of light fasten on a dark object lying low in the water. A moment later a dull, angry boom thundered over the sea. Another, and another. A livid sheet of flame, red and green and yellow, shot upward from the end of the beam. Then the sea swallowed the flame, and the beam was gone.

'Good hunting, by the lord, Pajarillo!' he cried, and rolled senseless across the tiller.

When he came to himself a man in a blue uniform, with gold braid on it, was watching him with an agreeable expression. Bruce recognised the surgeon of the French destroyer.

'Monsieur,' said the surgeon, 'I have here some excellent bouillon.'

'Where is El Paj—— Where is my friend?' said Bruce.

'Your friend is taking supper with our commander, who has opened a bottle of the best, but unfortunately cannot speak Spanish. Permit me to say that you nearly lost your arm. How many Boches are there ashore yonder?'

'Seven, with the officer.'

'It was fortunate for them that you took their boat,' said the surgeon grimly.

'And their ship?' asked Bruce.

'*Là bas!*' said the surgeon, pointing through the floor. 'We have just sent a wireless to the *capitania general* at Palma, informing the authorities, with our compliments, that a band of German sailors are waiting at Soller to be interned.'

A few days later the confidential clerk to M'Ilroy, M'Ilroy, and M'Allister came out of the partners' private office. He was immaculately dressed, but his left arm was in a sling. Beside him, smoking a *puro* of the best, walked

the brown-faced old *contrabandista* called the Little Bird. The Little Bird was putting a wad of notes carefully inside his red Robespierre cap.

'Ten thousand pesetas—not a bad week's work, *mi Pajarillo?*' smiled Bruce as he shook hands.

'Excellent, señor. I confess that this business interests me. Between you and me, I have made up my mind to accept the offer of your honourable principals in there to continue in this line for a time. I have been a spendthrift fellow, but if I could make up twenty thousand pesetas to provide for my family—I have a large family, Señor Bruce—I should face the future with a better heart. Permit me to say that I am proud to be associated with a man of business who is also a poet, like yourself.'

'Life is full of poetry, if one views it from the proper angle,' said Bruce sententiously.

'I shall endeavour to compose a few verses on our week's work, señor,' said the Catalan with perfect gravity. 'You, I venture to hope, will do the same. And as soon as I discover another suitable subject for a composition, I shall communicate with you without delay.'

'The sooner the better, Little Bird,' said Bruce.

SNAKES IN INDIA.

By SHELLAND BRADLEY, Author of *Adventures of an A.D.C.*, *An American Girl in India*, &c.

PEOPLE who have never been in India, and who believe that residents out here go in hourly dread of snakes, are as far from the truth as the globe-trotter who, never setting eyes on a snake throughout a cold weather tour along the beaten track, jumps to the conclusion that snakes are mostly a myth. The average Englishman in India, apart from the forest official and others whose work brings them into close contact with the jungle, may live in many an Indian district for months without so much as seeing or even hearing of a snake. Living for the most part in houses well raised above ground-level on brick or stone plinths, and set in the midst of gardens or compounds kept clear of jungle, it is rarely that a European is bitten by a snake. On the other hand, some districts are particularly snaky, and it is a common occurrence, especially in the rains when they are washed out of their hiding-places, for snakes to be found in one's garden, or more rarely at close quarters in the house itself. Thatched roofs, especially if old and dilapidated, provide them with most desirable quarters, and in some of the dak bungalows in out-of-the-way places where they are seldom used snakes congregate in numbers. It is not conducive to that unruffled frame of mind so necessary to the real enjoyment of a meal to have a snake drop unexpectedly from the roof on to the centre of the dining-table, and to know that another may follow at any moment. Neither is it altogether calculated to encourage one to linger in one's bath suddenly to spot a krait dangling uncertainly in the thatch ceiling overhead. One is also inclined to resent being taken at a disadvantage when a Russell's viper, one of the most deadly of all the tribe, drops out of the sleeve of one's dressing-gown as one goes to put it on in the morning. It is something of a shock to the strongest nerves to step suddenly upon a snake and to feel that you have been bitten, even though you do discover later on, some time after you have given yourself up for dead, that the snake had luckily bitten you right on your biggest and toughest corn, through which the poison could not penetrate. Yet all these things have been known to happen, most of them many times.

The Indian unfortunately is by no means so immune from snake-bite as the European, and every year snakes lay a heavy toll on human life among the poorer classes. The enormous areas of waste and jungle lands that remain in most Indian districts provide ample breeding-grounds, and the Indian ryot, living often in mud-walled, thatched-roof huts, round which the rankest vegetation is allowed to grow unchecked, falls a frequent prey to snake-bite. Last year in one district in Bengal alone 555 cases of deaths from snake-bite were recorded, 4510 being recorded for the whole province; and though, as one old official report that I came across recently explained, 'mortality from snake-bite doubtless covers a multitude of sins,' being a convenient fiction to account for the death of an undesirable relative or neighbour, the great majority of reported cases are doubtless true.

Amongst this same file of correspondence I found an interesting account of efforts made by Government to exterminate poisonous snakes in days gone by. Apart from the point of view of snakes, it is interesting as showing the watchful care of a paternal Government and the varied duties expected of a district magistrate. In 1858 the magistrate of a certain district drew the attention of Government to the heavy mortality from snake-bite, and asked permission to offer a reward of four annas for every snake brought in, dead or alive. Government sanctioned the proposal, but with the proviso that, in order to prevent fraud, the district magistrate should himself see the snakes' heads cut off and the reward paid. Within a few months 7846 snakes had been brought in, involving an expenditure of 1961 rupees 8 annas. This a careful Government seemed to consider too great

a price to pay for the extermination of reptiles, and the reward was promptly reduced to two annas. But it was soon seen to be a case of economy overreaching itself, the magistrate somewhat sarcastically reporting that 'there were few persons in his district willing to risk their lives to bring in a live snake for two annas.' By 1861 the number of snakes brought in had dwindled to eight, involving an expenditure of only one rupee for the whole year, and Government, if its efforts were not to be rendered futile, was forced to raise the reward again to four annas. The result was astonishing. The district magistrate who had strongly urged the increased reward reported on 14th July 1862, with evident satisfaction at the success of his efforts, that forty-seven snakes had been brought in on one day, and seventy on another. Only seven days later, however, the magistrate was plainly a trifle overcome by his own success. 'Ninety-seven snakes,' he wrote, 'were brought in on Saturday, and 118 to-day,' and the duty of superintending their decapitation had become so burdensome that he applied to Government for permission to depute some other officer to perform the task. Attending 118 executions a day was materially encroaching on his more onerous duties. But a careful Government, doubtless a little alarmed again at the expense involved, refused this seemingly reasonable request. No eye but the magistrate's own could be trusted to see that the snakes were alive when brought in, and were properly beheaded, so that they might not be produced again to claim the reward. Those months of the year 1862 were decidedly bad times for snakes. From 29th May to 14th October no fewer than 18,423 snakes were reported to have been brought in, making an average of over 100 snakes a day; while from 15th October to 7th December the number increased to 26,029, giving an average of 463½ a day. These figures, when reported, at once put a watchful Government on the alert. How was it to be accounted for that more snakes were being caught in the cold weather, when snakes are supposed to disappear, than during the rains, which is pre-eminently the snaky season of the year? The magistrate was asked to submit an explanation of this surprising circumstance without delay. The much-harassed magistrate, seeking for a reason, ascribed the increase to 'the increased expertness of the snake-catchers, and the larger number of persons who had abandoned their occupations and taken to this comparatively lucrative mode of obtaining a livelihood.' This explanation, however, Government did not consider wholly satisfactory, expressing grave doubts as to whether all the snakes paid for had really been poisonous ones; to which the magistrate rejoined with some warmth that he had exercised the greatest possible discrimination, and that 40,000 rupees would not have paid for all the snakes brought before him had the non-poisonous ones not been rigorously excluded.

In spite of the heavy mortality they occasion, it is astonishing with what superstitious reverence snakes, especially cobras, are regarded in many parts of India. So far from killing the snakes that take refuge in their houses, many of the poorer and more ignorant people afford them shelter and food, apparently fearless of consequences. Others, though not going the length of showing them hospitality, will carefully catch them, and taking them out to the jungle, let them loose again. The cobra figures, always as an object of respect, in many an Indian legend and folk tale. The Nagbansis, one of the many races that people the primitive land of Chota-Nagpur, connect the cobra with the origin of their race. Pundarika Nag, the great serpent, so they relate, transformed himself into human shape and won the hand of Parbati, the daughter of a high-caste Brahmin of Benares. But devoted as the couple were, there was one thing that detracted from the happiness of the bride. Pundarika's assumption of the human form was perfect, save for one thing. The double tongue of the serpent he was unable to disguise, and his wife discovering it, with true wifely curiosity, demanded to know the reason of this strange phenomenon. Much as she protested her love for him, Pundarika feared that he would lose her respect if the truth were known, and with deep insight into the feminine mind, he took her on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Jugernath at Puri by the sea to divert her thoughts. All went well so long as the novelty of the road and the attractions of the holy place lasted; but on the return journey Parbati's curiosity returned, and Pundarika, goaded by her importunity, at last told her the truth. But no sooner had he told her than shame at the disclosure overcame him, and he jumped into a lake close by and disappeared, never to return again in human form. Parbati was grief-stricken at this unanticipated result of her curiosity, and forsaking her new-born child, she threw herself, in a paroxysm of grief, into the lake into which her husband's body had disappeared. The unfortunate infant thus deserted was not left long alone. A Brahmin passing by, carrying his idol, the image of the sun, and stopping to drink by the side of the lake, was startled to see the child lying on the bank with a great hooded snake on guard over it. Terrified at the apparition, the Brahmin turned to run away, stooping as he did so to pick up his idol. To his surprise, he was unable to lift it from the ground, so heavy had it suddenly become. As he hesitated, overcome with fear, the snake spoke, announcing itself as Pundarika Nag, who had returned to guard his deserted offspring. Relating his story to the Brahmin, he confided the infant to his care, prophesying that the child would one day become the Raja of the country in which they

then were, and directing that he should always be known as the snake-crowned Raja. It is from this child that the Nagbansi family claim descent, and they are said to wear their turbans so wound round their heads as to present the appearance of a snake with the head protruding in front. The crest of the family is a cobra with a human face under its expanded hood. Though the serpent in the legend represents the Devil, to be able to claim relationship with him is considered a very ancient and honourable connection.

Not long since the Zoological Gardens were in need of a fresh supply of snakes, and I promised to do my best to procure some for them. A list of those especially required was sent to me, ranging from the non-poisonous *betachra* (the tree-snake) and the *dhamin* (the rat-snake), for which four annas only were offered, to the deadly *sankhamuti* (the krait) and the *chandrabora* (the Russell's viper), which were valued at one rupee; but I was given a sort of roving commission to collect as many snakes as could be obtained. I rather wondered as I read the letter whether the authorities at the Zoo remembered that my district was something over three thousand square miles in extent, and I luckily refrained from letting the demand for snakes be issued over the whole of it. Fearing that my experience might be somewhat like that of my predecessor, who had been so overwhelmed by the supply of snakes that his offers of reward had produced, I sent out only to a few selected localities, notifying by beat of drum that snakes brought in to me on a certain date about a month hence would be paid for at a fixed rate. I also wrote to three of the leading zamindars of the district, asking if they could provide any from their estates. Two replied, promising a supply, but the third was doubtful. 'As there is no such man within my zamindary as can catch the living snake,' he wrote, 'I think it will be difficult for me to supply specimens of varieties of snakes in time. However, I will try to look after a man who can catch the living snake, and to supply in time some sorts of snakes.'

In the press of many other matters, I had quite lost count of the appointed day, and was astonished one morning, on going into my veranda, to find the compound invaded by a large crowd, squatting on its heels and guarding innumerable little baskets grouped around it. The snake-catchers had arrived, my chaprasi informed me. There were already some fifty or sixty of them, and new recruits continued to add to the number. My appearance on the scene was the signal for a hasty advance, and a clamorous desire to exhibit their dangerous trophies. My little head-clerk, who arrived on the scene with the office file concerning them under his arm, and a bag of money in his hand wherewith to pay for them, viewed the situation with obvious apprehensions. 'Sir,' he said, looking at me solemnly, 'I beg to be excused, but I have no acquaintance with the habits of snakes. I fear much there will be difficulty in controlling so many of such poisonous character.'

'It will be your duty,' I replied, regarding him with the same solemnity, and irresistibly led to imitate his manner, 'personally to examine each snake, compare it with the description in the list, and pay for it accordingly on the spot.'

For a moment he looked at me reproachfully, then with a resigned, 'As your honour pleases,' turned nervously to his unaccustomed task.

After that it seemed to be a case of snakes everywhere. Restraining the impatience of the snake-catchers to exhibit their specimens, we seated them on the ground at considerable distances apart, and warily I and my little head-clerk went amongst them to inspect what they had brought. A few of them had come in quite long distances with only one snake of the value of four annas; but most of them were the proud possessors of several, and some eventually went away with what to them was considerable wealth. About half the snakes were cobras, but of these the variety seemed infinite, varying in colour from the darkest olive or black, with a wonderful purple iridescence, to a pale chocolate, fawn, or yellow. Various as they appeared, however, the snake-catchers divided them only into two classes—those with spectacle-like marks on the hood, which were known as *gokhuras*, and those without, called *keutias*. One, a splendid specimen some five feet long, was a glorious reddish-brown, shading near the hood into a brilliant orange. The Russell's vipers, smaller, but no less deadly, were a light chocolate-brown, with three series of large, black, white-edged rings down the back. To these the slender, brilliant green tree-snakes formed a striking contrast.

The snake-catchers were full of information. Cobras and Russell's vipers, it appears, can bite one another with impunity, but almost every other snake succumbs to the bite of either of them. A fowl bitten by a Russell's viper is said to die in thirty-five seconds, a dog in from seven minutes to several hours, a cat (in spite of her nine lives) in fifty-seven minutes, and a horse in eleven and a half hours. The most astonishing piece of information given me was that the hooded snakes were all females and poisonous, while the males were all hoodless and innocuous. I am bound to add, however, that an expert on snakes has since informed me that much of the information given to me with such confidence by those snake-catchers must not be wholly relied upon.

The skilful manner in which the men handled the snakes was marvellous. In spite of the openly expressed fears of my little head-clerk and my own secret misgivings, they seemed to have them under perfect control. Though the

poison had doubtless been extracted from most of them, they hissed and struck with their venomous-looking fangs as the men cleverly caught and held them, proudly displaying their size and beauty. All were carefully paid for and listed in my presence; but unfortunately other duties called me away, and I was not present to see them packed up in the boxes specially made to receive them. Later in the day the head-clerk told me, with an obvious sigh of relief, that they had all been packed and despatched. It was only then I learned that the boxes prepared had run short, and that seventy-four snakes had, therefore, been packed in the last two boxes. When I remembered the size of the boxes, my sympathies for the first time went out to those unfortunate snakes. The Black Hole of Calcutta must have been nothing to it. I upbraided my little head-clerk, but his desire to have those poisonous snakes safely boxed and despatched and off his hands seemed to have extinguished any humanitarian instinct he may have had. 'Sir, it was necessary to dispose of them,' the much-worried little man gravely replied to my expostulations; 'the snake-catchers had been paid, and being desirous of going away, even threatened to let loose their snakes if I did not take delivery.' Yet how they got so many into those two small boxes I cannot imagine. I feel that the end of this snake story ought to be that when the box arrived at the Zoo only one very large fat snake was found inside. But truth compels a less picturesque though almost as disastrous an ending. Only twelve of those unhappy snakes had survived the journey.

HUMOURS OF THE INDIAN MUTINY.

By the Rev. JOHN LENDRUM.

THE Indian Mutiny is linked in our minds with so much that is dark and tragic that to associate with it anything like humour or fun may appear almost an outrage. The facts of life, however, are not nearly so proper as some people would make them. The tragic and the humorous, the grim and the ridiculous, get mixed together at times in the strangest of ways; and, in particular, wherever the British soldier goes he shows himself not only splendidly brave in action, but irrepressibly cheerful. He is always cool enough to have time for his little joke. So it has been in the present war against Germany, and so it was also in the days of the Indian Mutiny. As we read the deathless story, we are at times like to weep; yet at other times we break into a smile, and sometimes even burst into boisterous laughter.

The British soldier, it would appear, is never overwhelmed by the seriousness of war, but preserves always a sort of nonchalant detachment. For one thing, he has always leisure for the making and giving of nicknames. In the present campaign he has suffered much from the huge German shells; yet, on account of the foul smoke and smell they give out as they explode, he dubs them 'Black Marias,' or 'Jack Johnsons,' or 'coal-boxes.' So, during Outram's heroic defence of the Alum Bagh, near Lucknow, a heavy gun in the enemy's front battery was known among our men as 'Nancy Dawson;' and again, when Sir Hugh Rose invested Jhansi, one of the enemy's guns was nicknamed 'Whistling Dick,' the reason annexed being that while with other guns there was time to duck beneath the sand-bags, with this gun the puff of smoke was scarcely seen when the shot came whistling overhead.

Nor was it only the guns that got nicknames. Some way down the slope of the Ridge towards Delhi city stood an old Hindu temple, which, as the scene of much hard fighting, had to have some handy name; and, hearing the natives call it *swami-ghur* or *swami-khana*—that is, 'god-house'—our men promptly named it 'the Sammy House.' Why should they bother with an outlandish native name when a good English one with a dash of humorous contempt in it was to hand? Again, in the turret of a high native house that almost overlooked the Residency compound at Lucknow there was a party of snipers. One of these, an African eunuch, used his double-barrelled rifle with such skill that he was known among our men as 'Bob the Nailer;' he nailed every one he aimed at. And the same good humour amid the engines of death appears in the following. At the beginning of the siege of the Lucknow Residency the rebels were so short of ammunition that they hurled against our posts great stones or logs of wood bound with iron. As one of these logs came swinging through the air our men would cry out with a laugh, 'Here comes a barrel of beer at last!'

As this last tale suggests, our people during the Mutiny were often hard put to it for food and drink. In the entrenchment at Cawnpore horse-flesh became a delicacy, so that our riflemen were more anxious to bring down a horse than to shoot its rider. Yet Mowbray Thomson, one of the few survivors of the Cawnpore massacre, could write thus cheerily—afterwards at least: 'Our hungry disgust had well-nigh sunk into despair when an old knacker came into range. . . . He was brought down by a shot like lightning, and hewn up. . . . The head and some mysteries of the body we stewed into soup, and liberally sent to fair friends in the entrenchment, without designating its nature, or without being required to satisfy any scruples upon that head.'

Then, too, as we have learned again in the present war, our British soldiers cannot get on without tobacco. At Lucknow, when the tobacco gave out, they took to smoking any sort of likely leaf they could find, just as in Flanders the other day some of our men were smoking tea. When Greathed's column reached Agra after a forced march, the British in his force were so burnt by the sun as to be hardly distinguishable from natives. 'The Queen's 8th,' writes one who was present, 'passed within three yards of us. "These dreadful-looking fellows must be Afghans," said a lady to me, as they slowly and wearily marched by. I did not discover they were Englishmen till I saw a short clay pipe in the mouth of nearly the last man.'

Sir James Outram, it is said, used to get very irate on occasion; but after letting out at any one, especially a young officer, he was never comfortable until he had made it up by some kind word or deed, often by the offer of a cheroot—a gift of value in those days. His holster, it is said, was stuffed with cigars instead of a revolver, and he gave them away freely, being also a hard smoker himself.

Nor was tobacco the only thing that ran short. At Cawnpore the ladies gave up their stockings to be filled with shot—'a species of cartridge never heard of before;' and on one occasion at least a bit of notepaper was hard to find. One of a few Europeans who, fleeing from the rebels, had found refuge in a cowshed, got a promise from one of the herdsmen to carry a letter to his wife at Naini Tal. He had only a small scrap of paper—'half the flyleaf of Brydges on the 119th Psalm,' and the stump of a lead-pencil. When the note was written he dipped it in milk, and set it out to dry in the sun. In an instant a crow pounced upon it and carried it off. 'I, of course, thought it was gone for ever, and felt heart-broken with vexation, as I had no more paper, or any means or hope of getting any, on which to write another note.' However, two natives followed the crow, and after an hour's chase saw the bird drop the paper, and brought it back uninjured. And, one is glad to learn, the letter duly reached its destination.

Soon after the outbreak of the Mutiny, when the first regiment of kilted Highlanders arrived in Calcutta, the natives are said to have declared that the British were so short of men that they had been forced to send their women. From the closing days of the Mutiny there comes another gibe at the kilt. One day, near Cawnpore, the troops under Sir Colin Campbell had to ford a river, and the men stopped to take off their shoes and stockings and trousers. 'What are you stopping for there?' a soldier cried out from behind. 'Don't you see I am taking off my breeches to cross the river?' came the reply. 'Bedad!' exclaimed the other, 'I knew the General would never stop till he had made Highlanders of us all.' At another point, fifty men of the 71st Highland Light Infantry were taken seventy miles in thirty hours on camels. The Highlanders did not like the action of their steeds, and their kilts proved so awkward for riding, and left them so sore, that after a halt they refused to remount, and had to be told sharply that if they did not mount the camels they would be left behind and lose their heads to the rebels.

The British soldier is not only a first-rate fighting man, but so greedy for fighting that he can never have enough. Before Delhi there were more than thirty fights within twelve weeks; yet one of our men could write: 'It appears quite strange to have had no fighting for five full days, and our fellows will begin to think they are badly used.' The Goorkhas, too—who, by the way, were with us and not against us in the Mutiny—were as keen as the Europeans. When word came in that the enemy was at hand, they were 'so delighted at the chance of getting a fight that they threw somersaults and cut capers.' When it got out that there was to be a battle the next day, our men in hospital declared they would not be kept in from it, and begged their comrades not to tell they were sick. Even when severely wounded, they would not give in. At Delhi especially their spirit was magnificent; and, stricken to death, a soldier would tell his officer he would soon be up again and ready for a brush with the enemy. At the taking of a fort near Calpee, a soldier who went under the assumed name of Whirlpool received no fewer than nineteen wounds. 'Take care, lads,' he said as they put him into the *dhooly*, 'and don't shake my head, or else it will come off.' For a previous exploit he was awarded the Victoria Cross; and he must have been of the right stuff, for he not only received nineteen wounds, but recovered from them. There were others who could joke even over their punishments. General Hope Grant was very strict in the matter of looting, and having one day caught some men in the very act of robbing a house, he had them tied up forthwith and flogged. Thereafter, whenever the men saw him coming, they would say one to another, 'Now, boys, take care of your backs; here is the provost-marshal coming.'

One of the heroes of the Lucknow garrison was Private Cuney, of the band. Accompanied by a sepoy who adored him, he crept into a battery of the enemy and spiked the guns. On his return he was confined in the guardroom for leaving his post without orders; but whenever there was fighting to be done he had to be let out, and when wounded he would leave his bed to join in a sortie. Another Lucknow hero was Captain Fulton, of the Engineers, who greatly distinguished himself in counteracting the mining operations of the rebels. One day, having detected a mine the enemy had driven a certain distance, he ran a short counter-mine to meet it, and then sat patiently, revolver in hand, waiting for the unconscious enemy to break

through. Some one looking for him asked a sergeant if he were in the mine. 'Yes, sir,' was the reply; 'there he has been for the last two hours like a terrier at a rat-hole, and not likely to leave it all the day.' Another day he found the enemy mining quite near his post; so, putting his head over the wall, he called out in Hindustani a trifle of abuse, and '*Bhago! bhago!*' ('Fly! fly!'); and at once there was such a scuffle and scurrying that he could not help laughing. A like ruse was used with similar success at Cawnpore. One night, the enemy threatening a general assault that would have overwhelmed our little band, Captain Moore and Lieutenant Delafosse went out into the open, and in a loud voice Moore gave the word of command, 'No. 1 to the front!' Completely taken in, and thinking we were to attack in force, the enemy at once rose and retreated to safer cover.

A very picturesque figure in the story of the Mutiny is Colonel Neill, of the Madras Fusiliers, who, from their fierceness, were known as Neill's Lambs. When his men were being entrained at Howrah, the stationmaster threatened to start the train whether they were all aboard or not; whereupon Neill put him in the charge of a sergeant's guard; and when other officials proved insolent, he laid hold of the engine-driver and the stoker, and placed a guard over them until all his men were safely in the train. Another hero, who also, like Neill, fell in the Mutiny, was Captain William Peel, R.N., whose men and guns from H.M.S. *Shannon* proved of the greatest service. He was everywhere spoken of for his coolness in action. He went into action, some one said, as unconcerned as if he had been going to an evening-party, and while working his guns he was always whistling or telling an anecdote.

Among the volunteers in the Lucknow garrison, clerks chiefly, was a stout, middle-aged Eurasian, who one day asked his officer, 'What are we to do, sir, if we are charged by elephants?' Without a smile, the officer replied, 'Whether able to keep off such huge animals or not, Government expects each individual to make the attempt.' Another Eurasian was in great anxiety how to present arms when his post was visited by an officer. 'Never mind, sir,' said another civilian volunteer, Signor Barsotelli; 'make a *leetle* noise; who is to see in the dark?' This Italian—there was a Frenchman also in the garrison—helped much not only by his bravery, but by his gaiety. Called out suddenly one night from a sound sleep, he exclaimed, 'I think these grand officers do this for their own amusement.' Yet the next moment, we are told, there he stood, a musket in one hand, a double-barrelled rifle in the other; at his side a huge cavalry sword, and pendent over his breast a huge ammunition-pouch—a comic figure perhaps, yet fearless and determined.

Of Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde, there are many memorable tales. 'When he grows very indignant,' writes Lady Canning, who met him in Calcutta, 'he pulls off his little cap and scratches his head violently, leaving his hair standing bolt-upright.' During some sharp fighting on the Kala Nuddee, the Irishmen of the 53rd, hearing they were to be relieved by the Highlanders of the 93rd, charged without orders. A little drummer-boy who had perched himself on a mound and sounded the advance, asked why he had dared to act without orders, replied, 'Please, sir, I was afraid the men would lick me if I didn't.' Furious at the daring breach of discipline, Sir Colin rode up to the 53rd and pitched into it handsomely. But the wild Irishmen, whenever he began to speak, shouted as loud as they could, 'Three cheers for the Commander-in-Chief, boys!' until at last he was forced to go away laughing.

Another good story with a bit of boisterous fun in it comes to us from the annals of the defence at Lucknow Residency. After the unhappy check at Chinhut, Sir Henry Lawrence decided to hold only the Residency, and gave orders that the Muchee Bhawan, an old fort in the city, which was to have been maintained as a separate position, should be evacuated and blown up. At midnight the troops marched out, and half-an-hour later the air was rent by a tremendous explosion. One man, however, was missing. When the roll was called he was lying drunk in some out-of-the-way corner, and could not be found. When the magazine exploded he was blown into the air, but, returning to earth unhurt, went off to sleep again. In the morning, to his horror, he found himself alone amid a mass of ruins. But finding a pair of bullocks and an ammunition-cart, he appeared with these at the gate of the Residency. 'Arrah, by ——! open yer gates,' he cried out. And the guards, we read, let him in, convulsed with laughter.

Such are some of the humours of the Indian Mutiny; and perhaps the recounting of them may help to keep us cheerful during the present distresses. It need only be added that nearly all the stories told above are to be found in Forrest's *History*, and have thus the great merit of being true.

SNARES.

Delicate threads of pearly gray,
Laden with dew at dawn of day;
Gossamer web of filmy lace—
Woven with skill and wondrous grace
Beautiful maze—but flies—beware!
Danger lurks in this dainty snare.

Plausible words of subtle charm,
Giving no hint of latent harm.
Temptations veiled in witching guise
Reveal—too late—their specious lies.
Unwary folks—take heed—beware!
Danger lurks in each cunning snare.

Adelaide Pollock.

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SEVENTH SERIES

A CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE.

By A Scottish Officer.

'THERE is a show on to-morrow,' announced the O.C. 'The division are going to demonstrate in front of B——. We shall start at two in the morning, and I shall issue detailed orders, of course; but meantime take note that corps signal squadron will lay a cable to temporary divisional headquarters, which will be twelve miles from here, and we will lay cables from there to brigades, and likewise keep in touch with the latter by visual signalling; and, Mr Mess Pip, a cup of tea just before we start would be very comforting, would it not?'

So, after reveille at twelve-thirty, followed by 'Turn out and saddle up' at 1 A.M., a party of mounted signallers, with half-a-dozen six-horse and eight-horse wagons, move quietly off in the moonlight across the rolling downs of Palestine, the last wagon paying out the telephone cable which is to be the link with headquarters in the rear.

Two miles from camp we enter a broad gully which leads to one of the *wadi* crossings, and dip gradually down to the stream, the banks, seamed and scored by many a torrential rainstorm, rising above us in fantastic shapes. The stream is now, however, only rippling gently over its stony bed, with its trickle of water expanding here and there into a semi-stagnant pool, in which innumerable frogs croak. Then we strike another gully on the far side, and, after a mile of twisting and turning through many tributary *wadis* and cross *wadis*, we once more reach the level grassy plain, and halt a while for a breathing-space.

We cannot, in fact, move on farther just yet, until the brigades that are also to take part in this reconnaissance precede us, for we are now beyond the outpost line. But far away on either side and behind us we hear the tinkle of innumerable hoofs as the iron heels strike the stones of the river-bed, the clank and jingle of steel from bit and stirrup, and the soft 'pad' of a multitude of horsemen advancing towards us over the grass in close formation.

'Who are you?' calls a voice in the darkness. Quickly comes the answer from the officer in command of the signal-party; and then the reply, 'Right! We are going through you.' For some minutes there is much dust, while shadowy mounted forms appear on all sides; after that, stillness.

'Stand to your horses! Mount!' and we follow up the brigade in front of us, and ere long become aware of a faint gray light in the east, and of that sensation of freshness in the air which comes with the dawn in Palestine. Pale gray soon turns into a dim yellow; then yellow changes and flushes into red. First the man immediately in front of you as you ride becomes visible, then more files, and by-and-by the head of the column stretching out before you. Last of all there appear on the left, a quarter of a mile away, a brigade advancing in column of troops, and beyond these again another brigade in a different formation—mounted troops in front, mounted troops away to the right, and more mounted troops far away on our left flank. Here at least there is room and to spare and ample breathing-space for all the cavalry in the war to manœuvre and fight it out, as the mounted men-at-arms and the Crusader knights, their great progenitors, did of old on these same Syrian plains.

Mile after mile extends the march, the going perfect over these grassy and gently rising uplands stretching to seemingly illimitable distances, to which even the wide and far-famed pastures of Meath and Kildare seem but diminutive enclosures. Here our route lies by a mud-built, deserted farm-house surrounded by a cactus-hedge, enclosing also within it perchance a patch of watermelons, cool, delicious, and thirst-quenching, which, when they can be found and appropriated, give to the thirsty soldier in the Promised Land the drink of the gods as compared with the heavily chlorinated water with which he has too often to moisten his parched lips and throat in the heat of an Eastern summer. There, by a clump of shady trees, are broken pottery and scattered remnants of black goats'-hair cloth, from which their tents are made, that mark the site of a former Bedouin encampment; while before long we are crossing some ancient camel-track, along which for ages there only passed the long, slow-moving caravan of the unchanging East.

The sun has now risen over the hills of Judea; but, the sky being still cloudy, the air even yet retains the coolness of the Syrian night, and we

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are, moreover, moving on to higher ground. By this time so many drums of signal cable have been paid out that we know that we cannot be far from the rendezvous. Another half-mile and two tracks cross. The officer in command has a look at his map. 'Yes, this is the place.' Then comes the order, 'Dismount and hand over horses to number fours.' Out of the limbered wagon come the little shelter tent for the telephone-men, the telephone instruments, the helios, and all the apparatus, in fact, of the signal service, invaluable for campaigning and reconnaissance-work in a wide-spaced and sparsely inhabited land like this.

Down on the ground goes the officer with his map and compass. 'The —— Brigade are on a bearing of 70 degrees,' 'The —— Brigade are on a bearing of 125 degrees,' and so on, and away go the cable-wagons on the indicated bearings, trailing the telephone cables as they go. Just as the helios begin to twinkle on the far ridges the divisional commander and staff arrive on motor-cars, having followed an ancient camel-track winding over plain and tableland, while from a circling aeroplane overhead there flutters down a beribboned packet containing a message. Such are the arts and artifices of modern war!

But suddenly comes a far-away *bang!* followed by a low whine; a column of black smoke shoots up among a group of led horses just in front of us (some of whom stampede at once), and our ears are smitten by the terrific *crump!* of a high-explosive shell. The Turks have discovered that something is afoot, and, not knowing what it may be, are searching the ridges and hollows with high explosives and shrapnel. The —— Brigade are now in touch with us by telephone, so that wagon must have got quickly out to them; and then comes the first message: 'We are shutting off our helios, as they are drawing the enemy's fire.' The shelling increases, and various groups of led horses move out of range. Divisional headquarters also receive considerable attention, and have to move farther back, while the machine-guns of the Turks splutter on our front and flanks. We have now clearly uncovered the Turkish position in this part of their long front, stretching from the sea beyond Gaza into the desert. Gradually, however, the Turkish fire diminishes, for they appear to think that, after all, it is not the real thing yet, and that no attack in force is intended to-day, whatever may come later.

Quite melted away now are the clouds which kept the air so cool in the early morning, and by eleven o'clock the whole country is shimmering in the fierce blaze of the sun of June in Palestine. One would indeed give anything for shade and sleep, but there is no shade to be found, while sleep is still a far-off luxury. In the approaching noontide heat the distant hills are wrapped in a mantle of blue haze, while from the enemy lines comes now only the *bang!* of an occasional gun, for the Turkish gunners too are evidently made somnolent by the lassitude of the meridian hour. The heat would, in truth, be unbearable but for the fresh breeze that sweeps in from the sea, even although the latter is some twenty miles away. We cannot move homeward just yet, however, for the special purpose of this reconnaissance is still incomplete in some of its details. There is an opportunity, therefore, to ride quickly to the far ridge and look from it at the ancient city of the seven wells in the dim distance, and to scan through a glass the mouth of the valley which leads to Hebron and Jerusalem.

But shortly after the sun has passed the meridian come the orders to retire, and out go the wagons again to roll up the telephone cables; helios twinkle a final message, gear is packed away, and horses are hitched in for the return march. Yet the Turks must of necessity speed the parting guest, so shells begin to fall once more, and rifle and machine-guns to babble; while from the Turkish lines come out several regiments of cavalry to 'shepherd' our rearguard, for some part of the way at least, across the wide plain which is the 'No Man's Land' on this flank. Still, previous encounters with our mounted troops have made their valour discreet, and they do not risk pressing us too hard on this occasion.

Back again we move over the many miles of rolling grass-lands. 'It looks like a two-sheep-to-the-acre country,' say the Australian troopers; for, although it is three months since we have had any rain, the grass is nevertheless still fresh and green, thanks to the heavy dews at night. Once more in the moonlight we descend into the *wadi*, and up again over the plain. From the Turkish trenches on the distant right-front flash the green points of fire of several Verey lights. 'Stage fright,' says some one, 'for they think that our show to-day no doubt means an infantry attack to-night.'

Camp is made once more, after a stretch of eighteen hours in the saddle, just as the shadow of an eclipse passes over the moon. 'Why was this eclipse not advised in route orders?' grumbles the O.C. 'Last night, for instance, it might have been very awkward;' and then, to the officer left in charge of the camp, 'Have you anything to report?'

'Nothing sir, except that a white cat sprang into my tent a few minutes ago, and is still there.'

'We will calculate to-morrow,' replies the O.C., 'the significance of the conjunctive appearance of a white cat and an eclipse of the moon, if some one can supply a table of demonological values. Personally I should say that an eclipse in Ramadān indicated local and prospective hell for the Turks. Is grub ready?'

The appearance of the white cat has never

been satisfactorily explained. No one knew how it had arrived, or whether it was still lurking in a corner of the camp-commandant's tent, or had disappeared as mysteriously as it came. Perhaps it may have been a reincarnation in the same form of one of those members of the great feline family which had been embalmed thousands of years ago by some ancient Egyptian princess, and had wandered far from the tombs of Beni Hassan into the Holy Land, in the Moslem feast of Ramadān, in search of adventure, and of new experiences of life in a very modern world! And this might even be the 'Night of Decree' or of 'Power,' when communications between Heaven and the World are particularly to be expected, and when, according to the Koran, many signs, miracles, and wonders may take place. Who can tell?

An hour later the actual eclipse was over, but the moon had turned to a blood-red; many wearied and thirsty soldiers were at length able to seek rest and refreshment in sleep; while a great peace had fallen upon the camp in the Syrian plain, broken only by the tramp of sentries, and the champ or the occasional neighing of horses in the lines. And now, from the blue vault of heaven above us, 'the Syrian stars look down.'

'THEIR HEARTS' DESIRE.'

CHAPTER II.

MEANWHILE Auntie Naarah had also reached her destination. It had been a long journey, with its frequent stoppages, but she had hardly noticed its tediousness.

Seated in a corner of the compartment, her back to the engine, as she had always been brought up to sit, Auntie Naarah, oblivious of her fellow-passengers, let her thoughts go back to the romance of her youth, when Edward Strachan's father, a young subaltern, had loved and wooed her.

More vividly than she remembered the happenings of yesterday did she recall the fleeting days of promise too soon to be nipped in the bud by the chill frost of parental disapproval. They had met at a country house, where both were on a visit, and had fallen in love at first sight. The lonely woman, hard-featured, whom none of her fellow-passengers would probably have credited with ever having had a lover, saw herself once again a fair young girl, modest, retiring, as girls of the early Victorian era were trained to be. She saw him—Edward Strachan—the handsome, dare-devil lieutenant with whom she had wandered hand-in-hand along the yew-hedged walks of the old-world garden.

She heard him speak her name—'Naarah'—saying that he loved its quaintness, and poor Auntie Naarah, who had been so called by a Puritan father and mother because the name had a Biblical sound and signified 'handmaid,' which subservient position was right and fitting for women in the eyes of all the Churches, felt that she too would like it. She loved it still more after her lover went to India. It sounded an Indian name to her then. A dusky Indian maid might have borne it, she thought. Those few days of Auntie Naarah's memorable visit, which passed with the swiftness of a weaver's shuttle, were all the time she and her lover had together.

After Naarah's return, Lieutenant Strachan had come boldly to her parents' home to ask sanction for their engagement. Had it been given, he intended to ask further that they might be married before he left with his regiment for India in a few weeks. But the permission was never granted.

Naarah's parents belonged to a dour and narrow-minded sect of the Church, and to them the mere fact of young Strachan being in the army was a sufficient ban to the union. The army for them stood for idleness, extravagance, and everything that was undesirable. None of their kin on either side had ever had anything to do with it. The old lines,

> The scarlet coats, the scarlet coats,
> They are a graceless set,

barely expressed the case to their minds. They were of the considerable class (surviving to-day in the form of conscientious objectors) which, while desirous of its property and lives being protected by the Services, yet illogically disapproved of the army and navy. It was wicked to fight; at the same time, it was only right that civilians and their possessions should be securely guarded from an invading enemy. But when Edward Strachan tried to make Naarah's parents see the inconsistency of such reasoning, they turned and rent him.

No child of theirs should marry a godless soldier! In vain Naarah wept and implored; in vain her lover brought all his powers of argument and persuasion to influence them. They were deaf to entreaty and remonstrance. They would rather, they told the young man plainly, see their daughter dead than married to him—a man who lived by the sword!

And so it ended. The lovers were ruthlessly parted; they were even forbidden to correspond. The episode was to be considered finished. Lieutenant Strachan sailed for India, where, after a couple of years, he married, his wife dying at the birth of the son, on whose shortcomings Lawyer Knowles had held forth to his aunt that afternoon. Later on, having distin-

guished himself in the Afghan campaign, Edward Strachan, then Major Strachan, died in the Punjab.

Naarah never saw him again. She, under the autocratic sway of mid-Victorian parents, settled down to the dreary shut-in life which was the lot of ordinary middle-class girls at that time. She grew hard and bitter. Small wonder, seeing how her life and nature had been thwarted. But her parents were quite satisfied with their judgment. It was better for Naarah to be an old maid than to have married as she had wished. They left her well off when they died, and money henceforth became Auntie Naarah's god.

She never saw her lover again, but she saw his son.

Major Strachan had told his boy, if ever he had the chance, to look up a Miss Naarah Knowles (somehow he felt sure she could never have married any one else), and Fate made their meeting extraordinarily easy. As it happened, the young man had relatives who had come to live in the town near which Auntie Naarah's lonely house was situated, and whenever he went to visit his kin he used to try to come over to see the woman whom his father's old letters, tied with ribbon and smelling of dead roses, had told him how he had loved.

Auntie Naarah awoke from her day-dreams with a start when the train crawled into Tussocks Station that afternoon. It was drizzling outside, but she set off bravely to trudge the mile and a half to her home.

In due time she arrived at the garden gate. It hung on one hinge, because repairs cost money, and Auntie Naarah never spent a halfpenny if she could help it. She passed through into the garden, past its straggling shrubs and bushes—never cut and trimmed for the same reason—and rang at her front-door. Jean, a middle-aged servant, who had put up with her mistress's irritating ways for a number of years, opened to her.

'You've got back?' she said. 'And there's a visitor to see you.' She threw open the parlour door as she spoke, and there, pacing up and down the room in the faint light of a half-turned-up, evil-smelling oil-lamp, stood what looked for the moment to Auntie Naarah's blinking eyes—the vision of her dead lover, Major Strachan!

It was his son.

'Well, Miss Knowles,' he cried, coming forward to meet her in his hearty, impulsive manner, 'I've just come to say good-bye. I'm going *out* the day after to-morrow.'

Auntie Naarah shook hands; then, walking across to the table, turned up the lamp. The young man in his khaki stood revealed. A fine, well-set-up fellow, good to look upon with his fair, open countenance and fearless blue eyes.

Auntie Naarah nodded two or three times, which might have signified her approval. 'Bring tea,' she said curtly to Jean, who waited for orders. 'So you've enlisted?' she added.

'Yes, and been hard at it for the last three months. Never knew what work was before,' said Edward Strachan with a laugh. 'Now I think there's no limit to my endurance.'

'Humph! Well, you couldn't have done better.' A gleam of softness came into Auntie Naarah's eyes. 'Try to be as good a man and a soldier as your father, and you'll do.'

'I'll try to,' he answered softly.

At tea Auntie Naarah gave him a brief homily. He must do his best; and she hoped—she quite hoped—that the discipline of the army, so necessary to a young man, and the hard work, would do Edward a great deal of good; and that when the war ended he would either remain in the army or settle down to some business at which he could stick.

'There must be no more chopping and changing about, Edward, because this, that, and the other doesn't suit,' she said; 'you must work.'

Edward agreed. 'Probably I shall stick to my new job,' he said.

Auntie Naarah passed him a plate of stale cake, which was cut up into 'ladies' fingers,' and only came out on the rare afternoons when a visitor was present.

'I have done a momentous thing to-day,' she said solemnly.

'Indeed!' The young man, trying to make two mouthfuls of his cake, looked up, surprised.

'Yes. I have made and signed my will,' was the weighty response.

'I suppose that's a good thing,' remarked Edward. He did not know quite what was the correct thing to say under such circumstances. Personally he had no need to make a will before he went out, as he had nothing to leave. His shilling a day and a trifle in the P.O. was all his worldly store.

'And,' went on Auntie Naarah, fixing him with a stony stare, 'I have left *all* my property to my nephew and nieces—the children of my late brother, George Knowles.'

'Quite right, I should say,' replied Edward cheerfully.

Money was nothing to him, he not belonging exactly to the vast clan who are 'wiser in their generation than the children of light.' He lived almost as carelessly and without thought for the future as the birds of the air. If he had made a little money, it might be by backing a lucky horse, he spent it freely and generously. If he had in turn to live frugally and abjure pleasures, he took it all philosophically as in the day's work.

Soon after he bade his adieus; and Auntie Naarah, putting out the lamp, sat in silence over the smouldering ashes on the hearth till bed-time, living again, in *memory*, the one paradise out of which, as Richter says truly, we cannot be driven.

A day or two after, in reply to a letter to her nieces, which was rather in the nature of a royal command, asking one of them to come and make a lengthy stay, she received the following reply:

'The Chain House,
'Crabtree, *November '15.*

'Dear Auntie Naarah,—Thank you so much for your kind invitation, which one of us would have been very pleased to accept' (Auntie Naarah snorted), 'but unfortunately just now we are *all* engaged, so shall not be able to enjoy the pleasure of your company just yet. It is very tiresome how things happen like this. However, as you make a point of one coming as soon as possible, we have ventured to send a substitute.

'Miss Brooke is a very nice, quiet girl. She has been in Edward's employ as a typist, but he is quite willing to spare her for a little while till Mary (whose privilege it is to visit you next) is at liberty. She is engaged with an old schoolfellow. I think you will like Miss Brooke, and we have tried to instil into her your requirements.

'Mary will look forward to coming a little later.

'We are all very busy just now working for others, and all our spare time is spent in knitting for soldiers.

'We were so glad to hear a pretty good report of you the other day from Herbert. With love from us all,—Your affectionate niece,

'Ellen Knowles.'

Auntie Naarah read the letter through twice, a red spot of indignation burning on her high cheek-bones. '*Too busy! Working for others!* What about me?' she muttered angrily. 'I suppose they could knit socks here as well as at Crabtree. Humph!' She snorted again. 'Send me a type-writing minx! What do I want with her? A strange girl, who would eat like a horse, I expect! I never heard of such a thing! Never!'

With trembling fingers she was about to tear up the offending letter and throw it on the fire, but her habitual carefulness came to the rescue, and she proceeded to fold and tear it in lengths for 'pipe-lighters' to save matches.

A few minutes later Jean, who had tramped in to Tussocks to do some marketing, and who had called at the post-office on her way home, brought in her mistress's frugal tea.

'Have you got the spare room ready as I ordered, Jean?' asked Auntie Naarah quickly.

'Yes, ma'am. It's all ready. I've had the warming-pan in the bed, and put away the best crockery, getting the odd service out. If one of your nieces was to come this very moment, she could just step up.'

'They're not coming,' said Auntie Naarah portentously.

'Not coming?' Jean looked aghast.

'No; they're engaged.'

'What! all of them?'

'Each one, as it appears.'

Jean sniffed. 'Well, we can do without them,' she said, adding, 'I don't know as they aren't like the old turnpikes, as my uncle used to say—"more missed than wanted."'

'But what do you think, Jean?' went on her mistress excitedly. 'They're actually sending some one in their stead—a young girl out of an office.'

Jean made the noise with her tongue against the roof of her mouth which is supposed to express surprised disapproval. 'Well, if that isn't the limit, Miss Naarah! Send a stranger to their own kith and kin!'

Auntie Naarah nodded. 'But I won't have it,' she said. 'I will not put up with such interference. My house is my castle, I suppose.'

'One would think so,' said Jean.

'And I am going to write at once, or directly I have had my tea, to forbid my nieces sending such a girl. That will surprise them.'

'I reckon that will put the lid on,' said Jean with a grim smile. And then they both started and looked at each other in dismay as wheels sounded in the road outside, and some vehicle drew up at the gate.

'Whatever—who can that be?' exclaimed Auntie Naarah.

Steps came up the path; the door-bell rang. Jean flew to answer it, and a cabman stepped over the threshold and put down a small portmanteau. Then Jean became aware of a slight, girlish figure standing behind him.

'Thank you,' said a sweet, low voice. 'I think this is right.'

The cabman pocketed his fare, and went briskly back to his horse, and Jean cried, 'Stop! What does this mean?' She stared at the visitor, who, looking somewhat surprised, had followed her luggage into the hall.

'I—I've come from the Misses Knowles at Crabtree,' said the girl, adding anxiously, 'Am I not expected?'

For answer Jean flung into the parlour, where her mistress was standing a few paces from the half-open door. 'She's come, ma'am,' she gasped.

'I—I never heard of such a thing in my life!' replied Auntie Naarah.

She glared at the doorway. The uninvited guest stood half-revealed in the opening. Then, summoning her courage, she came into the room. 'I am Eva Brooke,' she said timidly. 'Your nieces sent me. I understood they had written, and that you would expect me this afternoon.'

'You understood quite wrong. My nieces wrote, certainly, but I've only just read the letter, and I was about to write and tell them I would not receive you.'

The girl flinched before the fierce gaze and

manner of the infuriated Auntie Naarah. 'I can go back,' she faltered.

'Go back! How are you going to find your way back to the station in the dark? Absurd!' snapped Auntie Naarah. 'You'll have to stay the night at any rate. It is most *provoking*.'

'I didn't want to come,' Eva protested. 'But Mr Knowles gave me no choice. If I had refused I should probably have lost my job in his office, and—and—I have my living to get.'

'I dare say; I dare say.'

Jean came to her mistress's elbow. 'It isn't her fault, as I can see,' she said in a stage-whisper. 'Hadn't you better give her some tea? I'll bring another cup and plate.'

Aunt Naarah grudgingly assented. 'I dare say you'll be glad of some, now you are here,' she said ungraciously, adding, 'We live very plainly and frugally—no luxuries or dainties.'

'I am used to living plainly,' answered Eva. She might have appended to that statement that upon the salary Lawyer Knowles paid her it would have been impossible to do anything else.

Jean came bustling in with a small tray on which (quite unnecessarily, her mistress thought) she had put a plate of cake fingers which had been brought out for Edward Strachan. 'The spare room is all ready,' she murmured reassuringly to the unexpected visitor.

Jean liked the look of the girl, and inwardly decided that she would be an improvement on the Misses Knowles. Certainly Eva Brooke was fair to look upon, with her clear, pale complexion, smooth dark hair, and soft gray eyes shadowed by black lashes.

Jean hoped she would stay. The Hermitage, as it was fitly called, was a dull enough place; a little young life might enliven it somewhat. When she showed the stranger to her room Jean took the opportunity of giving her a few hints as to her behaviour to Miss Naarah.

'She's difficult. No gainsaying that,' said Jean. 'But I believe she's got a heart somewhere. Just you humour her a bit; and don't argue, whatever you do. Miss Mary Knowles, she tries that on when she stays here, and they pretty nearly come to blows.'

'Poor old lady! it must be very lonely for her here,' said Eva compassionately. She glanced at the funereally hung four-post bedstead, and wished herself back at her Crabtree lodgings.

'It is that,' acquiesced Jean. 'But Miss Naarah, she never was one to make friends.'

Eva thought that first evening would never end. Auntie Naarah showed her resentment at the intrusion by a stony silence; but after supper—a Barmecide feast, brought in from motives of economy close on the heels of tea—she relaxed a little.

Could Miss Brooke play cribbage?

Miss Brooke could. She had been well drilled by her invalid father at that curiously arithmetical game. The board was got out accordingly, and they played for some time. Auntie Naarah found her new companion was much quicker at counting than her nieces. Also, she did not forget to take for 'his nob' or 'his heels,' an omission which Auntie Naarah always felt very irritating.

Next morning, when Eva Brooke tentatively made an inquiry about trains, Auntie Naarah replied that there was no hurry; she had better wait till the morrow. And when the morrow came it was the same.

'Do you know, Jean, I'm half-inclined to let the young lady stay on a while,' she said.

'Why not?' returned Jean. 'She seems a kindly body, and gives no trouble; and as for her keep, she doesn't eat more than a canary.'

Auntie Naarah's miserly soul had noticed the visitor's small appetite with approval. Perhaps, if the truth were known, this had been the determining point in her favour. Anyhow, it ended in Eva Brooke's staying on for the present.

In accordance with her promise to Lawyer Knowles before she started, Eva wrote a brief summary of the state of affairs. Miss Naarah was pretty well, and she herself seemed to be giving satisfaction. Auntie Naarah did not trouble to write to her nieces; they had taken too much upon themselves, and must be made aware of the fact. Auntie Naarah would teach her legatees to dictate to her!

(*Continued on page 804.*)

'THE CURSE OF SCOTLAND.'

By Charles Menmuir, M.A.

THIS term, applied to the 'nine of diamonds,' has been in vogue in Scotland for upwards of two centuries at least, but, despite the efforts of many writers who have endeavoured to trace its origin, the subject has never been fully treated within even the limits of a magazine article. Any reader desirous of acquiring some knowledge of this phrase, as a sort of nickname for the playing-card, will find that he has at present no small amount of hunting up to do in rather out-of-the-way sources. The present writer, having been faced with this trouble, began at last to jot down the various references to the subject which he happened to come across. In stringing these together here, however, he does not presume either to have arrived at a definite explanation of how the term arose, or even to have tabulated all the many suggestions that have

appeared from the various pens more or less busy with this great 'Card Controversy' during the past hundred and fifty years. His purpose has been the humbler one of giving a résumé of what has been written on the question, and of placing on record the most important of the many elucidations of it that have been put forward at one time or another for a gullible public to swallow.

At the outset it may be appropriate to remark that this point of dispute about a playing-card may claim the distinction of having a precedent in support of it; for a writer of Elizabethan times makes a reference to the same kind of squabbling about a similar point in his day. The book which contains his statement is now very rare, bearing the catchy and alliterative title of *The Pennyless Parliament of Thread-bare Poets.* Its author appears almost to have foreseen the attempts of a later age to deal with such a matter, and indeed he seems to encourage such efforts, inasmuch as he gravely informs us that 'it shall be lawful for coney-catchers to fall together by the ears about the four Knaves of Cards which of them may claim superiority.'

The most widely accepted explanation of the phrase, 'the curse of Scotland,' is the one linked to the name of that Duke of Cumberland whose memory was rendered infamous throughout Scotland by his cruelty after Culloden. According to tradition, he wrote upon the back of the 'nine of diamonds' his order for the massacre that followed the battle. To bolster up this story, several points have been made much of. Its supporters, for instance, have attached great weight to the fact that Cumberland was an inveterate gambler, and generally carried a pack of cards in his pocket. What more natural, then, according to their line of argument, than that he should have used one of them in writing his order? Some have even gone the length of suggesting that the actual card is still in existence. In *Notes and Queries* (8th series, vol. iii. page 416), Father Oswald, O.S.B., wrote as follows: 'I am told on good authority that the identical card is preserved at Slains Castle, Aberdeenshire, the seat of Lord Errol.' This was replied to effectively in a later volume of the same magazine by W. Cooke, F.S.A., who stated that 'my friend, Captain Webbe, who married a sister of the present Lord Errol, has most kindly made a search for this card, and he writes to me: "The only card I can find among the Kilmarnock papers is the *eight* of diamonds; it has a short letter written on the back of it from the Duke of Hamilton to the Countess of Yarmouth, expressing regret at his not having been able to call upon her. There is no other card; nor has my wife ever heard of there having been another in existence here."'

Another writer, also favouring the Cumberland story, pointed out in the same magazine that this use of playing-cards for writing notes upon was not at all unusual in those days. 'To use,' he says, 'playing-cards for notes was certainly not an uncommon practice. I have now before me two notes of a serious character, and on matters of business, written in 1767, one of them (by a right reverend prelate) on the back of an ace of hearts, and the other on that of a three of spades.' Some might be inclined to regard this as making Cumberland's supposed use of the card more likely; but it is very significant that no one has ever made any endeavour to give us the exact words of this brutal order, and, further, even those who believed that he wrote it were by no means unanimous, for some of them maintained that what was written was really the Duke's first account of his victory. This variation secured particular favour in the eyes of those who favoured Cumberland, as it served the double purpose of whitewashing the Duke and of still admitting the connection between his name and the card, if only as a sample of his enemies' malice. This account is also mentioned in *Notes and Queries.* 'Cumberland was known to be a gambler and fond of cards, and is said often to have carried a pack in his pocket, and the first account of his victory at Culloden is said to have been written on the field upon the back of the nine of diamonds.'

Another suggestion has also been put forward that it was the other side who were the guilty ones. The following, which is again quoted from *Notes and Queries,* is the most detailed account of this explanation that has so far appeared: 'There certainly seems to be something wanting explanation with regard to the circumstance connected with the battle of Culloden and the supposed order of the Duke of Cumberland not to give quarter, which was said to be written on the nine of diamonds. Now, on the morning when the Lord Kilmarnock was beheaded, Lord Balmerino sent a message to him desiring an interview, at which Lord Balmerino asked Lord Boyd "if he knew of any order being made before the battle of Culloden for giving no quarter to the Duke's army," at the same time declaring "that he himself knew nothing of any such order." Lord Kilmarnock replied that he knew nothing of any such order, but that since the battle of Culloden he had been informed that there was some order to that effect, signed George Murray, and that it fell into the hands of the Duke immediately after the battle. Lord Boyd, up to his last moments, denied any knowledge of the message or command alluded to, and said "that he would not knowingly have acted under such an order, because he looked upon it as unmilitary and beneath the character of a soldier." Here then, on the one hand, it is asserted the Duke sent an order to give no quarter to the Jacobites; and, on the other, we have the same charge made against the latter in respect to the Royalists.'

Although for long this hypothetical connection of the card with the battle of Culloden was firmly believed in and most generally accepted, it is interesting to notice that it was precisely the one most easily ruled out of court, because evidence exists in black and white that the name 'Curse of Scotland' was applied to the card before ever Culloden was fought. Until quite recently the earliest printed record of the phrase was that contained in Dr Houston's Memoirs of his own lifetime (1747). On page 92 of that edition the author, in describing the state of parties in Scotland shortly after the rebellion of 1715, wrote that Lord Justice Ormistone, who had been very zealous in suppressing the rebels, 'became universally hated in Scotland, where they called him the Curse of Scotland; and when the ladies were at cards playing the nine of diamonds (commonly called the Curse of Scotland), they called it the Justice Clerk.'

In the Oxford *English Dictionary*, however, a still earlier quotation is given from the *British Apollo*, a magazine which was first published in 1708. In the third volume (for 1710) occurs the following: 'The nine of diamonds is called the Curse of Scotland.' The present writer became aware of this quite accidentally, for he had been content with what Dr Murray had given by way of quotation under the heading 'curse.' Under this various references are given, with the Houston one as the earliest. Naturally any one would suppose that this would be the most that the dictionary could do for us, and consequently there would be no inducement to prolong the search through its pages. Turn, however, to the word 'diamond,' and there you find the earlier allusion from the *British Apollo*. The omission of this under the word 'curse' is possibly due to the fact that it was not known to the editor until after the portion containing the word 'curse' was printed. None the less is the omission to be regretted, for 'curse' is undoubtedly the fit and proper word for the quotation to appear under, although there is nothing to be said against it also being placed under 'diamond.' Shortly after stumbling across this fact, I chanced to notice also that this same point had been commented upon by a writer in *Notes and Queries*.

Another interesting proof that Cumberland had nothing to do with the card was brought forward some few years ago by a Mr Hawkens, who owned a print of which he wrote these remarks: 'Cumberland's connection with the nine of diamonds cannot be true, for I have in my possession a print entitled "Briton's Association against the Pope's Bulls." In it the Young Pretender is represented attempting to lead across the Tweed a herd of bulls laden with curses, excommunications, indulgences, &c. On the ground before them lies the nine of diamonds. The print is dated Oct. 21, 1745, some months previous to the battle of Culloden.'

Before proceeding to a statement of the other guesses at the origin of the term, it may be worth while alluding to an instance somewhat analogous to the above. In various parts of Ireland, especially in Kilkenny county, the six of hearts is known as 'Grace's Card.' The explanation usually given of this is that a gentleman called Grace, on being asked, with promises of royal favour, to help William III., gave this answer to an emissary of Schomberg's who had been sent to him: 'Tell your master I despise his offer, and that honour and conscience are dearer to a gentleman than all the wealth and titles a prince can bestow.' According to the tale, this reply was written on the back of a card with the six of hearts upon it.

The next attempt at solving the problem with which we now deal is probably the one that has had most backing; and, as regards the weight of authority supporting it, it seems to have the strongest claim to be considered the most feasible one that has yet been put forward. It is stated well and concisely in the following terms in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*: 'Perhaps the least worthless of the many explanations offered is that it involves a reference to the detestation entertained in Scotland towards John Dalrymple, first Earl of Stair, on account of his activity in promoting the Union, and especially for his share in the Massacre of Glencoe. His heraldic bearings, "Or, on a saltire azure, nine lozenges in the field," bore a fanciful resemblance to the nine of diamonds.'

The Oxford *English Dictionary*, while pointing out that the origin of the phrase 'curse of Scotland' is doubtful, considers the Dalrymple explanation the best of a bad lot. Dr Murray cautiously terms it 'a not unlikely suggestion.' In doing so he follows in the wake of Annandale's *Imperial Dictionary*, which, after enumerating most of the usual explanations, holds that the 'Stair' theory is most probably the true one. The *Century Dictionary* also quotes this explanation, and adds, somewhat vaguely: 'Other explanations have been proposed.'

The heraldic proof seems to have been rather popular, for at least two other names are given as claimants to the doubtful privilege of being the cause of the first sinister use of the term. The first of these was Colonel Packer, of whom a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1786 states: 'The common expression made use of at cards refers to the arms of Packer, namely, Gules, a cross of lozenges, and that Colonel Packer was one of the persons on the scaffold when Charles I. was beheaded, and the same soldier afterwards commanded in Scotland.' When he was there he acted with so great severity that he became detested, and the evil taint attached to his name was supposed to have caused it to be linked with the nine of diamonds, because of the suggestion derived from his coat of arms.

In a similar manner a Scotch M.P., named Campbell, had his name dragged into the question. In a scarce volume entitled *Chronology, or the Historian's Companion* (4th edition, London, 1826), occurs the following: 'Diamonds, nine of, called the Curse of Scotland, from a Scotch member of Parliament, part of whose family arms is the nine of diamonds, voting for the introduction of the malt-tax into Scotland.' This personage was apparently Daniel Campbell of Shawfield, who was member for Glasgow in the early part of the eighteenth century. His house was destroyed by a mob in 1727 because he was suspected of 'having given Government the information on the habits and statistics of Scotland necessary for the preparation of the malt-tax, as well as having exposed a system of evasion of duties in the Scots tobacco trade.' Unfortunately for the feasibility of this theory of his connection with the playing-card, it must be added that his coat of arms cannot be said to suggest the nine of diamonds, even in the remotest degree.

Another set of explanations seeks to derive the phrase from certain card games. Brewer, in his *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, says that the two most plausible suggestions are: '(1) The nine of diamonds in the game of "Pope Joan" is called the Pope, the Antichrist of the Scotch Reformers. (2) In the game of "comette," introduced by Queen Mary, it is the great winning card, and the game was the curse of Scotland because it was the ruin of so many families.' The first of these suggestions was once stated in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in the following syllogistic form, and was evidently intended to be the final word on the matter: 'The Curse of Scotland must be something which that nation hate and detest; but the Scots hold in the utmost detestation the Pope; at the game of Pope Joan, the Nine of Diamonds is Pope; therefore the Nine of Diamonds is the Curse of Scotland. Q.E.D.'

It certainly seems a natural source to seek for the origin in some card game or other, but this does not in itself imply that the use of the phrase arose in this manner. In the case of 'comète,' for example, it can be shown that this game clearly had nothing to do with the question. In a French book of 1739, called *Académie universelle des Jeux*, the game is described as having been played with two whole packs, the first to contain all the red cards, the other the black, each pack thus formed to be used alternately, the nine of diamonds being the red comète, and the nine of clubs the black. According to this, there would be two comètes, both equally liable to be the curse of Scotland. This theory, therefore, fails to account for the particular suit—diamonds; and, as it stands, either clubs or diamonds would have an equal right to be the curse of Scotland.

Grose, the antiquary, in his *Tour through Scotland* (1789), turned to Scottish history for an answer to this card conundrum, and maintained that 'diamonds . . . imply royalty, and every ninth king of Scotland has been observed for many ages to be a tyrant and a curse to the country.' Brewer, in referring to this, made the sarcastic comment that it was a pity Grose did not give the names of these kings. Singer, in his book, *Researches into the History of Playing Cards*, also gives the same explanation. In writing of various cards that have got nicknames, he tells us: 'The Queen of Clubs is called in Northamptonshire "Queen Bess," because the queen, history says, was of a swarthy complexion; the four of spades, "Ned Stokes," but why I know not; the nine of diamonds, the "Curse of Scotland," because every ninth monarch of that nation was a bad king to his subjects. I have been told by old people that this card was so called long before the rebellion of 1745.' Unhappily, Grose's historical knowledge was not always above reproach, for in another of his books, called *Lexicon Balatronicum: a Dictionary of Buckish Slang, University Wit, and Pickpocket Eloquence*, he confuses Argyle with Dalrymple, and states the explanation connected with the name of the latter as follows: 'Others say it is from its similarity to the arms of Argyle, the Duke of Argyle having been very instrumental in bringing about the Union, which, by some Scotch patriots, has been considered as detrimental to their country.'

At least two other explanations connect the crown of Scotland with the nine of diamonds. One of these fanciful tales informs us that in the turbulent times of Mary Queen of Scots a daring fellow named George Campbell attempted to steal the crown out of Edinburgh Castle. He failed in this, but succeeded in stealing nine jewels out of it. As a consequence a heavy tax was put on the people to replace these gems. The writer of this wonderful concoction then proceeded to clinch his story by adding that he perfectly recollected in the early half of last century that the card was often called 'George Campbell' in the Highlands of Scotland.

A variant upon the above occurs in a volume printed about 1770, and called the *Oracle, or Resolver of Questions*. Amongst the questions which it attempts to 'resolve' is this vexed one of the 'Curse of Scotland.' The author proceeds with question and answer in these terms:

'*Q.* Pray, why is the Nine of Diamonds called the Curse of Scotland?

'*A.* Because the Crown of Scotland had but nine diamonds in it, and they were never able to get a tenth.'

Chatto, the author of a work called *Facts and Speculations on the Origin and History of Playing Cards*, actually accepted this ridiculous statement as the genuine one, and wrote of it that it was perhaps as near the truth as any of the others.

Another explanation that has been put forward is that the word 'curse' is a corrupted form of 'cross,' and from this the attempt has been made to link the card to the St Andrew's Cross by reading the phrase 'curse of Scotland' as if it were originally the 'Cross of Scotland.' This transposition of the letter does, as a matter of fact, occur occasionally in Scots speech, as, for example, 'grass' is frequently spoken of as 'girse;' but even if the feasibility of this change be admitted, there still remains to be accounted for the idea of evil associated with the card. One would rather have expected an exactly opposite meaning if the Cross of Scotland had any connection with the matter at all.

Whichever of the clues is the genuine one, it is at any rate fairly safe to assume that the card must have been named after some object of public detestation. As regards this point, more than one of the above explanations would fit, but certainly not this relationship with the Cross of St Andrew. The Oxford *English Dictionary* expressly states that 'curse' and 'cross' are quite distinct. 'Of connection with cross which has been suggested there is no trace.' It may be noted here, also, that the difficulty of arriving at a conclusion about the phrase is increased by the fact that the derivation of 'curse' (Late O.E. *curs*) is of unknown origin, and 'no word of similar form and sense is known in Teutonic, Romanic, or Celtic.'

The *Century Dictionary* records that the word 'curse' has been also supposed to originate in a particular use of an early form of the word 'cross,' as in making the sign of the cross in exorcism. It requires, however, a considerable stretch of imagination to trace a resemblance in the nine pips on the card to either the St Andrew's Cross or the cross used as a sign for protection from evil. In reality, the 'five' in a pack would be nearer the thing, and even then the special suit of diamonds is not accounted for, as any of the other suits would be equally applicable.

It is interesting to note that several other cards have also been given nicknames. Mention has already been made in this article of the six of hearts being termed 'Grace's Card' in Ireland. In Northumberland the four of hearts at whist is sometimes called 'Hob Collingwood,' and it is regarded by many players as an unlucky card. The four of clubs has also a bad reputation among sailors, who usually speak of it as the 'devil's bedpost.' According to a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1791, the queen of clubs is known in Northamptonshire as 'Queen Bess;' and the four of the same suit is termed 'Ned Stokes.' It is a somewhat remarkable fact that the 'four' of these different suits should be thus singled out for special notice. No explanation, so far as I am aware, has ever been given of this.

Some years ago Dr Murray, the editor-in-chief of the monumental Oxford *English Dictionary*, made inquiry through the columns of *Notes and Queries* for information regarding the phrase 'Curse of Scotland,' and in doing so he made the statement that he had not then any ground for thinking that the phrase was of Scottish origin. One would hardly have expected that the learned doctor would have been so sceptical as to the birthplace of the term, more especially as he was himself a Scotsman. Later on, however, when dealing with it in the dictionary, he admitted that there is practically no doubt but that it did hail from Scotland, and it is surely significant that all the elucidations so far brought forward have been of Scottish birth. They may, one and all, be erroneous, for absolute proof of the truth of any of them seems now past praying for, but they have this at least in common, that they are all of Scottish origin.

I got recently on the track of what I imagined was to turn out an English connection with the nine of diamonds, but unfortunately I drew blank when the chase was followed up. As the incident, however, deals with a playing-card, it may not be out of place to record it here. In *Notes and Queries*, 9th series, vol. v. page 493, a query was inserted as follows, but no answer, so far as I am aware, was given to it at the time: 'The nine of diamonds carved on a pulpit. Can any one of your readers suggest a reason for it being carved on a pulpit in Spofforth Church, Yorkshire? (Eboracum).'

Through the courtesy of Mr Fred Mitchell, architect and surveyor, Leeds, with whom I got into touch over this point, I have been put into possession of an item of more than passing interest with regard to this pulpit carving. When I wrote to Mr Mitchell, soliciting his help towards a solution, he informed me that a carving of this character did exist, but that it certainly was not in Spofforth Church. In a further communication from the same gentleman he expressed himself in these terms: 'I am inclined to the opinion that the mention of Spofforth is an error; it should have been Sprotborough, a village a few miles west of Doncaster. I have looked up my notes of this church, as promised, and find: "Fine late oak pulpit, apparently contemporary —very curious carving on door, a pack of cards, a jug, and a dice-box, said to represent gambling, drinking, and roguery."'

Not content with giving me this enlightenment, Mr Mitchell took steps to verify his previous communication, and, with the co-operation of his brother, he laid me under still further indebtedness by forwarding to me a drawing of the door-panel, showing the jug, dice-box, and a pack of cards, on the top one of which is represented the six of diamonds.

My gratitude for the above information did not, however, prevent me from being somewhat disappointed that this six of diamonds did not

happen to be the nine of diamonds. I had to console myself with the fact that all I have come across in connection with the 'Curse of Scotland' has been confined to Scottish sources; whilst I had also to admit that the origin of the phrase still remains an open question, even although its nationality be beyond a doubt.

'DICKY' DOYLE AND HIS ILLUSTRATIONS.

By E. Beresford Chancellor, M.A.

IF you examine that series of comic, yet essentially accurate, delineations of London life which Richard Doyle contributed to *Punch* and the *Cornhill* midway in the last century, under the titles of 'Manners and Customs of ye Englyshe' and 'Bird's-Eye Views of Society,' you will be transported to a world which seems, in all outward semblance, as far removed from our present state of society as that of the Plantagenets. The former series appeared in 1849, the latter in 1864, and in those fifteen years dress and habits altered perhaps less than during any other similar period during the reign of Victoria. If you take the fifteen preceding years, you will find that then the dress and manners and customs of the English went through a very obvious change. In the matter of ladies' clothes this change was marked enough, but hardly so much so as in those of the men, in whose habiliments the trousers, originally introduced by Brummell, became the rule, and not, as before, the rather rare and, as then regarded, *outré* exception. The top-hat, too, more or less in its present form, was the invariable concomitant of the smartly dressed man, and the peg-top trousers had largely taken the place of the previously strapped variety, and might, indeed, frequently be seen composed of a plaid material such as Lord Brougham wore in his later days. Similarly, during the fifteen years succeeding 1864, a no less drastic change took place in clothes: the trousers were no longer peg-topped; the top-hat (that constantly changing item of attire) had altered in a variety of ways; the frock-coat had come in, and the stock had gone out (you won't find an umbrella in Doyle's 1864 series, but you will come across many stocks). The varieties of changes in ladies' dress are too complicated for the mere man to enumerate or describe, but the disappearance of the crinoline, the advent of shoulder-of-mutton sleeves (to name but these), produced a far different appearance between, say, the belle of 1864 and her of 1879 than between one of 1849 and one of 1864.

Perhaps the best way to show how greatly 1849 differed from 1917 will be to take some of Doyle's pictures of that period, and point out the strange and wonderful things to be found in them.

The first represents an 'At Home,' the feature of which is the polka. Who dances the polka to-day? It survived its contemporaries, the schottische, the mazourka, and the redowa, all of which we stole from Poland, but is now more or less definitely *en retraite*. The gibus had not then become general, and men brought their ordinary top-hats (they almost slept in them, one would think) into full drawing-room, although one or two of the former variety are to be seen. The ladies' head-dresses range from the simple *à la grecque* convention to the terrible turban worn by the matron, who clung to this Oriental and, to the philosopher, significant covering. Old gentlemen wore fobs and stocks, young gentlemen wonderful ties made up into gigantic bows; and only the military were adorned with moustaches (a beard was then a rarity), as may be seen in the picture showing Hyde Park, where coaches with their two footmen standing behind jostle cabriolets such as Lord Tom Noddy called for on a famous occasion, and such as Mr Montague Tigg was accustomed to drive.

No. 4 of the series shows us St James's Street on a drawing-room day, and although the topographer might well question the accuracy of the architectural drawing, we at least have the famous bow-window of White's in all its critical glory, and the gate of the Palace in the distance. Most of us have seen those survivals of past magnificence, the state-coaches, on similar occasions in our own time, so that their presence in Doyle's picture does not seem so archaic as some of its features—policemen in top-hats, for instance.

In 'Tea and a Little Musyck,' as No. 6 is entitled, we have a scene we should have to travel far to discover to-day—especially as here the majority of the audience is composed of young bucks gorgeous in elaborate neckties, with low-cut waistcoats, very prominent jewellery, and the inevitable top-hat carried into the music-room.

The representation called 'Ye Commons Resolved into a Commyttee of ye Whole House'—not the present Gothic structure, but its insignificant predecessor—is interesting, because one can identify some of the protagonists. Sir Robert Peel is addressing the House in his characteristic attitude. Mr Disraeli is sitting close by, with his abundant locks showing beneath his back-tilted top-hat. Lord John Russell (Premier) and Lord Palmerston (with his hat over his eyes—he was then Foreign Secretary) and the large form of Mr Roebuck may be distinguished on the other side of the Treasury table.

The next picture shows the furore created by Jenny Lind, who gave her great series of concerts in 1847–48, and the inability to hear whom threw half fashionable London into despair. Here we have a well-dressed crowd fighting and struggling to obtain admission into the principal entrance of Her Majesty's, for all the world as if it was a mob at the pit or gallery doors on a first night.

Exeter Hall is now no more, but in the days of yore it was a great place for meetings, and Doyle shows us 'A Christian Gentleman Denouncynge ye Pope' during the anti-papal campaign which raged at this time, and which led (through *Punch's* attitude on the subject) to Doyle (who was a Roman Catholic) severing his connection with the periodical.

The picture of the Royal Academy represents the yearly exhibition of that body in Trafalgar Square, whither it had removed from Somerset House in 1838, and which it left for Burlington House in 1869.

Although the Derby as represented by Doyle is familiar to most of us — even if the dresses worn then, and the means of transit, have altered out of all recognition, the picture which follows is as strange almost as Tyburn Tree or the Stocks. It is 'A Prospect of Greenwich Fair,' and the once famous Richardson's Show is in full swing; there are notices of the giant and the inevitable fat lady; a tragedy and a pantomime may be seen for threepence; and in another part a gentleman armed with enormous boxing-gloves invites all and sundry to come and learn the noble art of self-defence; what time the showman bawls out an insinuating programme, and musicians in wonderful hats do their best to drown his oratory.

The picture of the House of Lords during a hearing of appeals is interesting as showing Lord Brougham, almost the only peer present, seated, deep in thought, with crossed legs clothed in the plaid which has been noticed as a favourite habiliment of that remarkable man.

The dominating feature of these wonderful little pictures in miniature is the top-hat. In 'Society Enjoyinge Itselfe at a Soyrée,' it is there carried in the hand. In 'A View of Mr Lorde hys Cryket-Grounde,' most of the players wear it (what a different Lords to the one we know!—although the site is the same). It fills the picture in the view of a flower-show at Chiswick Gardens; at a shareholders' meeting where railway dividends are announced at a minimum (the railway boom was then producing the usual results of booms) only the very excited members of the meeting are cooling their heads by temporarily discarding their beloved covering; men wear it at a Thames regatta, when they are going on apparently lengthy railway journeys, at the cider cellars (where do they drink cider in cellars to-day?), even when they are fishing from punts off Richmond, where, by-the-by, we see the old 'Star and Garter,' so recently demolished, on the adjacent hill.

In those days men used to dine off Whitebait at Blackwall, as here we have them probably at 'The Brunswick' (Lovegrove's tavern) or 'The Artichoke,' both once noted houses for the delicacy.

In No. 27 in the series we are introduced to the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's. This was when the exhibition was at the Baker Street Bazaar, which it left for its present palatial home only in 1884. The names and effigies of some celebrated murderers are given; and we see Edward Oxford, who shot at Queen Victoria in Constitution Hill on June 10, 1840; James Greenacre, who murdered Mrs Brown, and was hanged on May 2, 1837; Rush, Daniel Good, Thom, and other malefactors.

Some of these little pictures, crowded with life and character, instinct with wit and humour, as they are, yet seem to us to-day to recall a period as remote for all practical purposes as the Middle Ages. For instance, the 'Prospect of an Election' (No. 31), with its hustings, its vociferous member, its motley crowd, its ferocious partisan, carries us back to Eatanswill —and Eatanswill is now, except in Dickens's vivid prose and Phiz's no less vivid pencil, at the back of beyond. Look, too, at plate 34, where a comic actor (is it Charles Mathews? I think so) is amusing a crowded house innocent of stalls—the pit filling the ground-floor of the auditorium from the back up to the orchestra! The Zoological Gardens as shown in the next picture is the same, yet not the same, as we know it. The bear-pit and the cages where the king of beasts sits magnificent are now but a small item in the greatly enlarged place. Nor do we to-day see much of the once regular concomitants of Guy Fawkes's Day, as represented in plate 37, where one of the squares—from the statue and the mounted cleric, I imagine St James's Square, where William III. in stone and the Bishop of London's house still exist, to be intended—where one of the squares, I say, is filled with processions of boys carrying the one-time distinctive effigy.

In some of Doyle's pictures are introduced the portraits of famous contemporaries. Thus in No. 30, where we are shown 'Ye Farmer's Friend Impressynge on ye Agrycultural Interest that it is Ruined,' we have Mr Disraeli on his feet, apparently horrifying his auditory by his prognostications. Disraeli had become leader of the Conservative party in 1847, a year after the Repeal of the Corn Laws, it will be remembered. Again, at a 'Promenade Concert' (No. 40), the once famous figure of M. Jullien is seen conducting the orchestra; while Lord Brougham

in the House of Lords and Sir Robert Peel addressing the Commons have already been noted.

In this series of pictorial comments (so to term them) on current events, as well as in the later 'Bird's-Eye Views of Society,' which are practically all concerned with the social life of the period, we have 'in little' a record of the manners and customs of an altogether different day from our own. Modes of dress and modes of thought, amusements, and social habits of all kinds have undergone such a drastic revolution that in looking at these pictures of our forebears we are relegated to a wholly alien kind of society, and can but connect the two, here and there, by the presence of some landmark or some rare surviving observance common to both.

Perhaps one of the most marked differences, especially noticeable now, is the change in the garb of the military, the busbies and red uniforms of the Grenadier Guards then giving that touch of colour to an otherwise rather gray London, which to-day has given place to the khaki which mixes all kinds of regiments in one common ochre tint.

Richard Doyle, who was responsible for these illustrations of a past time, was born in September 1824, in London, and was the son of that John Doyle whose political caricatures over the signature of H. B. were at once the delight and the terror of politicians and statesmen. In his fifteenth year (so precocious was he) young Richard published his illustrations of the famous Eglinton Tournament; and another example of his early cleverness exists in his manuscript journal, now in the British Museum, which in its accompanying illustrations exhibits wonderfully fresh and inventive genius in a youth, for such he was when he wrote it. He first contributed to *Punch* in 1841, and two years later became one of its regular staff—the present well-known cover of that periodical being his work. His 'Manners and Customs of ye Englyshe' first appeared in *Punch* in 1849, with annotations by Perceval Leigh, who wrote under the pseudonym of 'Mr Pips.' The 'Bird's-Eye Views of Society' came out in the *Cornhill* while that magazine was under Thackeray's direction. In 1850, owing to a difference with *Punch* over the Roman Catholic question, on which that journal took a very pronounced anti-papal line, Doyle, who, as I have said before, was a Roman Catholic, severed his connection with it. Much book-illustration was subsequently undertaken by him, and his graceful and quaint designs may be seen in *The Newcomes* and *Rebecca and Rowena*, in *The Scouring of the White Horse*, in *The Battle of Life*, in *The Bon Gaultier Ballads*, and in *The King of the Golden River*. Later he took to water-colour work. In December 1883, while lunching at the Athenæum, he had an apoplectic stroke, from which he never recovered. Mr Austin Dobson once wrote of him: 'In Oberon's court he would at once have been appointed sergeant-painter.' He could have no better or more illuminating epitaph!

A CANADIAN FRONTIER TOWN.

By Fred A. Talbot.

IT was a blazing-hot August day. We had been paddling listlessly since a heavy lunch which had just been negotiated, and the heat of old Sol was not conducive to hard work. We were drifting round a bluff on the Fraser River, when suddenly the Indian in the bow of the crazy dug-out yelled, 'There's Fort George!'

The words acted like magic. It was more than six weeks since we had last been in the hubbub of civilisation, and that was at Edmonton. But as we had toiled along the lonely trail we had heard much about Fort George. Every prospector and traveller we had met had been full to overflowing about the boom in the new town, and the Indians during our six-days' canoe journey of three hundred and fifty miles down the Fraser had talked of little else. Though hot, tired, and lazy, we pulled at the paddles, to cover the last mile in record time, as if just setting out.

It was not long before we were pulling across the broad stretch of clear green water where the Nechaco joins the Fraser, and shot under the high, overhanging bank on which is perched the Indian reservation. The Indians gazed at us stolidly, their features relaxing into a broad smile when one of our Indian crew sang out some exclamation in incomprehensible Cree. A little later we ran into the bank with a smart jerk, just opposite the Hudson Bay fort, from which the town derives its name, and which for over a century had been a lonely outpost in the wilderness, an oasis to the white traveller, but which now was being absorbed rapidly in a maze of civilisation's bonds.

Tents were quickly pitched, and a general clear-up indulged in to remove the traces of the last six days' experiences on the river. Then I sallied forth to explore the town. There were bustle and excitement on every side. At this time, now some years ago, the town was only four months old; but in that short period much had been done, for in Canada months are as years in the Old World. The town had been planned in the usual American manner with streets running

at right angles to one another, and there was that characteristic uniformity in width.

Fort George came into existence with a rush. It is difficult for one who has never been through the country to realise how isolated the spot was, how inaccessible, and what the pioneers had to experience in order to be in 'on the ground-floor,' as they call it. The site is at the confluence of the Fraser and Nechaco rivers, two of the most important waterways in the interior of British Columbia. Placing one leg of a compass in the town, one could at the time draw with the other a circle of three hundred miles radius, and then not strike the nearest railway.

Seeing that the spot was so remote and so difficult to gain, it seemed a somewhat mad idea to establish a town there, and one wondered what its future would be. But there was method in the pioneers' madness. The Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was then being driven right through the country, and the pioneers found that Fort George was to be the point where the Nechaco and Fraser rivers would be crossed at one and the same time. Then, again, they knew the country like a book, even though it was closed to commerce and civilisation. They knew that every mountain range ran in such and such a direction, and that the passes by which these clumps could be threaded all converged to one point, and that was Fort George; that the trade routes to the interior followed those passes; that all the provisions for certain udson Bay posts were supplied over a wide circle from the pivoting fort at the confluence of the two rivers; and that if the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway wished to enter Vancouver, it would have to spread out from Fort George to do so. All this and more was known to these hardy frontiersmen, and there and then they decided that Fort George must blossom into a great town and become an important railway centre, and that some day it would be the focus of a large railway network, ramifying to all corners of British Columbia.

The rush to the site of the new town has never been equalled since the discovery of gold in the Klondike and the mad stampede that then ensued. These frontiersmen and others anxious to buy land came up by rail as far as Ashcroft. Thence they went over the two hundred and twenty miles long Cariboo Road as best they could. Some walked, others rode, while every kind of conveyance that could be brought into service was utilised. It was a motley throng that pressed along that track, winding up and down, in and out, and suffering the tortures of thirst as they toiled over the terrible alkali desert thirty miles in width, on which not a drop of water could be obtained. The road brought them to Soda Creek, where it ended. Before them was the turbulent Fraser running Pacificwards at from six to eight miles per hour. There was no trail for the next one hundred and fifty miles passable to vehicles. The river was the obvious means of communication, and they had to get up this as best they could. The Indians at the Fort George reservation welcomed the invasion with open arms; it was a harvest to them, and they charged outrageous prices for any assistance they rendered.

It must also be remembered that all the participants in the rush had to bring their own necessities with them, such as tents and provisions, for prices were at famine-level in Fort George. When they reached the site of the town, they pitched their tents and squatted down, awaiting the auction sale. In due course the lots were put up, and spirited bidding ensued for the choicest positions.

After the sale there was another wild rush to get buildings up and to commence business. This was for a store, that for a barber, another for a baker, these here and there for land offices, a restaurant, and so on. Two banks came in, and ran up buildings with timber walls and canvas roofs, the managers sleeping on the premises with their loaded rifles beside them. Building had scarcely commenced before the irrepressible newspaper man appeared on the scene, and rapidly housed his type and pedal printing-machine, so that simultaneously with the laying of the foundations of the first timber buildings the initial issue of the local newspaper appeared. Down on the river-bank a sawmill sprang into existence, and soon the screeching circular saw was whizzing round, ripping into lumber the logs sent down the river.

Then a small steamboat appeared on the river, maintaining communication between Fort George and Soda Creek, the head of the Cariboo Road. It drove a thriving trade, until one day the captain mistook his course and knocked a hole in the bottom of his little craft in the ill-famed cañon. For a month Fort George was as completely cut off from the outside world as if it were at the North Pole. The luckless inhabitants were placed in a tight corner. Butter was exhausted, flour soared to a prohibitive figure, milk was unobtainable, tea and coffee became luxuries, and sugar was as scarce as snow in summer. Every day the unfortunate marooned inhabitants anxiously awaited the repair of the boat and its arrival with provisions. Many, unable to stand privation, hurried away, and those who remained went on short rations to tide them over the famine.

But the inhabitants were resolved not to be caught napping in that way again. Down on the river-bank a shipyard was rigged up, and soon tools were being vigorously plied in the building of the hull of a larger river steamboat, the machinery for which was coming up from the railway as fast as possible. Amid much jubilation, the hull was successfully launched, the machinery installed, and the *Bx*, as the craft was called, proved herself one of the finest little boats ever seen on an inland waterway.

I was sauntering along Main Street, taking in the general features of the city, when I was suddenly accosted with 'Looking for a job, stranger?'

I turned, and saw a tanned, husky frontiersman, with a hammer in one hand and a saw in the other.

'Not much. What do you think?'

'Thought as perhaps you was. I can give you a good one. Come on; I'll give you six dollars a day and your board.'

Twenty-five shillings a day, and unskilled labour at that! I thought the man must be hard up for labour if he was willing to pay such a wage.

'Honour bright! What! isn't it enough?' he went on, observing my silence. 'Well, make it seven dollars.'

I shook my head negatively. I was thinking of the thousands working for less a week in Britain than this man was offering me for a day. 'I don't want any work,' I explained; 'I'm just looking round.'

'Gee! I don't know what I'll do. Can't get a man anywhere;' and he expectorated vehemently. 'Look here; I wish you would come and give me a hand. I'll willingly pay you for any assistance you can give. I'll do the rough, hard part of it; only, I must have some one to help me. It's a double-handed job. Come on, that's a good fellow!'

But I was proof against his pleading. I wandered a little farther down the street, and ran into a prosperous-looking young fellow. With frontier bonhomie, we were soon conversing as if lifelong friends. I broached the labour question, and related my experience of a few seconds before.

'I guess he'll have to do it himself. Why, here it is difficult to get a man for love or money. I have purchased a large estate up the river, and want to erect a summer home. I asked an English carpenter if he would undertake the job. Yes, he was agreeable. What would I pay him? Eight and a half dollars—roughly, thirty-five shillings—a day (what he was already receiving) and his board. No; he refused. Wouldn't go under fifty shillings a day and his board. That summer home of mine is still in the clouds, and will stay there until I can get labour cheaper.'

On all sides it was the same story. If you wanted a job done you had to do it yourself; you couldn't get a man, no matter what you would pay. Money was as cheap as dirt; these frontiersmen put no value on it. Nothing was less than 'two bits'—that is, a shilling. Smaller coins had no purchasing-power. In fact, in these frontier towns every effort is made to establish the dollar as the unit, in order that all negotiations may be effected in bills or paper money, so that coins may be dispensed with, as in the Canadian currency paper money begins with the dollar, the silver coin of this value being detested on account of its size and bulk, while the lesser coins were disliked as being small. The bill is far easier to carry. So every inducement to spend a dollar at least is held out. An article is priced sixty cents, or two for a dollar. You may not particularly want the second article, but by spending the dollar you save twenty cents; or another commodity may be thirty-five cents, or three for a dollar; and so on.

Down the street the gambling-saloon was in full swing. Its owner was a Chinaman, and he was making money faster than any one in the place. Poker, black-jack, and other games of chance were the rage, and Johnny always played, and invariably won. In games of bluff the Chinaman is the most inscrutable opponent one can have. He sits as stolid as a statue; not a muscle of his face moves to betray his hand, and he generally wears his opponents out. Everything is fair and above-board; but, as one habitué told me, 'you might just as well play with a brick wall as with old Johnny.'

Fort George at the time of my visit certainly could not be described as a poor man's town. The cost of carriage from Ashcroft, three hundred and fifty miles away, was in the neighbourhood of forty pounds a ton, and accordingly provisions were high. Bacon was one-and-eightpence per pound, butter three shillings, meat tenpence, flour sevenpence halfpenny, condensed milk a shilling a tin, jam eighteenpence a pound, tinned fruits half-a-crown a two-pound tin, bread a shilling a two-pound loaf, while eggs were difficult to get at four shillings a dozen. Yet one could procure at a certain restaurant an excellent meal for two shillings, comprising soup, fish, meat, vegetables, sweets, cheese, and tea or coffee. This restaurant was run by two enterprising young ladies, formerly waitresses in a similar establishment at Quesnel, one hundred and fifty miles to the south, who had come up in the first rush, and undertaken to minister to the wants of 'Little Mary,' and, what was more, had found the undertaking highly remunerative.

One feature conspicuously absent in Fort George was the saloon. It was, or passed as, a 'dry town,' to quote the nickname for a community which has no liquor license. At the time of my visit, however, a thriving trade was prosecuted in the illicit sale of alcohol, and I experienced no great difficulty in securing a bottle of a well-known brand of 'Scotch,' though it cost me twelve-and-sixpence. The 'driver of the blind pig,' as the illicit vender of liquor is styled, was at that time making hay while the sun shone; but shortly afterwards the sun went behind a cloud, for an emissary of the law suddenly appeared on the scene, and raided the 'pen,' rounding up the driver and his wares. These were confiscated, while the owner was awarded a year's imprisonment,

with the alternative of leaving the country in a fortnight.

Life in a town such as this might seem devoid of any legitimate amusement, especially as every one is infected with the desire to 'get on' with business; but such is not the case. An impromptu ball was inaugurated in our honour on the floor of the poolroom, but postponed, as the internal mechanism of the musical box which was to perform the office of orchestra had given out. By the next evening the defects had been remedied, and the fun was fast and furious while it lasted, the half-dozen ladies resident in the town, attended by their husbands, contributing to the general gaiety. Though the floor was not of a mirror-like description, and was a mass of knots, dents, and inequalities, accidents only served to enhance the general liveliness. For three and a half hours Terpsichore reigned supreme, and then at midnight the younger members of the party kept up the hilarity on the plank-walk outside until the first signs of dawn appeared in the east.

Once a week on the average a general 'mafficking' took place. Then the whole town indulged in a frolic. Just why, no one knew; only to keep things going, was the explanation. At any rate, there was a general rag, and something suffered. Every one took it in good part, however, and any damage that was caused was usually put right. Dominion Day was generally the event which called for extreme rioting. It would put any Independence Day celebration on the southern side of the border to blush. It was not fired by alcoholism, as alcohol was unobtainable except in limited quantities, certainly not large enough to inflame boisterous spirits. But every one let himself go, until sheer exhaustion compelled retreat to bed; though that was not, as a rule, before the early hours of the morning. It is characteristic of these frontiersmen that, although they lead a steady, hard-working existence, and are as stolid as Indians, the desire to let themselves go now and again cannot be quelled.

Although the town was only four months old, and the railway was over three hundred miles away, many an old-timer pioneer bemoaned the approach of civilisation. These hardy men dislike connection with the outside world. So long as a place is inaccessible, and hardship has to be experienced to get there, they are in their glory. More than one expressed his intention of 'moving on and starting another town somewhere.' Evidences of civilising influences, bringing commerce in their wake, were apparent on every side, to their intense disgust. First the river was taken over by the steamboat, and there was no further need to make an exciting and adventurous canoe trip down the river to reach Soda Creek; then motor-cars were hurtling up and down the Cariboo Road, doing in ten hours with comfort what formerly occupied two or three days with discomfort; so that Vancouver was only three or four days' journey distant instead of a week or more. Again, the telephone had crept in, and the news of what was going on in the world at large was flashed to this little community. True, there was no electric light, trams, saloons, theatres, or other incidentals of a modern city; but the old dogs didn't like it. The tougher element were packing up their traps for a farther trek. 'The worst of it is,' muttered one old pioneer with a mournful shake of his head, 'this is the last piece of frontier country on the North American continent, and when this is opened up, what are we going to do?'

To these venturesome spirits the outlook was certainly black from their point of view. Without doubt, the frontiersman is rapidly dying out, as his spheres of activity are being narrowed down by the march of civilisation. They cannot go to the Klondike, for that is as open as Switzerland; Hudson Bay Territory is as much developed as the west of Ireland. There is only Ungava and Labrador left for them, and even these two provinces are not so completely closed as was New British Columbia some years ago. Many of these hardy fellows are extremely wealthy, but their restless spirit will not let them settle down; the idea of passing their last days in comfort and ease in a city is as repulsive to them as is work to the tramp. The last frontier is, indeed, rapidly disappearing, and with it a fine race of men who have done much for the opening up of Canada, for in their wake there always follow the farmer, prospector, and capitalist, as surely as night follows day.

EGYPT.

SPIRIT of Egypt! still I hear thy voice
Calling across the bar of countless years
Of toil and serfdom, 'neath the conqueror's yoke
Of pain and tears.

Thou art but sleeping; thou canst never die;
Ever shall live thy thoughts, thy work, thy fame.
All nations' sages through all time shall still
Echo thy name.

'Who drinks Nile water must return;' not so
The power of rivers of the past, save thine,
Where, hid from prying eyes, still sits
Isis divine.

Thou goddess Sphinx, between whose mighty paws
Thy queen, great Cleopatra, wooed her love,
Thou knowest all: art truth: thou daughter born
Of gods above.

Enough for man once to have seen the sun,
Thy sun, O Egypt, sink behind the pile
Of Cheops; and the first star rise
Above the Nile.

The wrongs that desecrating hands have done
Forgive: nay, 'tis too much to ask; and yet
Thy sacred lotus-flower consume, and so,
Egypt, forget.

G. H. LINDSAY OLIVER.

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'SPECIAL SERVICE.'

THE STORY OF THE MOTOR-BOAT PATROLS.

By JOHN S. MARGERISON, Author of *The Sure Shield*, &c.

HAD he been born eighty years ago he would have been a Corinthian, and have found the adventure for which his soul craved in tooling along a dusty highway in a chaise and four, or financing—and maybe taking part in—those fistic contests of the old-time Prize Ring. However, as he first saw the light of day in the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee, and did not find adventure until he had attained years of more or less discretion, he discovered his twin-soul in the motor-car.

He was a bright young fellow, and had circumstances compelled him to work for his daily bread and butter, would have risen to supreme command of any motor-shop in rather less than no time. His ear was one of those uncanny microphones which could detect in an instant defects from the sound of a running engine; he could tell you whether the timing-chain was a little slack, or whether the carburettor was merely choked. And, what was more, he took just as great delight in stripping down the mechanism and adjusting that timing-chain or clearing that carburettor as he did in going 'all out' along a particularly inviting piece of highway. With it all, he possessed the sympathy of touch and the subconscious knowledge of the right thing to do in an instantaneous emergency which are the gifts alone of the born driver.

As was only to be expected, when marine motoring began to attract the interest of the more adventurous youth on this side of the Atlantic, he plunged into the aquatic sport with all the fervour of an enthusiast, and rapidly became super-efficient in the handling of racing-hydroplanes and all their kindred craft.

Fortunate as regards financial resources, he was able to put into practical shape the manifold ideas which came to him from time to time; and the result of his many improvements on his own racing-boat was that he began to carry off, at the periodical regattas for petrol-driven craft, more pots, shields, and trophies than he could find room for on his sideboard; more pendants than the halyards on his boat's small mast could accommodate at one time.

Then came war.

'I'm going into this,' he said. 'I've got an idea that the navy will be able to use me and my boat; surely there's some way in which my peculiar knowledge of marine motoring can be utilised in the national service. Besides, look at the sport there'll be on the water—racing will be tame in comparison.'

Accordingly, he made certain representations to the powers that were—and the results of these representations were many and varied. The first was a commission as a temporary lieutenant in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve for himself and a diminutive White Ensign for his boat. Then came a tiny three-pounder semi-automatic gun and a few boxes of ammunition. This weapon he mounted on the half-deck of his craft forward, and balanced the effect by erecting a brass-jacketed, efficient-looking Maxim aft between the well and the sternpost. A miniature but powerful searchlight completed the boat's outfit; and a few tins of high explosive, with percussion-detonators ready for fitting, were added for certain specific purposes. His brother—who, incidentally, had turned his own boat over completely to the Admiralty—came as his second in command, and four men who had attended the racing-hydroplane in more peaceful times became able seamen in the Volunteer Reserve 'for the duration,' and for the love of the thing.

Thus equipped, the boat put out one gray morning for a certain spot on the east coast 'for disposal.' Her commander wondered largely what 'disposal' meant; an unsentimental commodore informed him that, initially, it meant acting as tender to a certain ship, which, in her turn, was a tender for submarines. The boat which had once made hay of all competition by reason of her speed, now found that speed and the facility with which she could be handled of exceeding value in taking mails to certain grateful submarines, and in bringing back the manifold letters they had found time to write. Then, when the mother-ship required fresh provisions, it was the racing motor-boat which fetched them. This was all very well for a time; then her commander began to grumble.

'I joined to fight,' he said; 'not to be an errand-boy.'

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'Your services can be best utilised, *at present*, in the work you are doing,' said Authority.

The young lieutenant bowed to the mandate, and gleaned an infinitesimal amount of hope from that 'at present.'

November came—the November of that first terrible winter—and the motor-boat got a change in her work. She was detached to run messages between two great battle-fleets, both of which, in certain convenient harbours, awaited alike the coming of the German Fleet and '*Der Tag*.' The lieutenant made some friends among the regular officers, it is true, and this went a long way to compensate him for those dreary days and nights when the motor-boat slashed through gray, icy seas; when the pitiless rain and sleet came down in sheets, drenching through everything; when oilskins chafed great calluses on wrist and throat; when life became almost unbearable.

Indeed, I think it would have become utterly so but for one little episode which came to break the monotony during the end of that winter. It was one of Von Tirpitz's submarines—sent out in that long-dead initial 'iron blockade'—which provided it by attacking a herring-boat, whose chief duty at the moment was the fishing up of mines. The herring-boat had nothing but rifles for armament; the submarine was making great play with a six-pounder, and rapidly reducing the fisherman's upper works to matchwood and splinters, when our motor-boat came silently and swiftly on the scene.

An overshot round from the three-pounder was the first sign of her presence, and the submarine turned to deal with this new and even more puny antagonist before finishing off her first opponent. But before she could get time to train her gun properly, the motor-boat was literally at her throat.

With the audacity which had carried through many a forlorn hope in racing days, the lieutenant let her rip, stem dead on to the submarine, while the three-pounder in the sea-washed bows put in double tides. Right close in to almost point-blank range, presenting a small and hard-to-hit target to the submarine, the little craft sped; and then, after a lateral spraying of tiny three-pounder shell—each of which did its part in the manufacture of a neat open-work pattern in the submarine's hull—she turned and fled, leaving that U-boat to go down faster and farther than her designers had ever calculated upon.

'Now, that's something like service,' said the lieutenant. 'Nothing like a bit of a scrap to encourage one in this everlasting errand-boy job.'

But Authority sat up and took notice when he made his modest report. When it was compared with that sent in by the herring-boat, Authority decided that the motor-boat could be better employed; so they appointed her to 'detached service'—which means exactly service as requisite or at commander's discretion. The motor-boat began to enjoy herself. She cropped up in all sorts of places. Lonely trawlers, punching up and down their ten-mile beats on the edge of their snared grounds, smelt her occasionally, and were grateful in their own dour fashion for the news she brought. Drifters, garnering enemy mines in the home waters, told her of suspicious happenings, which she immediately went to investigate. It was on one such occasion that she found a submarine in difficulties; a submarine which laughed at her insistent demand for immediate surrender, but which soon changed her tune when the Maxim swept every man from her whaleback, and the lieutenant's ready automatic made good practice on every head that showed above her conning-tower top. And, just to make sure, the three-pounder made a colander of the conning-tower, so that the U-boat had the option of diving and filling—thus drowning all hands—or surrendering unconditionally. It took her three hours to make up her mind to do the latter, and for that space of time the tiny cockle-shell motor-boat danced around her, ready and eager to deal with any and every emergency.

It was a great triumph for the young lieutenant when a tug came and took that submarine in tow; and later on he had the pleasure of seeing her, under a differ nt ensign, performing most efficient service with a flotilla.

Rusty tramps, nosing their canny way up Channel, met him occasionally, and were grateful for the lead which he gave them through the mine-field paths. Passengers on gigantic ocean liners speculated whether the tiny boat would sink and fill before she had piloted them to a safe anchorage, and all admired the grit and devotion to duty shown by these erstwhile racing-men.

Flanders called next—called insistently—and, lo and behold! our motor-boat blossomed into a full-sized canal monitor; and by the way her crew talked, you'd have fancied she was capable of beating the High Seas Fleet single-handed. She one day engaged in a long-range duel with a field-battery, and put two of its guns out of action; and that same evening she put a termination to the career of an enemy supply-train, to say nothing of destroying a couple of motor-lorries in a convoy. An inquisitive Taube, which swept low in the sky the better to see what the little spitfire might be, received a dose of lead from the Maxim that transported her pilot to hotter regions, and the Taube nose-dived into the canal, and was later retrieved as a spoil of war.

Then appeared defects. The rack and strain of the first year of warfare began to tell on motors and hull; spare parts ran short. A visit to a dockyard was imperative; and, for a full month, these half-dozen silent, bronzed, salt-

stained men of the sea 'enjoyed the blessings of the land and the fruits of their labours.'

For a full year they had dreamed of a bed that didn't kick and leap with every wave-motion; of a freshly cooked meal that didn't come out of a can; of clean, white sheets instead of soaked sleeping-bags; of Turkish baths, and stalls at the 'best thing in town.' Realisation came too swiftly; once these things had been sampled, there was born in their blood the old restlessness, and a full week before their time they were back in that dockyard, trying to hustle workers here, lending a hand there, with the result that the motor-boat put to sea three clear days to the good. She had achieved the impossible; she had hurried the dockyard!

'Why do we want to get back?' echoed the lieutenant when they asked the reason for his energetic pushfulness. 'Well, I don't know. It's a rotten life. Look at these hands. They used to be soft and white; now a coal-miner would be disgusted by their horniness. Look at this chafe on my neck; that comes of wearing a sodden oilskin when the spray comes over the bows in bucketfuls. We usually wear dry clothes for just so long as it takes the sea to soak through a change of raiment, and, as a rule, when at sea we have to bale like demons to keep the dear old hooker from filling and foundering. But, man alive! we like it—like it even better than those fair days when we sliced through the Roads at Cowes for silver cups and shields and trophies and bits of coloured bunting half the world would give their ears to sport; like it better than all the games we ever knew. War's the greatest game of all!'

'Your boat draws only a few feet of water,' said Authority, once more waking up to the lieutenant's existence. 'Go over to the Belgian coast and see what you can find there in the way of mines; also, if you should happen to see an occasional submarine—well, you know how to deal with her.'

The motor-boat said 'Thank you' very nicely, and disappeared once more. The 'pack' who hunt the *unterseeboote* gave her enthusiastic welcome; their commodore gave her a station and a few intricate devices for bringing home her quarry. Also, so that a crew should not be bored in the intervals between 'kills,' she was provided with one of those jolly little one-boat drags whereby enemy mines can be fished up from the depths and the gun-layer be allowed good practice in sinking them—from a safe distance.

Once there came a submarine, which broke surface after she had seen the motor-boat, and whose big four-inch gun talked most rudely to the smaller craft. The motor-boat spat back and ran—ran with the submarine lumbering after her, throttling down her motors so as to keep just out of range, and all the while drawing that U-boat farther and farther into the meshes of a gigantic net set for the trapping of such as she. And, after the destroyers had closed in and captured the U-boat, it was the little hydroplane which was given the job of escorting her home to a certain place on the east coast, where the navy has established a base for dealing with enemy craft which come intact to these shores.

It was rather fortunate that she should get home that day, for several big Zeppelins tried that same night to demonstrate what 'frightfulness' really was, having chosen certain highly important cities as their objective. But the east coast defences were ready and waiting for them, and also for the flotilla of submarines they had brought with them for some nefarious purpose or other. So when, just after midnight, our motor-boat became embroiled with two enemy submarines, which would insist upon rising, firing, and then suddenly dipping, her lieutenant suddenly bethought himself of a new scheme he had worked out a few days before—a scheme in which the jolly little one-boat drag and the tins of high explosive with percussion-detonators played a big part. He put the scheme into effect, and it worked. I can't tell you what it is—the Censor won't let me—but the enemy lost five submarines in that enterprise, three of which the young, bright lieutenant claimed; and the Admiralty have since adopted and improved upon the device in the eternal submarine hunt. The inventor refused to add a few letters to his name as a reward.

'D.S.C., be hanged!' he said when they mooted the subject. 'If there'd been no war there'd have been no invention. I don't want bally rewards for playing the game.'

At other times attached seaplanes would tell the motor-boat that submarines lurked in her vicinity. Then, by means of her own, the motor-boat would locate them. She became a shadow; where the *unterseeboten* went, she followed, and she had a nice way of tenaciously sticking to their tails till they came up to breathe, when—on the principle of hitting first and asking questions afterwards—she would present them with a grand collection of three-pounder shells, most of which found their billets, and raised joy in Admiralty hearts when her reports were sent in.

But, notwithstanding the marked success which has attended his strenuous efforts, notwithstanding the thanks and gratitude a good-natured navy pours upon him and his fellow motor-boaters, the young lieutenant has never got rid of that tremendous feeling of awe engendered by the work of the Grand Fleet around him; has never quite lived down that unconscious pride in the useful and important jobs the Motor-Boat Patrol are called upon to do.

'The end?' he queried when once asked a certain question. 'The end's inevitable; it's just got to be the end of war for ever and ever.

The future 's as bright and rosy to-day as it ever was; Fritz is nearly sitting up and wagging his tail like a begging dog. Rewards?'

He broke off, and pointed to a small photograph on the wall of his room ashore. It showed a battered submarine in tow of a tug which had once been a pleasure-steamer, and hoisted above the black-crossed Eagle Ensign was the Meteor Flag of the Sea Empire.

'Rewards?' he repeated. 'Those pots and things there I got in fair and strenuous contest.' His arm swept in a vague gesture the silver-decorated sideboard. 'Look here, my boy; if it came to a choice which of all my trophies I should keep, you could take all the cups and shields and shove 'em in the crucible; you could rip the pendants up for paper-making; but that photo is the picture of the first submarine I ever succeeded in capturing, and when my call comes, it shall be buried with me. No, it 's not swank. It 's just the feeling that war is the greatest game of all; that the best reward a man can have is to know he did his little bit when his country had need of him.'

THEIR HEARTS' DESIRE.

CHAPTER III.

'YOU girls made a mistake,' said Lawyer Knowles one morning at breakfast—'I thought so at the time, and I said so, I believe—a great mistake; and now I hope you will realise it.'

He put on his pince-nez and read again a letter from Auntie Naarah written to him, but evidently in answer to one from Mary, in which she had stated that, her old schoolfellow having left, she was quite at liberty to pay her long-looked-forward-to visit to The Hermitage. It ran as follows:

'THE HERMITAGE,
'TUSSOCKS.

'MY DEAR NEPHEW,—Mary need not trouble. At present I am quite comfortable with the young woman you sent me. I find her very quiet and biddable.

'The weather is very bad, and I am not feeling as well as I should like. But what can one expect at my age with so much rain and cold winds? This house is very damp in the autumn. Jean, too, has got a troublesome cough.—Believe me, your affectionate aunt,

'NAARAH KNOWLES.'

Ellen peeped inquiringly round the coffee-urn. 'What is wrong, dear Herbert?' she asked a little anxiously.

'And where did we make a mistake?' put in Priscilla pertly.

'If you meant about Miss Brooke, Herbert,' said Mary, 'I think we managed very well.'

'You *think!*' cried Herbert witheringly.

They had all thought so—all the girls, that is. Certainly Herbert had not seemed to appreciate being robbed of his typist. But then his reluctance had only made the sisters feel more convinced of the wisdom of their suggestion. If he *had* any leanings towards her, it was such a good idea to get her away; and once she was out of the office and the estimable substitute from the Y.W.C.A. in her place, what was to prevent the arrangement, so far as the exchange of typists was concerned, from being permanent?

'Read this,' said Herbert shortly. He passed the letter to Ellen as the eldest. 'Read it out,' he added.

Ellen complied. There was a momentary dismayed silence as she finished.

'Auntie Naarah certainly seems hurt,' said Ellen.

'I don't wonder,' retorted her brother. 'Just after I had taken so much pains and trouble about her will, too. It is very annoying.'

'Oh, well, she 's *made* it, Herbert,' said Priscilla comfortingly.

'Yes; but there 's nothing to hinder her altering it or making another,' said Lawyer Knowles crossly.

'Still, dear Herbert, I hardly think that likely,' said Ellen. 'And it upset her so to do this, didn't it?'

'It upset her—yes,' agreed Herbert moodily; but he thought with some uneasiness of the French proverb, '*Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte.*' It would probably not upset Auntie Naarah so much a second time.

'"Quiet and biddable,"' quoted Priscilla dissatisfiedly. 'Miss Brooke is a sly little thing, no doubt. And now Auntie Naarah isn't very well, she 'll try her hardest to worm herself still more into her good graces.—*You* ought to have gone, Mary,' she concluded, turning to her sister.

'Why couldn't you go?' retorted Mary. 'You know I had Stella coming.'

'I think, too, Mary, you ought to have gone,' said Ellen.

'Oh, of course, it was my fault,' snapped Mary.

'That fact is proved,' said Herbert coldly. 'It was a most unwise proceeding altogether.' He meditated a moment, then said, shuffling his letters and papers together, 'The only thing I can think of is for me to run down to Tussocks and bring Miss Brooke back.'

'My dear Herbert!' cried Ellen.

'Give me the time-table, Priscilla.' He looked at his watch. 'I could go to the office, and get off by the 12.30 to London. It 's

awkward.' He ran his eye quickly over the time-table, 'And there's no train back till the 6.20 this evening from Tussocks. I sha'n't get back till late.'

Visions of the inadvisability of Herbert's travelling alone with his typist at such an unhallowed hour as it would be before they could arrive at Crabtree filled all the sisters' minds simultaneously. It was altogether a most awkward situation. If Herbert fetched Miss Brooke back, she would return to his office forthwith, and then that danger—the ever-lurking danger, to their minds—of Herbert's falling in love, and so unsuitably, would be to the fore again.

Their fears, as it happened, were quite unnecessary. Herbert was too cold-blooded, too wrapped up in himself, ever to fall in love; and as he was comfortably off, and had great expectations, he would naturally, if ever he did bring himself to marry, choose some one who had money.

Yet, if Miss Brooke stayed on at The Hermitage indefinitely, there was the other greater danger that she might, as Priscilla suggested, worm her way into Auntie Naarah's testamentary favour. It was a case of Scylla and Charybdis. But to their minds one thing was certain—it would not do, even if Miss Brooke was to be recalled, for Herbert to fetch her. Suppose any of their friends saw them together, any of the Crabtree people, what would they think? At the best, they would say that Herbert was engaged to his typist.

'I don't think, dear Herbert,' said Ellen, 'that it would do for you to go. It would—well—perhaps it would look rather funny.'

Herbert's sallow complexion got a dull red. 'Look funny?' he repeated. But, like his sisters, he thought a good deal of those fetishes of the weak—what people would think, and how it would look.

'Why shouldn't Mary go?' said Priscilla. 'She would have been going on her visit if it hadn't been for this, and Miss Brooke could come back by herself.'

'Capital, Priss!' cried Ellen. She felt that her sister was a Daniel come to judgment. 'The very thing. Mary must go.'

Mary looked as if she did not relish the idea.

'Of course, *I* must be the scapegoat,' she said.

Herbert, however, seemed loath to give up his own suggestion. But in the end, as is usually the case in a man's own house, his womenkind triumphed. Few men have the courage to brave feminine opinion (under their own roof, at any rate)—unfortunately for the characters of both.

Mary was to go. And a very cross Mary went to pack her things forthwith, while a very much injured Herbert strode off to his office. The other two sisters alternately bemoaned their attempts to play the *deus ex machina*, and assured themselves that it would be all right.

'Far better for Mary to see Auntie Naarah,' they said. 'So much more satisfactory than writing.' They sent Mary off primed with adjurations to keep her temper, and to express penitence for having unwittingly annoyed Auntie Naarah.

'It will be all right,' said Ellen placidly, as Mary's train steamed out of the station. 'And I have just been thinking we might get Miss Brooke a post as typist at the V.A.D. Hospital. I believe I heard another one was wanted.'

. . . . . .

The inmates of The Chain House were wrapped in slumber that night when they were roused by a loud and persistent knocking and ringing at the front-door. Hastily attiring themselves, the whole family hurried downstairs, and the front-door being opened, Mary, tired, almost distraught, staggered into the hall.

There was a chorus of 'Mary! Whatever has happened? Why have you come back?'

Mary dropped her portmanteau with a thud on the linoleum-covered floor.

'I couldn't get a fly,' she almost cried. 'It was too late.' She felt overwhelmed with having been out in the dark streets alone at night!

'But—but what about Auntie Naarah? Hasn't she forgiven you?' cried Ellen.

'For Heaven's sake, speak, Mary!' said Priscilla, almost pushing her sister into the dining-room.

'She's about knocked up,' said Herbert. 'Get her a glass of wine, Pris.' Then, as Mary, sipping the wine, revived somewhat, 'Now, take your time; tell us quietly,' he said in his most judicial tones. 'Why did you come back to-night?'

'Because Auntie Naarah was gone,' sobbed Mary.

'Gone!' For an instant Lawyer Knowles's heart leapt exultingly. Gone! Dead—before she could play any monkey tricks with her will! 'Do you mean *dead?*' he asked, trying to speak concernedly.

Mary shook her head. 'No; gone away. When I got to Tussocks, and drove to The Hermitage, I found the garden gate padlocked and the house all shut up. The cabman got over the fence, but the place was shuttered and barred, and there was no sign of life.'

She dabbed her eyes.

'Mary, you must eat this,' interposed Priscilla, coming in with some bread and meat; 'then you'll feel better.—Won't she, Herbert? Jam? No, I don't think Mary wants jam.—Do you, dear?'

'I didn't say, "*Jam*,"' retorted Herbert fiercely, adding, 'Auntie Naarah has clean bolted.'

'And Miss Brooke with her,' said Ellen.

Priscilla gave a gasp of dismay; she could not speak.

'Didn't you make inquiries?' said Herbert to

the returned traveller. 'You've got a tongue. Didn't you use it? *Where* has Auntie Naarah gone?'

'I don't know,' replied Mary, almost choking over a piece of bread, after her long fast. 'I asked at the station and at the general shop, but they could only tell me they'd all gone away. No one knew where. She took tickets for London.'

The grotesque-looking trio, in their unbecoming deshabille, exchanged dismayed glances. Auntie Naarah taking a journey, which was always an ordeal for her unless she had some pressing reason! It was inexplicable!

'You may depend,' said Priscilla sagely, 'that Miss Brooke is at the bottom of it. She is a designing girl, I believe.'

'She is nothing of the sort,' said Herbert staunchly.

When will women realise that the surest way to enlist a man's sympathies for a woman is to speak against her?

'Well, there is nothing to be done to-night,' said Ellen.

'I'll telephone to Twitty in the morning,' said her brother; 'though I don't apprehend Auntie Naarah will have called there. However, we have no need to be uneasy,' he added. 'Auntie Naarah has Miss Brooke with her, if not Jean.'

'Yes,' sniffed Priscilla.

'They may all be murdered,' said Ellen ominously.

'Well, of course, in that case there is nothing we can do,' replied Herbert.

The morning, though it gave no solution to the astonishing disappearance of Auntie Naarah, at least moderated her kinsfolk's anxiety. She had not been to Lincoln's Inn Fields, which was the great thing. They could only wait now.

The solution came in a day or two in a letter from Miss Brooke for Auntie Naarah, written from a boarding-house at Torquay. It dwelt, rather tantalisingly, on the delightful change from Tussocks, the balmy air and sunshine, and the enjoyment of the Winter Gardens and such-like entertainments. Entertainments! When Auntie Naarah would never spend a penny on such extravagance! They were very comfortable, lived plainly but well, and the company, including a minister whom Auntie Naarah seemed to enjoy chatting with, was very pleasant.

At the end of Eva Brooke's epistle was a post-script in Auntie Naarah's mean, niggling calligraphy, which stated that she would probably be staying a week or two at Torquay; but on her return to The Hermitage she would be glad to see Mary, her other nieces following in due course, as she felt she had, under the circumstances, a right to their society.

'There, see what you have missed, Mary,' said Priscilla. 'Torquay this weather—delightful!—concerts—cheerful society.'

There was no need to enlarge on the advantages her sister had missed. Mary was bitterly disappointed. However, she declared that if she had gone to Tussocks, Auntie Naarah would never have gone to Torquay. It was all Miss Brooke's doing.

'Well,' said Herbert, who looked rather disquieted, 'Miss Brooke will soon be back in my office, out of harm's way.'

'But, dear Herbert,' protested Ellen, 'I hoped—that is, I thought that nice girl from the Y.W.C.A. might take her place.'

'*Girl!* She's an old fool,' growled Herbert. 'Can't spell even, and cries if I speak about her shortcomings. No. It's been very awkward for me without Miss Brooke, and it is a great pity Mary ever suggested her going.'

The two elder sisters agreed, and in consequence Mary was obliged to be an unwilling disciple of the Trappist monks in the matter of silence for the next few days, for, there being no neutral, she could not hold communication as usual on these occasions.

. . . . . .

Meanwhile at Torquay the two ladies whose movements had caused so much uneasiness were having a good time. Auntie Naarah had chosen a boarding-house in the least expensive situation, but even then she felt a pang when she thought of the double expense of her companion and herself. Still, it was the first time for untold years that she had been away. If it had not been that Jean had shown signs of being knocked up, and declared she must have a holiday, however, it is doubtful whether her mistress would have left home. But Jean gone would mean expense and annoyance with charwomen, and Auntie Naarah did not feel equal to that.

As for Eva Brooke, Torquay, even with the leaven of Auntie Naarah's fidgety presence, was an agreeable change after her nephew's office, and it was made more interesting for her by the numbers of wounded soldiers there. She could not resist the temptation of buying cigarettes for them, though it required a great screwing up of courage before she dared offer them. However, after the first two or three times it became easier, and the poor fellows were most of them so grateful.

Auntie Naarah was rather horrified at first by a proceeding that in her young days would have been considered unmaidenly in the extreme. But if she had a soft spot in her hard nature it was towards soldiers, and she contented herself with merely chiding Miss Brooke's extravagance. 'You spend all your money on tobacco,' she observed disapprovingly one day when Eva had been distributing largely, 'and it's *waste*—gone in a few moments; and what is there to show for it?'

'Still, it gives the poor fellows enjoyment while it lasts,' replied Eva, 'and I don't grudge my last penny to do that.'

'Oh, that 's talking nonsense,' was the crushing reply.

'Think what they have done for us, Miss Knowles,' retorted Eva warmly. 'Risked their lives, endured untold hardships, come back halt and maimed. Why, there 's nothing too good for them!' she added vehemently.

'Oh, well, of course, one feels grateful,' said Auntie Naarah.

One of the 'permanent' inmates of the cheap boarding-house used to visit at the Red Cross hospital. She asked Auntie Naarah's permission to take Eva with her once. It was given, and Eva returned full of her visit.

'The poor fellows!' she cried with tears in her eyes. 'Such long rows of beds—and some of the boys looking so ill—and all so patient. Oh, Miss Knowles! it makes one realise a little what an awful thing war is.'

Auntie Naarah nodded, and the lady visitor asked if *she* would not go next day.

Auntie Naarah shook her head. She did not think that her nerves could stand it. However, after all, she was persuaded, and went. It was a sight she never forgot. All her natural life she had been centred on herself and her own health, her money, and how to save it. But somehow, as she walked on tiptoe down the long ward, past the one or two bad cases where the beds were screened from the public gaze, watched by so many pairs of eyes—eyes that had a look in them which told of what the owners had gone through—the eyes of men who had faced death, seen their comrades killed beside them, been through HELL—she felt that nothing else mattered.

The lady who was conducting them halted presently. 'I should like you to speak to my special favourite,' she whispered. 'Such a nice boy.'

Auntie Naarah nodded. She felt she would be glad to get away from the sight of pain and sickness, away from the atmosphere of disinfectants, but she would go through with it.

'Now,' said the cicerone, stopping at a bed where a young soldier was sitting up, turning over the pages of a magazine with his left hand, 'I've brought a new friend to see you this afternoon.'

The young man looked up with a bright smile, which suddenly changed to one of surprised recognition. '*Miss Knowles!*' he cried.

Auntie Naarah stood as if she had been turned to stone, staring at the occupant of the bed, speechless, hardly believing the evidence of her eyes.

'Do you know Miss Knowles?' asked Eva, surprised.

'I should think so,' was the quick response.

'Edward Strachan!' gasped Auntie Naarah. 'You here!'

A sister who was passing looked at the gaunt woman, and pointed to a chair. 'Won't you sit down?' she said.

Auntie Naarah subsided weakly into a chair by the bed. '*You* here!' she repeated.

'Yes. I was wounded almost as soon as I got out,' replied Edward Strachan cheerfully; 'but I 'm much better, and going to be allowed out in the grounds to-morrow.'

'But—but'—Auntie Naarah's distressed gaze was fixed on an empty sleeve—'you 've lost your arm.'

'Yes. Rotten luck, wasn't it? But I've got another,' was the cheery reply.

'Your *right* arm,' continued Auntie Naarah.

'Yes—but I've come back,' said Edward Strachan meaningly, and his smile faded as he thought of some of his comrades who would never come back.

'How are you going to get your living with only one arm?' queried Auntie Naarah, the unwonted tears trickling down her long nose.

'I shall learn to use the other, Miss Knowles,' said the young man. 'I shall manage all right. Don't you worry about me.'

'I think perhaps Miss Knowles had better come away now,' said the lady who was responsible for her visit; 'she seems rather upset.'

'Oh, don't hurry,' said Edward; but he looked at Eva as he spoke.

Auntie Naarah wiped her eyes. 'You never told me you were wounded, Edward,' she said half-reproachfully.

Edward explained that he had sent a card from the hospital, but he didn't want to worry her before. He should be all right soon.

Soon after the visitors t ok their departure, Edward promising to return the call on the first opportunity.

'I am afraid it was rather a shock to you, Miss Knowles,' said the lady, giving Auntie Naarah her arm as they walked away from the hospital.

'It was. The young man's father was a dear friend of mine,' replied Auntie Naarah.

'Ah!' murmured her new friend sympathetically. 'He is a fine fellow,' she added warmly.

Edward Strachan was soon to be seen walking along the sea-front or sitting in shelters, sometimes alone, sometimes with a companion from the hospital.

Auntie Naarah and Eva Brooke were sure to see him in their walks, and more than once he had tea with them at a café. Once he had the temerity to share the formal tea in the stuffy drawing-room of the boarding-house, an object of keen interest and sympathy from the many elderly ladies there. But his most cherished moments were when he happened to meet Eva *without* Auntie Naarah innocently making the unwanted 'third wheel of the cart.'

(*Continued on page 820.*)

SOLDIER-LIFE IN GRÆCO-ROMAN EGYPT.

By Rev. Professor GEORGE MILLIGAN, D.D.

SOME years ago I strung together and contributed to this *Journal* for 1909 a budget of old papyrus letters recovered from the rubbish-heaps of ancient Egypt, with the view of illustrating the new light thrown upon the ordinary life of the people in the centuries immediately preceding and succeeding the beginning of the Christian era. Amongst these, two soldiers' letters were included. The first was from the young recruit Apion, who had gone on foreign service, and who wrote from Rome to inform his father of his safe arrival after a stormy passage, and of the good time he was having on the three gold pieces which he had received from the emperor as military pay. The second was from the same soldier at a later date, and was addressed to his sister, his father apparently having died in the interval. Various pieces of family news were narrated, from which it appeared that Apion was now a married man, and greetings were sent from his 'life's partner' Aufidia, his two daughters Elpis and Fortunata, and his little son Maximus, whose birthday was about to be celebrated. Both letters were simple, frank, human letters, just the kind of letters we are accustomed to receive from the front to-day. And it may, therefore, be of interest to cite a few additional examples, one or two of which have been deciphered and published quite recently, and to do so purely on account of their human interest, and without any effort to learn from them any particulars of the military situation in Egypt in either Ptolemaic or Roman times.

Before, however, turning to these letters, a few documents of a more general character may be referred to.

Thus, from the town of Oxyrhynchus, at the beginning of the second century after Christ, we have a communication in Latin addressed by one prefect to another, announcing that six recruits had been 'approved,' or, as we would say, 'passed' for service in his cohort. Their names and ages are fully detailed, along with the mention of any distinguishing bodily marks or signs they possessed, exactly as is done to-day in the personal descriptions appended to our passports. Here the six men are: 'C. Veturius Gemellus, aged 21, without description; C. Longius Priscus, aged 22; description, a mark on his left eyebrow; C. Julius Maximus, aged 25, without description; [·] Lucius Secundus, aged 20, without description; C. Julius Saturninus aged 23; description, a mark on his left hand; M. Antonius Valens, aged 22; description, a mark on the right side of his forehead.'

That 'exemption' from active military service was given then, as now, on adequate medical grounds is shown by the following certificate from the same district:

'Copy of a release dated and signed in the twelfth year of Tiberius Claudius Cæsar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, Pharmouthi 29. Release from service was granted by Gn. Vergilius Capito, Prefect of Upper and Lower Egypt, to Tryphon, son of Dionysius, weaver, suffering from cataract and shortness of sight, of the metropolis of Oxyrhynchus. Examination was made in Alexandria.'

The year referred to is the year A.D. 52, and the reference to Upper and Lower Egypt may also be noted as recalling the double crown of the Pharaohs.

With this exemption-certificate may be compared the 'honourable release,' inscribed this time not in a papyrus letter, but on a wooden tablet, which was accorded to a veteran on the completion of his military service.

Another document of a considerably later date deals with a complaint raised by certain recruits that they had not 'received the sum agreed upon with them.' And elsewhere the sum payable to recruits is described as an allowance for food and clothing; while there is also evidence that, after the expenses for these had been deducted from the soldiers' stipends, any surplus was added to their deposits in the military 'bank.' To what extent these deposits were obligatory or only customary is not clear.

Requisitions both of supplies and of money for military purposes are by no means uncommon, and may easily have led to much extortion. Of this we have a trace in an official report of the fourth century announcing 'for the information' of the prefect certain demands made by officers who are named—Zoïlus, the adjutant, being credited with '20 rugs of 6 cubits,' supplied to him by the local rug-merchant, and Tauriscus, a member of the bodyguard, who had come to collect 'corn and barley' receiving in addition '80 solidi of gold.'

That, too, private soldiers in Egypt were as apt as in Palestine in the days of John the Baptist to 'make wrongful exactions' and not to 'be content with their wages' is shown by the very vehemence of the denial of a village scribe in an almost contemporary document, dated in A.D. 37:

'I swear by Tiberius Cæsar Novus Augustus Imperator, son of the deified Jupiter Liberator Augustus, that I know of no one in the village aforesaid from whom extortions have been made by the soldier . . . or his agents. If I swear truly, may it be well with me; but if falsely, the reverse.'

Very curious, too, is the account, dating this

time from the middle of the third century before Christ, of the drastic steps taken by certain householders to avoid having officials—there is no express mention of soldiers—billeted upon them. It was found amongst the Flinders Petrie papyri, deciphered with such skill by Professor Mahaffy, and in his translation runs as follows:

'Mem. to Aphthonetos the strategus, from Andronikos. We find in Crocodilopolis that [the occupiers?] of the houses formerly billeted in have taken down the upper story at the owner's instigation, and in like manner have built up the doors of the houses [and] set the altars against them; but this they have done to avoid being billeted on. If then you approve, since we are short of billets, write to Agenor to compel the owners of the houses to remove the altars to the most convenient and conspicuous place on the houses, and to build them up better than the previous ones, in order that we may have room to give to the overseers of the works who have just arrived.'

The exact meaning to be attached to some of the expressions used is not very clear, but so much at least seems certain, as the editor points out, that it was the privilege of the Crown to billet any of its officials who came on public service in certain houses of the town, perhaps only houses with two stories and two doors; and that their occupiers, to evade this liability, had gone the length of taking down the upper story, and blocking up a door by setting into it an altar or shrine. They must, accordingly, be compelled to remove the altars to more convenient situations on the roofs of the houses, and thus leave the lower stories free for billeting purposes.

Passing from these more general documents to letters written by soldiers themselves, we may begin with one, again written in Latin, which was intended to serve as a letter of recommendation or introduction, and incidentally throws light upon the happy relations subsisting between different ranks in the Roman army during the second century. It has been translated as follows by Drs Grenfell and Hunt in the first volume of their *Oxyrhynchus Papyri:*

'To Julius Domitius, military tribune of the legion, from Aurelius Archelaus, his *beneficiarius*, greeting. I have previously recommended to you my friend Theon, and now I beg once more, sir, that you will regard him as if he were myself. He is indeed a man worthy of your affection. He left friends, property, and business, and followed me, and he has throughout secured my comfort. I ask you therefore to grant him admittance to your house; he will be able to relate to you all that we have done. Whatever he tells you about me you may take as a fact . . .'

Attention has been drawn to the echoes of Biblical, and especially New Testament, phraseology which the letter contains. And in consequence it has been conjectured that the writer, Archelaus, may himself have been a Christian, and that, when he speaks of his friend Theon's having 'left friends, property, and business, and followed' him, he was borrowing directly from the words of St Peter in Matthew xix. 27. But, as Professor Deissmann has pointed out, it is not likely that any Christian believer would take words so hallowed to him by their associations and apply them to an ordinary human friendship. And the probability is that we have here simply one of the 'stock' phrases of recommendatory letters, which in the Gospels acquired deeper spiritual meaning.

Our next letter is of a very different character, and for unblushing begging would be difficult to beat. It is addressed by a soldier to his mother, in the hope of arousing her pity and assistance, after apparently he had failed with his father.

'To my dearest mother, heartiest greeting. Above all I pray that you may be in health along with all the members of your household. Please, as soon as you have received this letter, send me 200 drachmas. When Gemellus, my brother, arrived, I had only 20 staters, and now I have not one, because I have bought a chariot with a team of mules, and have spent all my money upon it. I am writing that you may know the state of the case. Will you send me a woollen robe and a rain-cloak . . . and a pair of bandages and a pair of leather garments, and oil, and a basin, as you said to me, and a pair of bolsters, and . . .? Further, mother, send me my monthly stock of provisions as quickly as possible. You said to me, when I was visiting you, "Before you enter the garrison, I am going to send one of your brothers." But you have sent nothing to me, and thus let me depart having nothing. You did not say, "He has nothing—no money or anything else;" but you let me depart like a dog. And my father, when he came, did not give me anything—an obolus or a rain-cloak or anything at all. The result is that all are laughing at me. "His father is a soldier," they say, "but he has given him nothing." My father said, "When I return home, I will send you everything." He has sent me nothing. Why? Valerius's mother sent him a pair of girdles and a pitcher of oil, and a basket of slices of meat and . . . and 200 drachmas. I beseech you, therefore, mother, send to me. Do not leave me thus. I have gone and borrowed money from a fellow-soldier and from my adjutant, and my brother Gemellus sent me a letter and breeches. Know that I am grieved because I have not gone near my brother, and he is grieved because I have not gone near him. He sent a letter blaming me because I had gone to another district. I am writing this that you may know, mother. It will be good if when you have received my letter you send to me quickly. Know that my brother Gemellus

[sent me] a letter and departed. I greet all of you at home. I greet Apollinarius and Valerius and Geminus. I greet all who love us.'

Such letters, let us hope, were rare. And it is certainly pleasant to turn from the 'Give, give,' there displayed to the satisfied and generous tone of another letter, also addressed by a soldier to his mother. It comes from Oxyrhynchus, and appears in the last volume of the *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, published for the Græco-Roman Branch of the Egypt Exploration Fund by those unwearied workers Drs Grenfell and Hunt. Their translation runs thus:

'Theonas to Tetheus his lady mother, many greetings. I would have you know that the reason why I have been such a long time without sending you a letter is that I am in camp, and not that I am ill; so do not grieve about me. I was much grieved to hear that you had heard about me, for I was not seriously ill; and I blame the person who told you. Do not trouble to send me anything. I received the presents from Heraclides. Dionytas my brother brought me the present, and I received your letter. I give thanks to [the gods] . . . continually, . . .'

And then, lest he should not have made himself clear, the unselfish lad adds a postscript in the left-hand margin of his papyrus sheet at right angles to the rest of the letter:

'Do not burden yourself to send me anything.'

From another new collection, published in Berlin in the spring of last year, and showing, therefore, that a certain amount of literary activity was still going on there, another letter may be selected. It belongs to the first half of the third century after Christ, and the soldier's correspondent this time is his sister.

'Athenodorus sends heartiest greetings to his sister Selbina. Above all I pray that you may be in health, and I make my prayer on your behalf to the gods of this foreign land. I wish you to know that I am engaged in the Arsinoite and Heracleopolite districts and in other districts along with Areius the decurion. He belongs to Tmetn[i] in the Lycopolite district. His cattle are with you in Antinous, and he is about to visit us. Question the wife of Horion, my fellow-soldier, and seek out . . . , in order that you may let me know regarding them. I am sending by the hand of my fellow-soldier Dioscurus, who belongs to Diopolites, who is being commissioned along with us for work in the Government office, and is engaged at Hermopolis, 30 denaria, that is 120 drachmas. On receiving them let me know that you have received them "as soon as water has flowed into the channel [of your empty bag]." I shall always write you and incur outlays on your behalf. Show yourself accommodating until such time as I shall meet you. Let Lucias work and live on his pay. Do you also pay heed to the opportunity. Let not Lucias be idle but work. Spread out the other cloak for bleaching [?] and sell it, and also the remaining three, in case I shall be backward to sending to you. Sell . . . if you find one. Do not fail to let me know if you have received the 30 denaria. I send many greetings to Antonia. Take care of yourself until I come. Let my mother know that Sirtti held an entertainment for me. I am giving her a woolly garment belonging to Herieus, and on his account I have not sent it to you. I have not given him money. I greet Lucias and the wife of Paulinus with her children. Do not neglect to let me know regarding your health. Do not be anxious about me. Tittus, the cavalry man, is serving along with us. The brass articles which I sent you by the hand of Sirt' the sailor are his. Give them therefore to his wife along with the brazen pint-measure. I have received only one letter from you. Tell the priestess of the shrine of the Hermonthites, that I am sending my letters there, since she is well known. Let me know therefore whether you have instructed her, so that I may send my letters there. Send me to the Government office a letter under the address of Memnon. Memnon will send it on to me. I send greetings to the landlord along with his children. I pray that you may be well.'

It cannot be said that the contents of this discursive letter are in themselves of particular moment, and yet their variety, taken along with the constant repetitions and the abrupt passing from one subject to another, is thoroughly characteristic of the unpractised letter-writer of that or of any generation. Apart, too, from this, the letter has a special interest for the New Testament student, owing to its use of many colloquial words and phrases with which he has become familiar in the Letters or Epistles of the New Testament—further proof, if proof be needed, that the book intended for the people was written in a tongue the people could understand. Into this it is impossible to enter here, but one point may be noted. The foregoing letter has been compared in its general setting and structure to St Paul's Letter to Philemon, and so may lead us to the last letter that can be cited, in which the circumstances of the Pauline writing are reproduced with a strange likeness.

The letter forms part of the military correspondence of a Roman military officer, Abinnæus, who resided at Dionysias, to the south of Lake Mœris, about the middle of the fourth century, and is written by a village priest, Kaor, with whom a runaway soldier had taken refuge, as Onesimus had taken refuge with St Paul. Moved by the same spirit as the Apostle, the priest states that he is sending this man back to his duties, and in doing so prays that the man may be pardoned 'just this once.'

'To my master and beloved brother Abinnæus the Præpositus, Kaor, Papa of Hermopolis, sends greetings. I salute your children much. I wish

you to know, lord, with regard to the soldier Paulus, with regard to his flight, pardon him just this once, since I am not at leisure to come to you this very day. And again, if he does not desist, he will come into your hands still another time. I pray for your health for many years, my lord brother.'

Unfortunately we have no means of knowing in this case, any more than in the case of Onesimus, whether the appeal was successful.

GEORGE TINWORTH.

By WALTER A. MURSELL.

IT is probable that the name of George Tinworth is not known to the majority of people. It is likely that the announcement of his death in 1914 roused no interest or emotion; but it carried me back a period of nearly thirty years, when, as a lad, I was taken to see Doulton's famous pottery-works at Lambeth. I have the vaguest recollection of the many things I saw—a confused picture of glistening clay, whirling wheels, jars and pots of all sorts and shapes and sizes, men in soiled aprons and with grimy hands, girls sitting in a quiet room painting in a quite wonderful way flowers and leaves and animals upon the well-known art pottery or Doulton ware which at one time had so wide a popularity.

But the picture that remains vivid in my memory to-day is of a large room at the very top of the great factory, in which a small, bearded man moved softly about, and gazed at the intruder with a mildly troubled eye, as if deprecating the invasion of his quiet seclusion. This was George Tinworth, worker in terra-cotta, moulder of life-size figures, maker of statues, shaper of wonderful panels, creator of things grotesque and beautiful, dreamer of dreams. Here he had lived and worked almost from boyhood. The Doultons had found a man of genius, and they wisely gave him freedom to shape his own fancies and to follow his own bent; and Tinworth turned that vast room into a place of wonder.

Often have I sat at Kennington Oval, with the green shaven turf outspread before me, speckled with flannelled figures in the middle distance; and while a ball was being retrieved from a far boundary, or during a lull in the great game, my eye has rested on the tall ornamental chimney of Doulton's Pottery, visible in the haze in company with 'the towers of talk at Westminster,' a mile away; and I have thought of that retiring genius working in his big, rambling room under the tiles, heedless of the roaring world of London down below him, caring neither for cricket nor for the prattle of politicians, but dreaming in clay, making poetry and pottery at the same time.

It was wonderful to witness the ease with which he manipulated the plastic stuff in his caressing fingers. He would take up a lump of clay from a table, and, with a quiet smile and a twinkle in his eye, proceed to show the curious and amazed visitor 'how it was done.' A roll with the dexterous fingers, and it became a small pedestal; a few swift squeezes and pinches on another shapeless lump, and a statue was placed upon the base. A pull here and a dab there, and the whole thing was changed into a cat making her morning toilet. Another twist or two, and there was a grinning gamin or a sailor dancing a hornpipe. Another pat and pinch, and the figure became an apostle. I saw Abraham grow under my very eyes. It was like a conjuring trick. It was not merely the figure that he gave you, but a face with a real expression upon it. It was most fascinating to watch him, and if you expressed surprise and pleasure he would be as embarrassed as a girl. For George Tinworth was an anomaly in these latter days—a genius who declined to pose in the limelight; a man, also, of high ideals and humble, child-like heart; an artist, too, who was never satisfied with what he had done, but was always hoping that he would do better next time, for ever striving, for ever pressing on to the summit of his ideal for the only prize an artist cares about—perfection.

Tinworth lived entirely for his work. Though he had genius, he never presumed upon it, but toiled year after year with a most ardent enthusiasm and an untiring industry. He was never satisfied, was always altering and improving. A day was not wasted if in it he could give his figure or statue the touch that would make it breathe. When he was conceiving and executing one of his great terra-cotta panels, crowded with life-size figures, which by-and-by would appear in some public hall or lend an added dignity to a cathedral, he was completely absorbed in his work, toiling daily at his task with a religious intensity.

The secret of Tinworth's greatness, like the secret of all really great men, went back into his character. He was a deeply religious man, brought up on the Bible, whose pages he brooded over perpetually, and whose pictures and figures lived in his mind. He was a devout and simple Christian, but so shy that when he presented himself for membership in a Baptist church in London, he was so flustered and confused with the questions and forms, and so entirely unable to give any verbal expression to his faith, that he gave up any attempt at seeking membership in a church, though he remained a faithful church-goer to the end of his days. It was the

church that was the chief loser, not its stammering and timid disciple.

All his greatest subjects were Biblical in character. He loved his Bible. It appealed to him by its depth and beauty, its wonder and suggestion, and it stimulated his genius as nothing else did. Something within him awoke at its call and responded with a devout alacrity to its quickening. He loved a large canvas and a dramatic moment. Hence he chose such themes for his panels as Christ and the Children, The Entry into Jerusalem, The Release of Barabbas, and The Raising of Lazarus. All these were on a big scale, every figure life-size, and all crowded with detail. He seized the inner meaning of an incident, so that its hidden lesson was conveyed to the spectator by the pose or the grouping or the expression of countenance of the various persons in the drama. Some of these expressions were particularly striking. He brought out the inward difference between Jesus and Barabbas in a marvellous way by his delineation of the two faces—the one calm, beautiful, serene, resigned, with a pure and manly strength; the other gross, grinning, evil, with recklessness, scorn, violence, and sensuality in every line of it.

Tinworth had a sardonic humour about him, too, which he sometimes used with great effect, and which came out very vividly even in some of his religious productions. One would not suppose that there was any scope for humour in the incident of The Raising of Lazarus. But Tinworth saw it, and managed it quite legitimately, on the basis of a clear Biblical suggestion. I remember it particularly, because this happened to be the very panel he was at work upon when I paid a visit to his studio so long ago. He had modelled one of the crowd of unbelieving Jews at the grave's mouth holding a handkerchief to his nose, in anticipation of the stone being rolled back! A grim touch, but a touch of nature that makes the whole world kin. The eye for dramatic effect is shown in the statues that Tinworth executed of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher, and Charles Bradlaugh, the famous and doughty champion of Freethought. In the statue of Spurgeon, the great pulpit orator is represented with arm uplifted and finger pointing heavenward; in the Bradlaugh statue the burly demagogue is depicted with the hand making a fierce gesture earthwards, or possibly to some spot lower than the earth! From which it will be seen that if Tinworth had his prejudices, he had also the courage of his convictions. The kindliest man may sometimes attribute a repudiation of orthodoxy to a flaw in character, and the strain of strong and gentle piety in Tinworth would scarcely find a point of contact with an iconoclast like Bradlaugh.

George Tinworth's work is done. He has enriched the world with many a striking and beautiful product of his art; they may be seen in quiet minster and in stately cathedral for years to come. But the more enduring part of him is invisible—the genius that dreamed over the Bible, the spirit that drank daily at the full springs of God, uttering itself in a life of simplicity, industry, and faithfulness that made him the friend of many.

SAVED BY A PUFF-ADDER.

By G. H. Furse Deane.

MOST people have justly such a loathing for poisonous reptiles that it seems hardly credible that one of the most venomous and repulsive-looking of snakes should have been the means of saving a man's life. But it sometimes happens that bad men and savage animals are forced by the irony of Nature to take a part in the theatre of life for which they seem utterly unfitted.

In this case the man and the snake were thrown together by one of those unaccountable *coups de théâtre* which Nature takes a grim pleasure in staging. It was Christmas Eve, 1901—the last year of the great Anglo-Boer war. I was sitting in my tent in Clanwilliam, which lies about a hundred miles north-north-east of Capetown. Clanwilliam, though it bears a British name, and has a fair sprinkling of British descendants, is an old-fashioned, Dutch-built town, consisting merely of one long street of detached country-houses lying along the left bank of the Jan Dissels River.

One of my new chums was a conductor of transport-wagons, named Morgan. Morgan was a licensed Government land-surveyor, and before the outbreak of the war, which swept thousands of men out of their peaceful vocations into the ranks of the belligerent forces, he had been living in Southern Rhodesia. He had joined one of the columns, had been besieged in Mafeking, had got an attack of malaria, had been sent down to the base hospital at Capetown, and after recovery had again joined the military as a conductor of transport-wagons. He had been all over South Africa, not only in the towns, but in the remote back-veld; knew Dutch as well as English; and, though somewhat quiet and reserved in manner, was an excellent conversationalist.

On that particular evening there was a smoking-concert at the sergeants' tent a few yards farther up the road, and Morgan happened to come in; and, after staying there half-an-hour, he strolled down to my tent.

I brought camp-stools, and we both sat outside. Men whom we knew passed and repassed, and among them was a group of Australian officers who held commissions in the different volunteer regiments that garrisoned the town. One of them, Lieutenant Davids, wore a black shade over his left eye. At my invitation they sat down and chatted, and they all partook, except Davids, of some particularly good whisky, which I had obtained by special favour from one of the officers of the South Staffordshire regiment.

'Davids has sworn off,' said the others, laughing. 'He was out on patrol the day before yesterday, and in Pakhuis Pass he met a dragon, or some other fabulous monster, and this creature squirted some poison into his eye.'

'Well, tell us the whole yarn,' said I.

'I was out on patrol duty,' said Davids, 'towards Pakhuis Pass, the day before yesterday, with three native troopers. We had nearly reached the top of the pass, when a long black snake crossed the road leisurely. I was riding a few yards ahead of my men, and at once charged into him, and got in a good smack with my stock-whip. He backed up against a big rock, and showed fight, rearing up and flattening his head. My horse was rather skittish, so I got off. I caught him another good crack with the whip, and then he elongated his neck like a pea-blower, and before I could get in a *coup de grâce* he squirted his venom slap into my left eye. Jeerusalem, boys! vitriol and nitrate of silver are soothing and unctuous compared to that liquid hell-fire. My lance-corporal, who had shouted a warning to me to be careful, told me to put on a little pipe-oil [nicotine], and this relieved it somewhat. Just look here!' and he removed the shade, and we could see that the whole of the eye was swollen and inflamed as though from an attack of the worst kind of ophthalmia.

'But how is it we've never seen this particular species of snake?' asked one of the other Australians.

'Because it's not found all over Cape Colony. You won't find it in the southern districts, or anywhere in the Eastern Province, but only in this middle chain of mountains; and it's not found on the other side of the great inland chain,' said I.

After a few minutes' chat they went on to the smoking-concert, and left Morgan and myself alone.

'It's quite evident that none of those Corn-Stalks believe altogether Davids's story,' I observed.

'The belief of most men is as limited as their mental horizon,' said Morgan. Then he produced his tobacco-pouch, and handed it to me with the words, 'You've noticed this particular pouch, haven't you?'

'Yes,' said I; 'it's an iguana-skin, isn't it?'

'No,' said Morgan gravely; 'it's the skin of a puff-adder, and'—he spoke with gravity—'paradoxical though it may seem to you, this particular puff-adder was the means of saving my life.'

'Saving your life!' said I. 'That must be an occurrence worth relating.'

'Well, if you care to listen, I'll tell you the whole story. This thing happened on Christmas Eve, 1896. I had been busy doing some private survey-work in Southern Rhodesia. I had a mixed gang of men, one of whom was a quondam Kafir witch-doctor, who possessed a considerable knowledge of herbal medicines, and who was credited by his fellow-workers with supernatural powers. He was named Umbande, but I always called him Johnson. He spoke English as well as Cape Dutch. We had knocked off work the afternoon before, and as I had received an invitation to spend Christmas with a friend named Graham, I gave the men four days' holidays, intending to return two days after Christmas.

'I had never been to Graham's farm before, and there was no road thither from our camp; but, as the veld was pretty open, and he had given me a few landmarks to steer by, I was not at all afraid I should lose my way. The walk of thirty miles through such country as that was a mere trifle to a South African land-surveyor. As horse-sickness had been prevalent in this part during the winter, I had not a single trek or riding animal with me.

'That evening, before turning in, I strolled down to where the men were camped. They always made their bivouac a few yards away from my fire. On the present occasion they were all squatted in a semicircle round old Johnson, who was throwing his dice, evidently telling somebody's fortune. These dice are composed of the knuckle-bones of a goat, and are known among the Dutch as *dobbel-steentjes*. On the farms one often sees children playing with them. They call them their *dol-ossen*, and place them in rows, with a toy wagon behind, like a long team of oxen. When I came up and stood behind him, he looked up into my face with a troubled expression. He had a very open face, and a good prominent forehead, and without his cap, as I had often thought, he would have posed well for a model bronze Socrates. Then he swept up the dice with a quick motion of his hand, and put them back in his bag.

'"Whose fortune have you been telling?" said I.

'"You believe in them, master?" said he.

'"Believe in them! How can I believe in them? They are merely children's playthings," replied I.

'"Children's playthings!" he said slowly; and he repeated these words two or three times, looking up at me steadfastly with the many-wrinkled brow of trouble or perplexity.

'"Throw them out again," said I; and he did so, though with considerable reluctance.

'Then I arranged them as I had seen Dutch farm-children place them, in a long double row,

like a span of oxen. When I had placed them all in position, and was looking at them and at old Johnson alternately, memory, with one of those lightning-like back-strokes of hers, which are so inexplicable and yet so illuminating, lit up a scene of the past. I was in what is called in Cape parlance the *onder-veld*, in the district of Fraserburg.'

'Oh, I know that part of the country well,' said I. 'I was there when Hertzog and Brand's columns came down from the Free State to get horses.'

'I had been surveying on a farm some fifty miles north-west of Williston, and had been staying off and on with a Mr Dantje Roux, a very kindly, intelligent old fellow.'

'I knew him well,' said I. 'His sheep were nearly all wiped out by the drought of '96, and then he started a small country shop.'

'Did he ever tell you about one of his children having died of snake-bite?'

'Oh yes,' replied I. 'I think it was on a Sunday, when I was visiting there, that he told me the whole story with that minuteness of circumstantial detail in which the old-fashioned Boer indulges.'

How it happened was briefly in this way. A puff-adder had come near the house, had been seen by one of the grown-up people, attacked with a stick, and left for dead. The child had seen it, and began playing with it. The snake had revived sufficiently to bite the child. The little one had been put to bed, and had been doctored with such simple remedies as the household medicine-chest could provide, and seemed to be progressing well. On the fourth day, when the father came up to the little boy's bed, the patient raised himself to a sitting posture, and, with a sudden convulsion, fell back dead.

'Well,' continued Morgan, 'a day before this, the boy was playing in the yard with these knuckle-bones, or *dol-ossen*, as he called them, and he was shouting out their names and urging them on with that realism of action which is the birthright of childhood. When I came there again he was a corpse. And now, as I looked at the old Kafir's African dice, the whole scene was reconstructed again.

'When I said "Good-night" Johnson promised to rouse me early, and bring me a cup of coffee.

'I am a sound sleeper, but I always wake at four o'clock, and when I got up that morning old Johnson had just started his fire. I dressed myself quickly, and made up a few necessaries, such as a spare shirt, brush and comb, &c., into a light roll to fasten with straps behind the shoulders. Then I slung my Martini carbine over this, and put a few cartridges in my pocket. There was not, I thought, any likelihood of my meeting dangerous animals, but as I had to cross a big vlei, or dry swamp, I might pick up a buck —one of the smaller kinds—which would be a welcome addition to Mrs Graham's larder.

'I did some very good walking during the early part of that day, and it was not too hot to be pleasant. My idea was to keep walking till about eleven o'clock, then find some shade, and take a good siesta, then start again about 3 P.M.

'In Cape Colony, especially in the Western Province, you can tramp for hours without finding a tree which will afford shade enough at noon for a person to lie under; but here there were plenty of trees, and every here and there patches of brushwood. As for food, I had some sandwiches with me, and a golden-syrup tin to make coffee in. Resting under a tree for about ten minutes, at eight o'clock I took a light breakfast of sandwiches and water.

'My course was pretty plain. I was to keep steadily to the north-west, with a kopje having two tops, shaped like two inverted funnels, as my beacon. This kopje was approximately two-thirds of the whole distance from my base-camp to Graham's farm. A mile or two beyond the kopje I should strike the vlei, which was some two miles wide, running north to south. In this vlei I should find a wagon-road going to the farm, but in those days in Rhodesia wagon-roads were mostly rough tracks which had been ridden through the veld, not made.

'I was in the pink of condition, for a land-surveyor's life in South Africa, when he takes to the back-veld, is one of the healthiest in the world. I passed above the kopje a little after eleven o'clock, and as it was now getting pretty hot, I determined to make my lunch, have a good smoke, and then take a siesta. I found a good tree which would give shade for at least a couple of hours, made a plain but hearty meal, and then, after a few draws at my pipe, lay down for a nap. My walk, coupled, no doubt, with the holiday feeling of well-deserved leisure, acted so soothingly on my nerves that I slept until three o'clock, and it was close upon four o'clock before I had partaken of coffee and was again under way. It was now pleasant and cool, and I reckoned I could easily do the remaining ten miles in the three and a half hours which elapsed before sundown. After about half-an-hour's brisk walking I struck the vlei, which was from two to three miles wide, and I kept going up it, hoping to strike the wagon-road which I thought crossed from one side to the other. As a matter of fact, this road had been formed only some three months before, and had been used for "riding" poles and firewood. It did not cross the vlei right through, but only came about half-way, and then made a wide circular bend back into its original course.

'For about an hour I held on my course on the hither side of the vlei, chiefly because the going was easier, but also because I thought that, as this vlei, which was really only a wide river-channel, had a low, sloping bank on either side, the wheel-tracks of a wagon would leave a

deeper spoor as the animals pulled out. Then I tried the vlei itself, which I crossed about half-way.

'As there was now only about an hour before sundown, the possibility arose in my mind that I should have to spend the night in the veld. But before I prepared my camping-place I was determined to make one final effort to locate the farm. I ascended the farther low bank, and climbed a tree, and from my elevated perch I gazed carefully all round in hopes of catching sight of some tell-tale wreath of smoke or other sign of human occupation; but all in vain. Then I got down and walked back to the water. I cannot say that I felt at all nervous at the prospect of having to sleep in the veld. Just alongside the stream I caught sight of a *grijsbok*, which was standing broadside on. I dropped him in his tracks with a Martini bullet behind the shoulder, and then set to work cleaning him. This accomplished, I lit a fire, toasted the buck's liver over the coals with a forked stick, and enjoyed a good supper. Then, fastening the animal's feet together with a spare *riempje* [rawhide strap], I slung him up on to a branch of a wide-spreading tree, under which I intended bivouacking. My rifle, too, I fastened on to the same branch, outside the buck, taking the precaution to load it again. Then I cleared a place on the sand for my shakedown, and, after a final pipe before turning in, I was soon sound asleep.

'In those days I was an excellent sleeper, and was never troubled with bad dreams or anything approaching nightmare. So it was all the more inexplicable when I woke some time after midnight with a vague sense of clammy oppression on the left side of my chest. It took me some seconds to realise what was the cause of this; and then, as I was now fully awake, the horror of the dreadful visitation dawned clearly on me. A large, fat, loathsome puff-adder was reclining on my chest, the whole of its coils covering a space very little bigger than an ordinary dinner-plate, and with its evil-looking, flat head resting close under my short beard. It seemed to be fast asleep, and was purring like a cat. I was at first so horrified that I could not formulate any plan of action. Then it occurred to me that if I could seize it suddenly by the tail, I could hurl it from me. But my knowledge of South African snakes warned me that the puff-adder bites backwards; though it is quite a mistake to suppose that when its long, sickle-like fangs are cleared for action it cannot bite an object in front of it. Again and again, when a youngster, on the Cape flats, I have teased a puff-adder with a whip, and have seen that when once it is thoroughly on the defensive, it can snap in front as well as behind. And in the present case the snake lay with only a tiny portion of its tail exposed—certainly not enough to grasp at. Then I thought of catching hold of it behind the head, as I had often seen my foreman do. But I remembered that he never caught a snake without first treading on it. I must not omit to mention at this stage that the moon was shining brightly, and I could carefully note the slightest movement on the part of the snake. I lifted my arm slowly to see if I could make a grab at it, but, whether it was through my heart beating at double-quick time or through some palpable vibration of my body which it was impossible to control, the loathsome creature seemed to arouse from its placid slumbers and transfix me with its Gorgon eye; and I realised that I must feign an attitude of perfect torpor.

'Naturally, all these thoughts did not pass through my mind at once. They were only evolved slowly, with alternating periods of hope and fear.

'No doubt it was this balancing and counterbalancing of the forces on my side and those arrayed against me which saved my reason and prevented my hair from turning white. My heart, too, shared the abnormal excitement of my mind, for it was at one time quite regular in its pulsations, and at another it was thumping like a locomotive engine on a heavy up-grade. One thing I knew I must do, and that was to keep rigorously awake; for if I fell asleep again, and woke with a sudden start, I ran the risk of being bitten.

'But a more terrible ordeal was awaiting me, and one which called into requisition all the powers of that *mens æqua in arduis* beyond the limit which the Roman poet could ever have imagined. It must have been fully an hour after I woke, and between two and three o'clock in the morning—as I could ascertain roughly by the position of the moon—when I saw what appeared to be two dim lights which appeared to be moving together about two feet above the ground. First I saw them on my left, and then a few minutes after on my right. They burned with a soft, phosphorescent glow, which was very weird and elusive. After they had travelled slowly more than once across my limited field of vision, I came to the conclusion that they must be caused by the eyes of some night-prowling animal, such as a hyæna or a Cape hunting-dog. I did not know for certain whether the eyes of these animals emitted any glow at night. Then it occurred to me that it might be a leopard or a panther. As to its being a lion, that was quite outside my reckoning. Whatever predatory animal it might be, it had probably been attracted by the smell of the buck which I had cleaned, and when it found the entrails, would in all likelihood make a good meal of them, and then retire without molesting me.

'When I next saw these twin-lights they seemed to me much nearer. There was a little open glade some twenty yards to the left, and I

kept my eyes fixed steadily on this. You can imagine my amazement, therefore, when, a few minutes after this, there stepped out of the shadows into the light a lion—not the lean, loafing, decrepit, man-eater type, but a well-set, thick-maned animal with lowered head, like a bloodhound on the spoor, and eerily glowing eyes. Strange to say, my unwelcome visitor, the puff-adder, also saw the lion, and was actively on the *qui vive*, raising its head and flickering its tongue.

'The lion stepped across the clearing, but did not advance directly towards me. He was evidently attracted by the buck which hung on one side of me, and he was puzzled, or, it may be, even scared, by the rifle hanging on the other. He was adopting, too, an old stratagem of a wary antagonist by going round and round his objective in ever-narrowing circles. When he came again into view within the open space, he was not more than ten yards off. Then he sat down with his head raised, for all the world like a tame mastiff, and his tail slowly whisking from side to side, and regarded me intently. He got up in a dignified manner, and came a little nearer, always with a sidelong, half-circular motion, and nosing the ground carefully. Evidently he thought I was asleep, and was waiting to annex the buck, but was not satisfied until he could ascertain this by actual personal observation. He quartered his ground as methodically as the best pointer, and was now alongside me. At first, when I saw him sitting taking stock of me, I thought I would stake all on one grand *coup*, grab the snake and hurl it from me at the lion, then leap to my feet with an ear-piercing war-whoop, and get hold of my rifle. But the threatening attitude of the snake, which seemed to be eager for a fray with any third comer, made this altogether too risky a proceeding for such a novice at snake-handling as myself. All I could do was to petrify myself into a state of perfect torpor, and await results.

'The lion was snuffing at my clothes, and seemed to be puzzled at my rucksack, which I was using as a pillow. And then he saw the snake, and he gave a low snort of surprise or disgust. The puff-adder drew its head on one side like a catapult, and struck him on the nose. The lion at once retreated a pace or two, snorting loudly, then came up again, and gave a dab with his paw in the direction of the snake. The puff-adder meanwhile seemed to have swollen itself out to twice its normal size, and struck now with such force at the lion's snout that it rolled completely off my body. The lion again retreated, this time a pace or two farther.

'Now I was free, and rolling on the off-side away from the snake, I sprang to my feet and gave a blood-curdling scream. Whether the lion was confounded at this novel mode of warfare, or at the sudden intervention of a second antagonist, I cannot say; but he bolted at once with one or two gigantic bounds, not even looking behind. As to the puff-adder, its head was slightly torn by the lion's claws, and, though I felt some compunction at despatching it, I deemed it best not to harbour such an uncanny visitor.

'The less said of my mental state during the last few minutes the better, but I can remember very vividly repeating the rules for Latin genders which I had learned when a boy in the public-school primer. The rest of my story is soon told. I put in the time before dawn in skinning the snake.

'When it got light I struck back along the vlei, and found cattle-tracks leading to some kraal, and I reached Graham's shack in time for breakfast. Everything was done by both Graham and his wife to make compensation for the horrible Christmas Eve I had spent. On the day following Christmas we went after the lion, and followed his spoor for a couple of miles. Then we turned back, for, as Graham put it sententiously, "He's heading straight for the Zambesi."

'When I got back to my boys at our base-camp I told them all my adventures. Old Johnson listened to my narrative with the keenest interest, and when I had concluded he said solemnly, "Master, I knew that you would meet some great danger, but the dice showed me that you would pass through it safely."

'To my somewhat curtly-put question, "Then why didn't you tell me of it before I left?" he replied, with the same serious look on his face, "But you would never have believed it, master, for you said that the bones were only children's playthings."

'It was he, incidentally, that made the pouch for me. None of the other Kafirs would touch it on any account.

'I have found myself again and again faced with these two unanswerable questions: could old Johnson have possessed some occult power of divining by means of these bones? or was it merely the black charlatan's desire to exalt himself in the estimation of the white man?'

LOVE'S AFTERMATH.

You come to me from out the long dead years
What time I wander in the realms of sleep,
And with angelic touch you dry my tears,
And softly whisper that 'tis vain to weep—
That all the loves of old, if true and pure,
Are garnered up to one day gladly bloom
Where hopes are realised, and joys endure
Unmenaced by the shadow of the tomb.
With this sweet message comforting my soul,
I take my place amid earth's striving throng,
And with eyes firmly fixed on that far goal
Attune my heart for its unuttered song,
Assured that I, when freed from mortal clod,
Shall meet you in the Paradise of God.

W. Fordyce Clark.

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THE HEART OF THINGS.

By Henry Leach.

London, Yesterday.

THE glamour of history is such that most of us, upon reading of the great events of bygone days, epochs in the life of mankind, as we regard them, have reflected upon the peculiar privilege granted to the people of such times in having been born into them, and upon the strange sense of importance, no doubt, and the thrills of existence that they must have enjoyed. It may be an empty reflection, for, after all, every age has its work to do, and does it, for the development of the great scheme of humanity; and in the long-run, though the cataclysms of war appear to make the greatest impression on mind and circumstance, a fairly steady age average may be maintained. But it is certain, anyhow, that it is a whim of the mind to regard epochs of the past as those in which life seemed to sparkle most, and to think of the fine thing it must have been to live in such days. To have been in Egypt under the second Rameses! Would it not have been something to have been one of the humble workers engaged in the building of the temple of Thebes; or to have been a Roman in the great days when Cæsar brought the captives home, and there were processions of purple and gold through the Eternal City, which, for feelings of exultation that they kindled, have hardly been bettered in the centuries since? Nearly every boy at some time has lingered over the fancy that it must have been a wonderful thing to be a Roman and have a share in such an age as when the legions leaped upon the shores of Britain or when Horatius kept the bridge in Rome. The past, as we view it from afar, is never prosaic; history and legend work such a refining process upon the general mass of fact and incident that from the measure of a whole world and a full century they will extract one ingot, and labour upon it and polish it until it is a beautiful gem that glitters before our eyes for ever. Yet really in those times there was much of what we would call dull according to modern standards. A humble citizen of Rome, even in its greatest days, might carry on his life with no greater exhilaration or better means of edification than a Lancashire cotton operative enjoys to-day. Probably the advantage would be all with our cotton-worker. In the great days of Rome the general course of life and action was not just what it may appear to have been from a Shakespearian play. Looking back in our own history, most of us see as the most glowing chapter that of the Elizabethan period, when England was quivering to the great expansion upon which she was then entering. Drake and Raleigh, and the colour that seemed to glisten upon everything and make of life something between a ballad and a fairy-tale—it must have been a privilege to live in those times when the imagination strained across the seas. Again, when the first Europeans, and particularly the first people from our own islands, struggled in the throes of the early colonisation in North America, what a draught of life they had! As we have said, most of us, in looking back in time, have somehow felt, even if the thought has not always been clearly expressed to ourselves, that those who have slept for centuries since had privileges in life, being chosen for the mighty periods. Perhaps, in spite of the maintenance of that average of which we have spoken, a certain special dullness crept into our collective existence in late Victorian times—it is said so—and that may account for some of the envy that has arisen; and yet how should that be so when steam and electricity and all the wonders of science were developing every day and changing the manner of life? But sometimes we find ourselves in the midst of great events, the greatest, and then indeed it may appear to be a miracle of the ages that, seeing that there has been some sort of civilisation for thousands and thousands of years, a certain event charged with the utmost consequence should occur, and you or I should be individually associated with it; that we should have been born at the particular time to ensure our participation in it, and not fifty thousand years before, or even in the seventeenth or eighteenth century among the ancestors of whom we still hear. What an extraordinary chance it seems that, of all the generations, fate made its cast upon our unexpectant selves! It is, of course, not extraordinary; but do not mind that now.

* * *

It has been said that of all the *mots historiques*, that which most excites the fancy and is capable of most constant personal application is the saying attributed to the doge of

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Genoa (not of Venice) when, at the beginning of 1685, he went to Versailles to offer the compliments of his republic to Louis XIV., the court of Louis Quatorze being something to see and to think about. Upon returning to his own city he was asked what it might be that had astonished him most at Versailles, and he answered, according to the story that is given us in France, '*C'est de m'y voir.*' Nothing had excited his wonderment so much as the simple thought that there, amid that most impressive scene at Versailles, he, the doge of Genoa, as far removed in thought and circumstance from such things as he could possibly be, should find himself implanted. To find himself a part of such a scene was a greater wonder than the scene itself. The oddity, and yet the special human waywardness, of such reflections does not come upon us at once; but it is there. It was much the same with many persons in the early stages of the present appalling world conflict. They saw life and the whole fabric of civilisation heave up and tremble; they were told and believed that this was the most gigantic happening, the most fateful event, that had ever occurred since humanity came into being; that the future of the whole human race, the general path and tendency of civilisation, were to be determined by it. Hence we, you and I, who chance to be living in this particular one of the many generations of civilised life that are known to have existed, have been chosen as the instruments of this marvellous and enormously important process, and to see all the wondrous events that occur, and to be part of them. Search among the recollections of your own thoughts for a year or two, and you will almost inevitably discover that at one time or another you were inclined to marvel at the strange chance that had pitchforked you into this arena —whether you rejoiced at it or not. That this cataclysm should occur at all is certainly remarkable, but then we know that history deals in sensations; what is strange to us, as it was to the doge of Genoa, finding himself of all others at Versailles, is that we of all others should belong to it and be a part of it. In time the drama, the reeking tragedy, the fiery process of world adjustment will be completed, and we shall pass away. What of a hundred or two hundred years hence, when they who then walk the earth—if there be any then who do not fly—may notice our tombstones, if they will be so kind, as they pass through the village churchyards? Will they wonder also upon our fortune in having lived at such a time, and will they glory in our victory? Or will they be doubtful upon many things, and have eclipsed our sensation with something greater and more terrible?

* * *

By this fourth winter, though love of country and of right, and the great determination that glows in the honest heart, are not less than they were, but more, it comes to pass that emotions are exhausted, the senses somewhat dulled by the fast sequence of shattering events, and while new impressions are difficult to make upon us, we think perhaps somewhat less of the immensity of current happenings than we did at first. Amid so much madness and confusion people have reflected that for over three years the most tremendous of our explosives and other horrors, the yielding of tens of thousands of lives, the full aggregate of sacrifice and enduring and suffering—none of these has made the very slightest difference to the workings of Nature. In that way they may seem not to have mattered to any one save man alone, and it is wondered what account, if any, is taken of them by the Highest Power. One who becomes a little morbid under the effect of such considerations may inquire as to what the attitude of posterity to this affair is likely to be, for at the beginning—more so than now, it seems—we took posterity very much into our thoughts. It is not now less the fact that we labour heavily and suffer for posterity; but the intensity of our labour is such that we do not concern ourselves with these sentiments as a year or two ago. Splendid as we may have been, there is, however, sometimes an uneasy feeling on the part of those of the morbid way that posterity, duly thanking us and feeling grateful, even if regretting that we overlooked something that may cause trouble later, will have a large eye for certain notorious faults in our organisation and administration. But beyond this, thinking of the farther posterity to which the last faint eddying rings made by the splash of this tremendous missile of war into the placid pool of life will hardly seem to extend, this person of troubled thought, not content that verily the day's evil is sufficient thereunto, conjures up the prospect that away in the ages ahead, farther in front, perhaps, than we are of the early adventurers in neolithic times, our great event, this most awful thing of the world and its history, and all our tremendous sacrifice and the crowning achievement of it, may not even be remembered! They may not know of it. They may have other troubles to think about without rummaging among faint records of prehistoric periods to confirm doubtful theories of tribal wars when civilisation was so young that even radium—as they may put it—had only just come in. Some of us may start a little at the thought that this war, the period in which we have the privilege of living, may be forgotten! But we must bear in mind the old way of time, unflattering though it be. M. Anatole France achieves in one of his short stories the most remarkable effect of its kind that is contained in literature. He takes a great event in the long-past history of the world, one that we all know of, one that has affected most of our lives most profoundly, and he nominates one of the chief actors in that tremendous affair,

and finds him only a few years later, in his old age, resting in retirement, and entertaining himself at a bathing-resort, where he exchanges reminiscences with an old associate. The latter reminds him of the event, and asks him if he does not remember. He considers for a moment, and then says he cannot recall it; he has forgotten. Without further indicating the details of this short sketch, we may say that the effect upon the reader of the suggestion of the very possibility of forgetfulness in the circumstances is tremendous, shaking. Some such emotion, a little gentler perhaps, may arise at the thought that an ultra-distant posterity, tracing its own origins back and back until, for want of records, it halts at some point which is yet perhaps a hundred centuries on from that in which now we live, may not know of us and what we bore. These parts of the earth may have become cold, and the region of the southern pole, warmed and made pleasant, may have been long established as the centre of life and industry. And some day a hardened traveller comes home there after remarkable explorations amid the icy, silent regions of old Europa, and among the specimens he brings are some bits of metal which suggest to the mind of this imaginative person a theory, that about the twentieth century there may have been a struggle of some kind between the people of those parts, or, if not, that they indulged in strange sports and recreations. This explorer will naturally read a paper on the subject to the scientific societies; but the members will smile sadly, and reflect that the hardships borne by this splendid fellow have weakened his mind. They will not believe him.

* * *

If we need not fear that our war will not be remembered, this possibility, in the way it has been put, may at least serve to counteract our idea of the wonderful consequence of ourselves. A true sense of proportion may be assisted, and it may be realised that, great and overwhelming as is the war, all the armies of the world could not make a single blade of corn to grow without the assistance of Nature, to which it is such a trifle. So much for our 'power' and the instruments we use; let us not confuse the merely human with what is more than human. But the truth is that man himself in the fourth winter of war is insensibly acquiring the true sense of proportion, and in his own slight considerations is adjusting the war to its proper place in regard to the eternal. Man is, after all, a marvellously adaptable creature with a fine reserve of sense. If he wonders unduly to-day, and is excited accordingly, the truth dawns upon him by the morrow, and he goes his way without another thought. The war is still a big thing to him because he knows it is big, that it is the biggest thing of its kind the world has had—in numbers, carnage, and so forth; but he knows there have been wars in the past which have probably influenced the destiny of human life quite as much. Even if he were disposed to think less of the war, he could not; a careful Government turns the screw upon him a little more at every minute. The phlegmatic way in which man, and above all, we may say, the Briton, pursues this war in the fourth winter makes a marvellous study in simple, quiet persistency. So adaptable are these human beings, such their capacity for accommodating themselves to circumstances, that some of them may reflect sometimes that, in spite of it all, things, so far as they can see, are not greatly different. They have forgotten so much, you see. Though a thousand things have happened, each one of which might have caused consternation in the placid days, they are all taken as customary now, and as of long establishment. Consider the railway travelling arrangements, the licensed houses, the food and drink restrictions of every kind, the registration of persons, the severe taxation, the revolution in prices of most things and the scarcity of many. See what a vast change has swept over our Governmental system. Think of the Defence of the Realm Act and how much our political and civil liberties have been curtailed. And there is the darkness of the streets and the sense of creepiness under starlit skies. The other night, at the opera, we were watching with delight that lovely work of Mozart and Beaumarchais, *The Marriage of Figaro*, excellently given; and presently, beyond the high ceiling, through the walls, back from everywhere and round us there came dimly, but nearer and nearer, the sound of guns. Now and again there was an uneasy rustle in the seats, but not more than that. People pretended not to know. And another night, after some hour or two's firing over our London, as between the enemy and ourselves—mostly ourselves by way of barrage, as we call it—the 'All clear' was given, and then, what was the first thing that happened afterwards? Why, all the urchins —and some who were bigger than that—turned into the thoroughfares, and in the very dim light they scraped their feet along the surface of the streets, and poked about with their fingers in the gutters, looking and feeling for bits of shrapnel for mementoes! And the strange thing is that the dog life of the town, having itself understood that queer business was afoot, and entering thoroughly into this lighter aspect of the affair, scratched and smelled and poked about in the gutters in a veritable frenzy of search for shrapnel, and intermittently howled with the excitement of the quest. This we saw in Piccadilly. It is nothing; nothing is anything. But how different are the times, and how adaptable the people who live in them!

* * *

Surely some changes have been wrought. Are men the same? When the blast of war began, all in confusion laid charges to them-

selves, and in their distress and their resolve urged that it was for the good of all, and that they all had erred and the lives of all were needing cleansing. The war would do it, so they said. Time has modified some of those reflections of the early days of war. All that rises from this conflict is not pure and good; there are things that are better for the soul than war. Men are chastened, and they have many sorrows now. In that surely they have gathered a new strength. In other ways men are changed. They are more careful, silent, discreet. The great Napoleon said as a maxim that in war-time you should keep your eye upon your neighbour. All the people are doing that. If real loves and real friendships have drawn closer, there are wider separations elsewhere. Looking around, man sees a frightful materialism in the ascendant, and he sees nations turned to insincerity and opportunism. He sees states, governments, regarded formerly as being of undoubted honour because they had seemed to be the concentrated essence of the best of their people, the models, the examples, the judges, the committee verily of life and death—sees and hears them committing every kind of dishonour, and particularly hears them lying from day to day and hour to hour upon every fact and circumstance, changing the form of their own thought between its leaving their minds and reaching their lips, and sending it out in falsehood, until it appears too difficult or impossible for them ever to speak the truth. If these be the states, the rulers, the governments, the highest examples, what then shall be the individual? Wherein shall he find the code for his own conduct? Alas! If these governments be foreign and enemy to us, nevertheless our faith in some human institutions is shaken. From a great disillusion the man of the time falls down to no despondency. He sees idols and old ideals totter; but he reconstructs. In this exigency he shows not mere adaptability, but a marvellous persistency. From the first dawn of life it has been a struggle upwards, and now, after a spell of rest, the struggle is fiercest. Man is scratching on. He is more silent, and he is thinking more. Some vague thoughts, such as those of the accident that has put him in this struggling time, and of the relation between war and the things of great eternity, come up in his mind. And again when his liberties are lessened, and his friends have gone, and the night is dark, and he feels alone. Then there are all the lies and the other falsities of great governments; the judges are condemned, and the standards are in the gutter. More than ever he is alone, in thought and feeling and direction. He, every one, feels inevitably and certainly in these days one great thing, and that is that now his strength, all of it, for the present and the future, his hope and his guidance, must come from within. He must be a moral and spiritual guide to himself. So he turns with a wild, hungry eagerness to elementary philosophy as never before. Slowly simple truths are presented to him as never before; wonderful and good they seem to be. He thinks far more. . . . That is the greatest thing the war has done till now, the greatest any war could ever do. It has made a world of careless men to think. They are thinking now.

THEIR HEARTS' DESIRE.

CHAPTER IV.

A FORTNIGHT passed, and Auntie Naarah was still at Torquay. Her nephew and nieces began to think about the expense of such a protracted stay; they had always rather encouraged her meanness, being content on their visits to The Hermitage to go on short rations, knowing that every penny thus saved would go to swell their ultimate portion.

That Miss Brooke was at the bottom of it the 'girls' all felt convinced. Even Herbert had misgivings. He felt himself in a delicate position. It was advisable that Miss Brooke should return to her work at his office. On the other hand, her recall might offend Auntie Naarah.

However, a glaring instance of incompetency on the part of the Y.W.C.A. substitute decided the question of Miss Brooke's absence. Herbert wrote a diplomatic note to his aunt, saying he would be glad to know when she could spare his secretary, and that one of his sisters would be ready to relieve her at a moment's notice. In reply, Miss Knowles said that she was sorry to have inconvenienced her nephew, that Miss Brooke was returning forthwith, but that the writer hoped she would be coming before long to Tussocks, as 'she was a very ingenuous, kind-hearted girl,' and nothing would suit Auntie Naarah better than to engage her as a companion.

This announcement created considerable dismay at The Chain House. Ellen declared that that must never be; Priscilla said that she had foretold just what would happen; and Mary, feeling somehow the cause of such a state of affairs, said valiantly that Herbert need not let her go. To which Herbert sullenly replied that he was not a slave-owner, and had no power to retain Miss Brooke's services against her will.

Miss Brooke looked very fresh and blooming when she once again took her place before the typewriter in Lawyer Knowles's office, one

window of which looked sheer on the narrow little river which flowed through the town of Crabtree. Her employer asked a few questions about his aunt, and was surprised to hear that she had been to concerts and once or twice to the 'Pictures.' It was all so unlike Auntie Naarah as to suggest undue influence at work.

Lawyer Knowles was suspicious by nature, and when, coming suddenly into Miss Brooke's domain one morning, he surprised her with a happy smile on her lips while hurriedly slipping a letter into her pocket, he began to think her designs on Auntie Naarah were flourishing.

'Have you heard from Torquay since you left?' he asked with apparent carelessness. Rather injuredly he added, 'We have had no letter from my aunt for some few days.'

'Miss Knowles has been ill,' replied his secretary.

'Ill? Why were we not told?' cried Herbert sharply.

'Miss Knowles was taken suddenly ill; it is believed she ate something which poisoned her,' said Eva Brooke. 'One or two other people in the hotel had the same symptoms, but more slightly.'

'Poisoned!' Herbert looked concerned. 'And is my aunt still there, and is she better? Just what does she say?' he asked irritably.

'My information does not come from Miss Knowles,' said Eva; and surely he was mistaken, but Lawyer Knowles fancied there was a gleam as of mischief in her dark eyes.

'Not from my aunt? Some one in the hotel, then?' he persisted. The Knowleses were an inquisitive family, and were never above asking questions to find out what they wanted.

Eva Brooke shook her head. Then, colouring, she said boldly, 'My letter is from Mr Edward Strachan.'

Lawyer Knowles almost gasped. 'Edward Strachan!' he repeated blankly. 'What is he doing at Torquay? I thought—I quite thought' (he almost said 'hoped')—'that that undesirable young man was out at the front.'

His tone unconsciously suggested that he would not have cared had Edward Strachan stopped a bullet.

'Mr Strachan is home wounded,' said Eva Brooke, and her eyes flashed.

Unfortunately Lawyer Knowles was too perturbed to notice it.

'Wounded! Dear me! Not dangerously, I suppose?'

'He has lost his right arm,' said Eva proudly.

'Well—very sad, of course. But he was a lazy, extravagant fellow before he enlisted. I am afraid he never did any useful work with his right arm.'

'He is a brave man, at any rate,' cried Eva; and her employer turned in surprise at the challenging emotional tone of her voice.

'Oh, I don't doubt that,' he replied leniently. 'But that attribute unfortunately does not always belong to a worthy character. However, the young man's shortcomings have nothing to do with us, so far as I am aware.'

'On the contrary, Mr Edward Strachan's good name has a great deal to do with me, Mr Knowles,' said Eva Brooke vehemently, 'seeing that I am engaged to marry him.'

'Marry him!' Lawyer Knowles was staggered. 'My dear Miss Brooke, I can hardly congratulate you. I fear—I very much fear—he will never (now less than ever, owing to his infirmity) be likely to earn an honest living.'

'If not, I must work for both,' said Miss Brooke; 'and I may take this opportunity to say that I am looking out for more remunerative work. At my present salary it is hard enough for *one* to live.'

Lawyer Knowles frowned. 'You won't find it so easy,' he said with grim satisfaction, conscious of the inadequate wages generally paid to women workers.

Eva only smiled confidently. With Edward's love she felt strong to face an adverse world, to wrest favours from close-fisted fortune. The girl's happiness had beautified her; she looked younger, more blooming and desirable altogether.

She was too good, much too good, to be thrown away on a thriftless fellow like Edward Strachan. Forgetting the errand which had brought him, Lawyer Knowles retreated to his own sanctum in a very bad temper. For so curiously is man compounded that the mere fact of a woman being out of his reach immediately increases her value in his eyes 100 per cent.

He had never thought of marrying Eva Brooke himself, in spite of his sisters' misgivings on the subject. He had no idea of marrying a portionless bride; but he liked Eva, and somehow he felt hurt at the idea of her being engaged to some one else. It was illogical, of course; but then even shrewd lawyers are sometimes illogical where women are concerned.

When he went home Herbert told his sisters about Auntie Naarah's indisposition, and of Edward Strachan's being at Torquay, but he did not mention the engagement. Feeling annoyed about it himself, he would not give his sisters the satisfaction he knew it would evoke on his own account.

However, Auntie Naarah, sending a note in very shaky handwriting on her return to Tussocks a day or two later, gave the surprising news in a postscript. 'Poor Edward Strachan, who has lost an arm in his country's service, is in hospital at Torquay, and I understand that he and Miss Brooke intend making a match of it. I suppose they think they can live on love.'

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When Mary paid her deferred visit to The Hermitage she found Auntie Naarah in bed with a chill. The return from balmy air and sun-

shine to the gray skies and perpetual damp of Tussocks had taken effect on her frame, weakened by her short but severe attack while away. In her feverish state Auntie Naarah's mind wandered, and even when she was once more about again she sometimes seemed dazed, and her memory, never good of late years, grew rapidly worse. Still, her mind was clear and unaltered on one point—that is, having Eva Brooke as a permanent companion. And this, together with the knowledge that Edward Strachan would soon be visiting his relatives in the neighbourhood, gave The Chain House contingent furiously to think.

Mary wrote frequent reports of the invalid, who appeared to be giving considerable trouble. On two or three occasions, Mary said, she had got up and dressed in the middle of the night, once putting on her outdoor attire with the intention of walking in to Tussocks to the bank.

As a result of this information, Knowles, who had brought his legal mind to bear upon the case, himself paid a visit to The Hermitage, taking Ellen, as being more experienced, with him to relieve her younger sister. Auntie Naarah stared blankly at the pair of them when they were shown into her parlour, where every breath of fresh air was rigorously excluded, red sandbags, which had been in vogue in the days of her youth, stretching their snake-like lengths on the top of the window-sashes.

Mary looked quite wan and enervated by her fortnight's stay, the close atmosphere even more than Auntie Naarah's fidgety ways having evidently told on her.

'Really, it is almost insupportable,' she confided to Ellen, 'and auntie is so irritable. I sometimes think she'll wear us all out before we get the chance of seeing a farthing of her money.'

'Well, Ellen has come to take a hand now,' said Herbert consolingly. Then he went over to Auntie Naarah, crouching in a big chair over a handful of coals in the grate, which was all she allowed herself.

'And how do you feel to-day, aunt?' he said solicitously.

'I am not at all well,' was the reply. 'But what are you doing here? I wasn't aware that I had sent for you.'

'I came to see how you were getting on, auntie,' replied Herbert in rather crestfallen tones.

'Perhaps Mary wrote for you.' A gleam of cunning came into Auntie Naarah's faded eyes. 'She writes a great deal. Waste of ink, I call it, now when everything is so dear.'

'No, auntie, indeed I did not,' began Mary, anxious to justify herself; but Herbert put up his fingers silencingly. 'It's no good taking any notice of what she says,' he replied *sotto voce;* and then, as Auntie Naarah turned to her nephew with the repeated question, 'What are you doing here?' he added, 'Poor thing! you see how it is.'

'Yes, that's what I say,' said Mary in an excited whisper. 'Auntie is—is—going off her head, don't you think?'

But Lawyer Knowles never committed himself to a statement if he could help it. He only shrugged his narrow shoulders as Auntie Naarah, peering suspiciously at them both, asked what they were 'jabbering about.'

'We only want to help you, dear auntie,' put in Ellen.

'I don't want your help,' was the ungrateful rejoinder. 'I don't want any of you; so you can take your ugly face off, Ellen, as soon as you like.'

Ellen grew a dull red. It is humiliating to have one's personal appearance depreciated, even if the depreciator's mind seems temporarily unhinged.

Herbert again shook his head with a soothing air. 'Poor auntie! She will never be quite herself again, I fear.'

'Wouldn't it be as well if you could see her doctor?' Ellen, drawing her brother apart, presently suggested.

'Just what I intend doing, and that is why I am staying till to-morrow.' He objected to being given a lead.

Auntie Naarah's medical attendant was a young man and a bachelor, which perhaps accounted for his large and increasing practice. He very seldom had occasion to visit The Hermitage, and with so many more interesting patients to see, he did not care to waste much time with a cantankerous old maid.

Herbert approached him with a very serious air about Auntie Naarah's condition.

'Oh, she's better; she's got over the bronchial attack better than any one could have expected; but then she's tough, Mr Knowles. Another bout would do for her, though, I shouldn't wonder.'

'Humph!' Herbert looked concerned. 'But it was about her *mind*, Dr Banks, I particularly wished to see you,' he said. 'To me her mind seems failing. And she has turned so suddenly against my sisters and me, which in itself is, I believe, a sign of such a state.'

'Sick people often take dislikes of that sort,' said the doctor carelessly.

'And I suppose my sister told you of Miss Knowles dressing in the night and coming down. Really, you know, doctor, she might set the house alight.'

'Take her candle away, then,' replied the doctor shortly.

'I understand my sister did that,' said Herbert, 'and Miss Knowles nearly fell downstairs in consequence.'

After a little conversation, and Herbert's adducing several instances of Auntie Naarah's

peculiarities, the doctor allowed that it might be true that her mind was failing.

Knowles was one who believed in striking while the iron was hot, and on his return to Crabtree he called on his friend Mr Twitty in Lincoln's Inn.

'You do a lot of work for companies,' he said. 'I wish, Twitty, you could find a good post for a lady typist who has been in my employ. She is really worth more than I can give her.'

Twitty promised to do his best, and Herbert hurried home to be in time for a missionary sermon which a colonial bishop was preaching at his church.

Meanwhile Ellen, acting on her brother's instructions, kept a watchful eye on Auntie Naarah, and when the doctor was paying his farewell visit she asked his opinion about getting a resident nurse for her aunt. 'My brother suggested it when he was here,' went on Ellen. 'He said a nice nurse used to mental cases, who would be kind but firm, would be a great comfort.'

The doctor looked rather surprised. He didn't think Miss Knowles was bad enough for that, he said. But when Ellen, with all her family's obstinacy, pointed out how unfair it was to Jean to leave her alone with her mistress in such a trying state of health, and that her nieces felt unequal to the strain, he began to waver. For one reason, the doctor was in a hurry, and thought the quickest method of getting away was to say he would think it over.

'I am sure you could find some one suitable, doctor,' said Ellen with her most bewitching smile.

The doctor said he would see what he could do.

When Herbert went down to The Hermitage again after a very brief interval, he found a stern-faced woman mounting guard over his aunt. The unfortunate lady, who had always gloried in her independence, was now never for a moment left alone night or day, the 'nurse' sleeping in a box-like little room leading out of her patient's.

Lawyer Knowles congratulated himself on his wisdom. 'Things marched,' he felt.

But when Ellen and he were alone the former remonstrated.

'It's all very well, Herbert,' she said; 'but think of the expense! I've beaten the woman down, but her salary means something out of Auntie Naarah's income; and, besides, there's her keep. Jean says she will have the best of everything.'

Herbert gave a sphinx-like smile. 'Granted, Ellen,' he replied, 'that there is some expense connected with the new arrangement; but had we left auntie alone, who could have said what would have happened? There was nothing to prevent her making a new will any day.'

'No, of course not, dear Herbert,' replied his dutiful sister. 'But though any will Auntie Naarah might make now would be set aside, she being of unsound mind, what is there to hinder her *giving* her money away?'

There was a half-triumphant glance in Ellen's eyes, as if she thought she had propounded a poser.

'Sh-sh!' said Knowles cautiously. 'Don't put things so baldly, Ellen; one never knows who's within earshot. And as for the contingency you mention, I have thought of that, and am making arrangements accordingly. I am proposing to bring Twitty down in a day or two, and I think he will see that Auntie Naarah is not fit to have control of her money. With a little judicious persuasion, I have no doubt that I can get auntie to create a power of attorney for Twitty to sign her cheques. You leave it to me, please, Ellen.'

'I might have guessed you would think of something, dear Herbert,' responded Ellen with a glow of gratification.

Then she went into the parlour, where Auntie Naarah was sitting with a picture-book on her lap.

'Well, auntie, how are you feeling now?' she chirped.

Poor Auntie Naarah, whose dull eyes had the pathetic, wondering expression of a dumb animal under suffering, looked up. 'What is that woman doing here?' she asked slowly, pointing to her nurse.

'She is here to help you, dear auntie,' said Ellen cheeringly.

Jean was indignant at the installation of the 'keeper,' as she styled the strange woman.

'Miss Knowles would be all right if she was let alone,' she cried. 'I don't see, Miss Ellen, what all of you's little game is; but I know you've got some maggot in your heads.'

'You may be quite sure, Jean, my brother and all of us are only acting for your mistress's good,' said Ellen.

Jean sniffed. 'Say *your own*, Miss Ellen, and you'll be nearer the mark,' Jean retorted candidly. 'You'll have every penny she's got. Miss Knowles has told me so herself often. But if you want to hurry her out of the world, pretending she's off her head won't help it.'

'Do you know, Jean, you are being very rude,' cried Ellen.

'I say what I think,' said Jean, 'and it would be better if other folks would do the same. That nurse, she's as cunning as she's high. I pity my poor mistress never being out of her sight when she no more needs a keeper than I do.'

'When you speak to me like that I am not at all sure you don't need one,' replied Ellen with dignity. However, not to let Jean think she bore any malice, Ellen asked Jean, when she came in from chapel that very evening, what the text was, and Jean, with some meaning, Ellen fancied, replied promptly, 'He gave them

their hearts' desire, Miss Ellen, but He sent leanness into their soul.'

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Eva Brooke, who was now in London at the good post the obliging Mr Twitty had provided, received a letter from her *fiancé* one day which gave a deplorable account of Auntie Naarah.

'Poor old lady!' wrote Edward. 'I should hardly have known her when I dropped in at The Hermitage the other day to see her; she seems reduced to a state of mental and bodily helplessness—can't call her soul her own, I should think. It made me feel quite bad to see her. I can't bear to see a dumb animal ill-treated; and this was worse, somehow. When I was going poor Miss Knowles put her hand into her pocket. She looked sadly at me as she said, "I'm sorry, Edward; I should have liked to give you a little present, just to buy you some tobacco" (she used to give me a quid or two now and then, you know, Eva), "but I have no money now. My nephew's friend Mr Twitty, a lawyer, signs all my cheques. I haven't even a shilling in my purse," she said; and the pitiful way she looked at me—it made my blood boil, I can tell you. I only wish you could be with the poor old girl, darling; you would make her happy; and she is not a bad sort really. I can never forget that my father loved her.'

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The end came to Auntie Naarah's cheerless existence quite unexpectedly. Perhaps the feeling that she had no interest or authority or anything to give her a grip on life had something to do with it. Anyhow, when the spring came she escaped from the never-ending surveillance of her keeper and her relatives.

And one sunny afternoon all the Knowles clan were gathered in The Hermitage parlour, where, following an old-fashioned custom, Mr Twitty was preparing to read the will he had made. And then, as Lawyer Knowles and his sisters, in their deep mourning, sat round the room trying to look as if they were broken-hearted at having just attended poor Auntie Naarah's funeral, a taxi dashed up to the door, and three strange men alighted, one of whom was in ministerial attire.

Jean went to answer the door, and the next minute had shown them straight into the parlour, amid the astonished protesting glances of the assembled group.

'Excuse the interruption,' said the first-comer, a keen, middle-aged man, who held a long envelope in his hand. 'But I have only just seen the announcement of Miss Knowles's death, and I have hastened from Scotland to be present at her funeral, as it was her desire that I should be. I conclude, however,' looking round, 'that I am too late for that.'

Lawyer Knowles bowed. 'This is a family gathering,' he said, 'and this gentleman,' pointing to Mr Twitty, 'is about to read my late aunt's will.'

'Then I am in time,' said the stranger. 'I am a solicitor practising at Torquay'—and he handed Herbert his card, on which was inscribed, 'Mr George Cotton, Solicitor, Torquay'—'and I was sent for by the deceased lady to see her at the Minerva Boarding-House, Green Street, on the 6th November last. The Reverend Nehemiah Watkins'—he indicated the minister—'was present by the testatrix's request on that occasion.'

As he spoke he drew forth a document from the envelope. 'This is the will I made there and then for Miss Knowles,' proceeded Mr Cotton. 'She had been taken dangerously ill, and thought she would not recover. Mr Watkins and my clerk here, John Horning'—he nodded in the direction of the third man, who stood modestly apart—'were witnesses to the same.'

'But—but—this is absurd,' cried Herbert. He had turned a yellowish white, while the 'girls' stared, open-mouthed, dismay written on their countenances; Jean, whom they were all too concerned to notice, standing just inside the door, a look of exultant expectancy on her face.

'It is all in order, my dear sir,' said Mr Cotton. 'Your will is pre-dated by two months. Miss Knowles, it appears, had been thinking over the disposal of her affairs, and was evidently not satisfied. Therefore she made this new will, which I should like to read now.'

He did. In slow, sonorous syllables the Torquay lawyer proceeded: '"This is the last will and testament of me, Naarah Knowles, spinster, of The Hermitage, Tussocks, Surrey. I revoke all wills and testamentary dispositions heretofore made by me, and declare this to be my last will. I appoint the Reverend Nehemiah Watkins and Mr George Cotton my sole executors.

'"I bequeath one hundred pounds each to my nephew, Herbert Knowles, solicitor, and to my nieces Ellen, Priscilla, and Mary Knowles; as they are already comfortably off, they are not in need of a fortune. To my faithful servant Jean M'Inly I bequeath one hundred pounds free of duty.

'"I bequeath one hundred pounds to the B.R.C.S., and I appoint Private Edward Strachan, 56th Battalion of the Middlesex Regiment, son of the late Major Edward Strachan of Grey's Court, Chelsea, my residuary legatee, hoping that the responsibility of this wealth will be a comfort to him in his maimed condition, and that he will realise the great trust committed to him.

'"In witness whereof I have to this my will set my hand this 6th day of November 1915."'

'It is preposterous!' cried Herbert, springing up. 'Miss Knowles must have been off her head when she made that new will. She was for some months before she died.'

'But perfectly sane while she was at Minerva

House,' put in the minister, who had not yet spoken. 'I had many an argument and talk with poor Miss Knowles, and the doctor who was called in to attend her can bear out my statement.'

'My aunt has had to have a mental nurse for some time,' said Herbert furiously.

'That is of no consequence, my dear sir,' replied Mr Cotton. 'As you know, the testatrix was of sound mind when she made this will; that is all we have to consider. I sympathise with you in your disappointment if, as I gather, this last will is less in your favour. But it must stand.'

'I shall appeal!—Twitty, we must appeal!' cried Herbert.

Mr Twitty shook his head gloomily. 'I am afraid we have no case, Knowles,' he replied in low tones.

The 'girls' seemed dumbfounded by the overwhelming and unexpected disappointment, a veritable bolt from the blue.

Priscilla was the first to recover her speech. '*Residuary legatee*,' she said. 'What does that mean, Herbert?'

'Mean! It means in this instance that that scapegrace Edward Strachan will become possessed of about thirty-five thousand pounds,' replied Herbert, white with rage.

'And The Hermitage,' put in Mr Twitty, 'with the furniture, plate, books, &c.'

'In fact, everything that is not specified in the legacies already mentioned,' said Mr Cotton.

'Well, money is not everything,' remarked the minister, with a laudable attempt to pour oil on the troubled waters.

'There has been undue influence,' cried Herbert. 'I am sure we can prove that.' He turned to Mr Twitty, who again could only shake his head regretfully.

'Not at all,' Mr George Cotton replied quietly. 'Miss Knowles had a perfect right to will her money as she chose'—he picked up the fateful document from the table—'as in the words which she dictated at the end of her will, but which I believe I omitted to read just now: "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own?"'

THE END.

THE MINISTRY OF MUNITIONS AT WORK.

By Luke Harruney.

SOME time ago Mr Lloyd George, in an address to the staff of the Ministry of Munitions, described the first meeting of the Ministry. It took place, he said, in a room barely furnished with a table and five chairs, and one of the important points under discussion was how to obtain a carpet for the room from the Office of Works! Not quite three years have elapsed since then—no very great space of time in a human life—yet how remote those days seem to be already to workers with the Ministry! Huge buildings have been taken over on all sides, until, octopus-like, the Ministry has extended its tentacles all over London. Most Londoners are aware that practically the whole of Northumberland Avenue has become one immense Government office, and that the giant hotels and clubs in the neighbourhood have been swallowed up one by one; but few realise that, not content with this, the ramifications of the Ministry extend east and west even in London. And all over England factories and filling-stations have sprung up to an extent that has profoundly affected the national life. The tale of how all this came to pass will have to be told after the war, and it will be worth the telling, if only because many of the results have come to stay.

At the present juncture, however, it will be more interesting to give some details of the work now going on in our midst. It would be no ordinary room nowadays that could contain even the 'heads' of departments and sections of the Ministry. In July 1915 the staff of the Ministry numbered no fewer than 8761 persons of all ranks. At the time of writing it amounts to nearly 40,000. And over and above all these, there are 8000 persons at work in America. Let not the reader think, when he sees these figures, that an undue proportion of men has been withdrawn from military service, for a year ago women made up 28 per cent. of the total, and nowadays they account for 61 per cent., and are actually 29,000 in number. Men over military age or otherwise unfit for military service largely account for the 11,000 remaining in this country.

Very similar are the figures for our greatest arsenal, Woolwich. Here the staff numbered 10,866 in August 1914. Now it numbers 73,571, and the women employees have increased from 125 to nearly 25,000. After this, we may hope to hear fewer gibes at the expense of the 'weaker sex.' And the work that this staff is carrying out is enormous. Not only is the Ministry (with other new 'ministries' and departments) engaged in putting into practice an experiment in State Socialism on the largest scale, but it is also organising and developing old industries that had languished, while bringing into existence entirely new ones. Many of these had previously been entirely in the hands of the foreigner, or were undreamt of before the war. Take glass, for an example. Of the

optical supplies sold in these islands before the war only 10 per cent. were of British origin, and the very processes for the manufacture of certain kinds of glass were practically unknown. All the formulæ necessary have now been worked out in actual practice, and we can supply not only ourselves but also our Allies with every article needed. Recently German boastings about potash have appeared in the newspapers. German chemists have plumed themselves on the fact that before the war they furnished the bulk of the supplies of this material—so important in agriculture and the arts—and have announced that after the war they will supply the world. Well, Great Britain has chemists also, as the Germans are beginning to find out, to their cost; and—honour to whom honour is due—Mr Kenneth Chance, with others connected with the Ministry of Munitions, has devised an entirely new process for the manufacture of potash, by which the German plans are already defeated. In addition to this, Dr Addison says that the new programme for fertilisers to be produced in Britain includes over a million tons of superphosphate, nearly half a million tons of basic slag, and a quarter of a million tons of sulphate of ammonia.

Nor does all this by any means exhaust the list of side results—of matters which are not primarily essential for the supply of munitions, but which have attained a lasting increase owing to the waste and wear and tear in the production of more necessary war material. Many waste products have also been utilised. It is safe to assert that the most vital of all chemical reagents in the production of high explosives is sulphuric acid, or oil of vitriol, as it is vulgarly called. Before the war sulphuric acid was largely used in the industries of peace, and nitre-cake, one of the by-products brought into prominence owing to the unprecedented output of explosives, was a waste material, very often treated as refuse. But nitre-cake contains nearly 30 per cent. of sulphuric acid, so that many manufacturers, previously in the habit of using the pure acid, have now found (partly under compulsion, it must be admitted) that nitre-cake can be used for many of the purposes for which the acid itself was used. When the war is over many firms will continue to use nitre-cake, and thus reduce their expenses and turn out cheaper material. Every one has heard that horse-chestnuts, also, are valuable. The Director of Propellants will be glad to tell collectors where to send them.

It may be asked why the Ministry needs so large a staff as 40,000 persons, and what they all are doing. In the first place, the correspondence of the various departments is enormous. Every conceivable subject under the sun is dealt with, from guns and chemicals down to the provision of police for the factories, and even the menus of the workers' meals. A letter may arrive, addressed to no one in particular, and when it has been opened and read, and the particular department and section to which it appertains has thus been ascertained, it is at once sent to the proper officer. All the correspondence has to be filed and referenced, by dockets, if necessary, and copies of the replies kept. When thousands of letters are involved (a daily occurrence), even this is no slight task. So each section has its registry, and each department its main registry—a sort of post-office controlling letters and telegrams and the mass of official correspondence carried on by means of 'minutes' and 'files' between departments and the other branches of the Government service. Many of these last are curious, and even at times confusing, owing to the rapid growth of the different branches and the invariable practice of designating them by initials instead of writing the full address in words. Thus, Mr 'X' of His Majesty's Office of Works will be addressed on a 'minute' or 'file' as 'Mr X, H.M.O.W.' Without further ado, in this instance, everybody will know what is meant. But, given a new ministry or section, the puzzled clerk will often be put to much trouble in order to find out what is meant. Take, for example, the 'Oils and Fats' section. Here the official initials, 'M.F.O.F.S.,' rather suggest a practical joke than 'Ministry of Food, Oils and Fats Section.'

Forms, too, now being sown broadcast all over the country, to the exasperation of those ordered to fill them up, are a constant source of derision to the comic papers. Yet a little reflection should convince any one that they are absolutely necessary if control is to be maintained over the output of this or that article. The plainest questions have often to be repeated, even a simple direction to sign a form and give the deponent's name and address being frequently ignored; so that a wearied official is left with nothing but a post-mark on an envelope to guide him as to who it is that is answering his questions. And when the examiner of these forms has to go through hundreds of them day by day and tabulate the results, this is no joke. In addition to all this, factories have continually to be visited, and controlled establishments supervised, so that a large number of travelling inspectors are necessary.

Guns are now being turned out to an unheard-of extent. The number of machine-guns now made has increased twenty times, so Dr Addison tells us. The output of sulphuric acid has increased to fifteen times the quantity before the war, and it costs less to make. And as regards steel, whereas our output before the war was about 7,000,000 tons a year, it is now nearly 10,000,000, and is increasing rapidly. Steel plates now cost half the price paid in America. One and a half million steel helmets were turned out for our Tommies during the last six months,

and 17,963 tons of them have been sent abroad. Of the shell components sent us from the United States, the U-boats have only succeeded in accounting for 5·9 per cent.

Zinc deserves mention. As the French say, the Germans had successfully 'accaparated' the Australian output of spelter before the war, and only one-third of the zinc used in Great Britain was the product of the Empire. Zinc is now completely under our own control, and Australia has swept away the German hand for ever.

Notwithstanding increased wages, economies have been effected in all directions. Our shell-filling factories alone employ about 100,000 hands, and fill about 85 per cent. of our shells, at a reduced cost of nearly 40 per cent. The magnitude of the operations necessary for filling shells can be gauged by the fact that every million round of 18-pounder shells requires 183,000,000 separate gauging operations. Thus the work of inspection is gigantic. Trinitrotoluol, or T.N.T., the turn-out of which is controlled by the oldest department of the Ministry, the Department of Explosives Supply (D.E.S.), is now produced in such quantities that if the old rate of cost before the war had been maintained £7,000,000 a year would now have to be paid for it. But, thanks to the improved plant and methods, necessitating a capital outlay of only one and a half million pounds sterling, the total cost now amounts to just half that sum. T.N.T. now costs 8½d. a pound instead of 1s. 9d. By March 1915 the total of the pre-war output of high explosives had been increased twenty-eight times. Nowadays it is quite four times the amount it had attained even a year later than this—in March 1916.

More than 6000 new inventions have been reported on, and special rewards have been granted to the employees in sixty-five cases.

In conclusion, it may safely be added that when the war ends, the work begun by the Ministry will in many respects be found to be of lasting value, even in times of peace.

A GERMAN DESERTER.

THE poor devil of an Alsatian had swum the Rhine at daybreak, and landed safe, but exhausted, on the friendly soil of Argovie. A German patrol had put out in a boat from the Baden shore a minute too late; as the result of which, Fritz just managed to reach the asylum of neutral waters, his pursuers daunted by the incriminating presence of Swiss sentries, but for which eye-witnesses they would have shot their countryman on neutral soil with no more compunction than they had shown in the case of a Russian fugitive a fortnight earlier. For the Russian, death could have had no sting, because he and his had for months been tortured, the favourite punishment for the slightest disaffection being to string these unfortunates up to trees by the wrists!

Desertions across the Swiss frontier, whether by swimming the broad and rapid Rhine or by crawling, under cover of darkness, across the neutral zone, increased to such a degree during the third summer of the war that the German military authorities had continually to devise new baits to lure the repentant and unwary back to the fold. These efforts failed, if only because the fugitives knew their former masters too well to trust them. In vain were successive proclamations to deserters, each more tempting than the last, posted along the frontier. First, the offender was given seven days in which to report to his regiment, and was promised no worse punishment than a few months in prison. Could they but have counted on such a penalty, thousands would first have deserted, and then have given themselves up, so as to get out of the inferno of the dreaded *Trommelfeuer*, which shatters their nerves more effectually than all else; but well they knew that the real reward of repentance would be immediate transfer to the front trenches, so they stayed on the safe side of the border. The next proclamation, issued early in June, went yet further, for it extended the period of absence without leave to six weeks, and promised that bygones should be bygones. That also, as Fritz confided to me in the intervals of conveying Gruyère cheese to his mouth on the point of his rusty clasp-knife, seemed too good to be true, and those who had won free of the Kaiser's jurisdiction knew where they were well off.

He had never had much heart for the war, though at the first call to the colours he had left his little home in Hüningen, within sight of Bâle's factory-stacks, and had shouldered his rifle with the best. That was in September 1914, and since then he had been moved from West to East and back again, had fought in the Ypres salient and in the Russian marshes, had faced Australians and Cossacks (and did not know which of them had given him a clearer foretaste of hell), had been rushed from one pandemonium to the other, had thrice changed his battalion and four times his regiment, two of his earlier companies having been wiped out. As he evidently was not meant to be killed in battle, he had had enough of it, and cleared out.

He never had his heart in the business. He was an Alsatian, though he spoke German. He hated the pigs of Prussians, and prayed that the French might soon drive them out of Alsace. And now he was exiled from the home he could

look on from the streets of Little Bâle. His wife and children could not come to him. Ah, well! the war would not last for ever, and the pigs were going to have too many troubles of their own soon to give any thought to him! Why all these desertions?

Look you, some deserted for one thing, some for another. Most of those who crossed into Switzerland had their families in that land before the war. They regretted, too late, the patriotic impulse that had made them follow the drum across the Rhine. Others, more sensible and less sensitive, had known where they were well off. Switzerland was full just now, for numbers of young and able-bodied Germans had hurriedly got across the frontier in those feverish July days when war, though a moral certainty from Metz to Königsberg, had not yet been declared.

Many deserted because they could no longer stand the strain or the insufficient food. For days together they got no bread. When they did get it, it was mouldy. The troops in garrison complained that all the food went to the men at the front; but those who hungered in the trenches were quite aware that most of it was eaten by the greedy brutes in the garrisons.

Pay? Oh yes, he got pay—nominally, fifty-five pfennige a day, but more often he did field-work on the lower Landsturm scale of only thirty-three. Even this he was advised to pay into War Loan! *Advised!* No; there was no compulsion, but a bad mark was made against all who refused.

His wife's separation allowance? Great! For herself and five little ones, ranging from ten to three, twenty-eight marks a fortnight, or about thirteen shillings and eightpence a week! At the present prices of food, this would just have housed and fed the wife alone. Now, of course, it would stop; but he was a skilled mechanic, and he would, within a week, be sending her better money.

How did he think the war was going? Oh, who could tell? It was pretty much of a stand-still. Certainly no one believed any more in the march on Calais, and Paris was as safe as Munich. But, at the present rate of advance, it would take even the English, devils though they were, about five years to reach the Rhine. Probably both sides would get tired of it at last and come to terms. That would be the best way. It was a beastly business, and only those could wish to prolong it who had neither been in it themselves nor had their dear ones in the trenches. Anyway, he hoped France might get back her provinces. That, said this German-tongued Alsatian, was what Alsace and Lorraine wanted, whatever the newspapers might say. That, for him, was the whole business of the war. Belgium? Servia? No affair of his. But an Alsace freed from the Prussian heel—there was a dream for one's declining years!

And so, with a little offering, I took leave of my ragged runaway compelled by the irony of fate to bear arms for a land he hated against an enemy for whose victory he prayed in his heart.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE COMMUNAL KITCHEN.

THE need for public kitchens where munition-workers can obtain ready-cooked food at reasonable prices must be patent to all who are conversant with the conditions under which many mothers with young children are helping us to defeat the Hun. These women have no time to cook food for the midday meal, a fact which has been quickly grasped by that most progressive of public bodies, the Hammersmith Borough Council. A large central kitchen has recently been opened at the Council's public baths, and supplies cooked food by two motor-vans to a number of distributing centres situated in the districts most thickly populated with women workers. Two thousand meals a day can be served from each distributing centre, and the number of customers is rapidly increasing. The menu is varied from day to day, a weekly list being distributed, so that customers can choose what they require before going to fetch it—an arrangement which saves much time when the meals are served out. Prices are very low, as is shown by the following selection from one week's menus: soup, 1d.; mutton-pie, 3d.; meat rissoles, 2d.; steak and kidney pudding, 3d.; salmon cutlets, 2d.; potatoes, 1d.; college pudding, 1d.; jam-roll, 1d. In spite of these prices, the Council expects to make enough profit gradually to wipe out the initial outlay, amounting to nearly two thousand pounds. The central kitchen contains eight steam-heated boilers, each capable of boiling eighty gallons of soup in half-an-hour, with six gas-boilers as a reserve. Baking is provided for by four steam-ovens, two gas-ovens, and a pastry-oven with a capacity of seventy pies every twenty minutes. The equipment also includes an electric mincing-machine which can deal with one hundred and fifty pounds of meat in six minutes, while fruits and vegetables are cut up at still higher speeds.

A SOURCE OF GERMAN POISON-GASES.

German chemists have proved themselves so ingenious in providing artificial substitutes for natural substances that it comes rather as a surprise to hear that they use the seeds of

a Central American plant, the sabadilla, to produce some of the noxious gases employed in warfare. With this object in view they are said to have bought up the whole available supply before war broke out. Even the dust from these seeds is so irritating to the throat, nose, and eyes that the labourers, when harvesting the plants, are compelled to wear masks. Sabadilla-seeds contain a poisonous alkaloid, veratrine, used as an ointment for rheumatic and neuralgic pains. The dried ripe seeds were formerly official in the British pharmacopœia, but are now little used. Absorbed into the blood in medicinal doses, they act on the muscles and depress the heart, circulation, and body temperature. They have been employed in acute febrile diseases in strong, healthy persons.

LONG-DISTANCE FLIGHT.

The Italians were the first people to employ aeroplanes in warfare, while in other directions they have always shown a pronounced inventive faculty. It is not altogether surprising, therefore, that an Italian aeroplane should hold the world's record for a long-distance flight. In this connection it may be remembered that Captain Laureati's recent flight from Turin to London without a stop, although given so much publicity, did not establish a record, the distance, six hundred and fifty-six miles, having been considerably exceeded by the French aviator Lieutenant Marchal, who flew eight hundred miles across Germany, and very nearly succeeded in landing within the Russian lines. Captain Laureati, nevertheless, holds the world's record by virtue of a previous non-stop flight from Turin to Naples and back, when the distance covered was nine hundred and fifty miles. In his recent trip from Turin to Hounslow a strong north-westerly wind was encountered throughout the whole journey, which goes far toward making this performance equal the previous record achievement for distance. The flight was completed in seven hours twenty-two and a half minutes, involving a speed of eighty-nine miles an hour—a remarkably good speed against the wind for the type of machine flown. A mechanic accompanied Captain Laureati, and two machine-guns were carried. Many people have asked why, if these long-distance flights are possible, we do not go farther afield on our bombing raids into the enemy's country. It must be remembered, however, that the distance that can be flown without alighting depends upon the load carried; hence, with an effective number of heavy bombs on board, an aeroplane is very much handicapped as regards mileage.

SUBMARINE AS OYSTER-DREDGER.

The usefulness of the submarine by no means ends with the sinking of hostile vessels in warfare, and Mr Simon Lake, the well-known inventor, has recently been experimenting with a submersible boat for picking up oysters from the bed of the sea. This vessel, which is illustrated and described in the *Popular Science Monthly*, is somewhat similar in design to the fighting submarine. One important difference, however, is that when the boat is submerged the oil-engine is enabled to work by means of long pipes reaching above the surface, one to supply the necessary air, one to carry off the exhaust gases. A much larger pipe, also reaching to the surface, contains a ladder whereby the crew may enter and leave the vessel when at the bottom of the sea, and has a platform at the top for a look-out man. This pipe terminates in an observation chamber in the middle of the boat, from which the sea-bed can be examined. At each side of this chamber are the oyster-holds, into which the oysters are drawn by suction on the principle of the vacuum-cleaner. On good ground this strange oyster-dredger is said to be capable of sucking up five thousand bushels of oysters in an hour. A propeller is provided which can be worked by the engine that operates the vacuum-pumps and other machinery.

MOUNTAIN-SIDE CARVED INTO A MONUMENT.

We have long been accustomed to look to America for the greatest achievements of the world in certain directions, and this attitude has often been justified, at any rate so far as sheer size is concerned. One of the most recent examples of this nature is the carving of a mountain into a colossal monument to commemorate the part taken by the Confederate side in the American Civil War. Stone Mountain, near Atlanta, is particularly adapted to this project, which is now being carried out by the well-known American sculptor, Mr Gutzon Borglum. The adopted design shows an army moving across the face of the mountain, and in its midst will appear all the well-known Confederate leaders. According to the sculptor, as quoted in the New York *Evening Post*, 'the carving will be in full relief whenever it is necessary to so carve it to give the appearance of complete relief. Otherwise the work will be carved in simple relief, and frequently even only drawn with a chisel into the great wall. We have learned that our mounted men, horse and rider, must be from hat to fetlock at least fifty feet to produce the proper effect.' Mr Borglum goes on to describe how the work will be carried out from a horizontal track just above the top of the design, upon which will run trucks carrying electric elevators. The carvers will work in the cars of the latter, which are eighteen feet square and capable of ranging downwards four hundred feet. Automatic tools driven by electric motors are to be used by the carvers, who will work in squads of four. Each group of three or four squads will be under the direction of an artist, and three to five of such groups are to work con-

tinuously until the design is completed. The carving, when finished, will be eight hundred feet in height.

LIGHT PRODUCED BY INSECTS AND FISH.

The extraordinary efficiency of the light given by certain insects and fishes has hitherto been the despair of the electrician, who can only transform a paltry 15 per cent. of electrical energy into light, the remainder being dissipated in the form of heat, whereas the firefly produces light practically without any heat at all. Again, several fishes, notably certain species very numerous in Japanese waters, give out light which is not only very great in volume for the energy involved, but which also has a power of penetration through sea-water unapproached by any artificial light at present known. The substance that produces this light has now been discovered by Professors Ulric Dahlgren, Edwin Conklin, and Edmund N. Harvey of the Biological Department of Princeton University; and, according to Dr W. H. Ballon, quoted in *Popular Science Siftings*, this substance can be secured in sufficient quantities for commercial purposes from the Japanese fish already referred to, while it can also be made synthetically. The latter resort is, however, unnecessary at present, as the natural sources of supply are large enough to meet any probable demands for some time to come. According to Professor Harvey, this luminous substance can be kept in sealed vacuum tubes indefinitely, and when exposed to oxygen and water it gives a bluish phosphorescent light.

THE ELECTRIC PROBE.

Science has been indefatigable during the course of the present war in devising improved methods of treating men wounded in the fray. In this connection a distinct advance has recently been made in the construction of the electric probe and in the method of using it. In the older form of this instrument the probe through which the wires were led was inserted into the wound, and on coming in contact with any metallic body produced sounds which were carried to the ears through hearing-discs similar to those used by telephone-operators. But in this form of telephone-probe the sounds were apt to be mingled with others, and thus its usefulness was strictly limited. In the newer instrument, however, this difficulty is obviated. Both the metal probe and the contact wire are connected with a very delicate galvanometer, which by its movements indicates the passing of even a feeble current of electricity. The wire having been placed in contact with the tissues at the edge of the wound, search is made for the metal substance with the probe. As the same metal is used for both the probe and the contact wire, as soon as the former touches a piece of metal of a different kind an electric current is set up which deflects the needle of the galvanometer. The amount of deflection is to some extent an indication of the size of the foreign body, the needle being moved by even the tiniest speck of metal, and violently agitated by a piece the size of a bullet. It is expected that the improved instrument will be a valuable supplement to the X-ray apparatus in the speedy location of bullets and fragments of shrapnel, and thus be the means not only of alleviating pain, but also of preventing the development of dangerous complications.

WATER-POWER IN FRANCE.

The increased price of coal owing to the war, together with the scant prospect of any substantial reduction after peace has been brought about, has accentuated the attention given of late years to natural sources of power. More especially is this the case in countries possessing no coal at all or in which the supply is unequal to the demand. Some interesting figures relating to the water-power available in France were given recently in *La Nature*, from which it appears that over nine million horse-power is obtainable from French rivers for one hundred and eighty days in the year. Corresponding figures for other European countries show that France is especially favoured in this respect, her water-power resources being considerably larger than those of Norway, Sweden, or Italy, or in fact of any other country, excepting perhaps Russia, for which no statistics are given. It is also interesting to note that although Germany's available water resources only amount to about one and a half million horse-power per annum, she has utilised 31 per cent. of them, whereas only 10 per cent. of French water-power is yet developed.

DISINFECTING FLUID.

The Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Metropolitan Borough of Poplar for the year 1916 contains some interesting references to the manufacture and use of electrolytic disinfecting fluid, which is made by the electricity department. During the year in question some fifty-three thousand five hundred and eighty gallons of this fluid were produced and distributed to various municipal undertakings and to the general public. Since the plant for making the fluid was installed, eleven years ago, four hundred and forty-five thousand five hundred and sixty-nine gallons have been produced, at a cost of about one-halfpenny a gallon.

LARGEST TELESCOPE IN THE WORLD.

America will shortly be in possession of the largest telescope in the world, if indeed the instrument is not already completed. According to *Nature*, 'The history of this great telescope dates from 1906, when Mr John D. Hooker, of Los Angeles, presented the sum of forty-five thousand dollars to the Carnegie Institution for

the purchase of a glass disc and to meet other expenses incident to the construction of a one-hundred-inch mirror for a reflecting telescope of fifty feet focal length.' A further gift from Mr Carnegie has provided for the mounting of the telescope in a suitable observatory. Far and away the most difficult piece of work in connection with such an instrument is the construction of the mirror, which consists of a glass disc accurately ground and polished, and covered with a thin film of silver. The casting of the disc was entrusted to the French Plate-Glass Company of St Gobain, and the number of failures produced before a satisfactory mirror was cast shows how difficult was this part of the work. Owing to many defects the first disc was rejected on delivery in California, where special buildings had been erected for grinding and polishing the face to the necessary curve. After being cast, such discs have to be kept in an oven at a high temperature for a long period, and the second and third castings broke during this process, which is known as annealing. Eventually a flawless disc was produced, and the grinding operation was begun. The face was first ground to a spherical curve, which was afterwards modified to a paraboloid, the latter operation taking about a year. Some idea of the exactness needed may be gathered from the fact that the difference between these two curves at the centre of the mirror was only one-thousandth of an inch. The mirror measures about one hundred and two inches in diameter, is nearly thirteen inches thick at the edge, and weighs over four tons. Mirrors for telescopes are silvered on the face, not on the back, as for the ordinary looking-glass. The silver coating is almost infinitesimal in thickness, and is deposited by a chemical process which in this case occupied fifteen minutes. Although the middle of the mirror was only one and a quarter inches deep below the edge, no less than thirty-five gallons of distilled water were required to fill the depression. The silvering operation used up thirty-two ounces of silver nitrate, one hundred and fifty gallons of distilled water, and certain chemicals.

MOUNTING OF THE GREAT TELESCOPE.

Very great care was taken to pack the mirror securely for its journey to the summit of Mount Wilson, six thousand feet above sea-level. The silvered face was covered with a layer of cotton-wool, and the mirror was subsequently crated on edge and mounted upon a motor-truck. Widening of the mountain-track for the upper half of the journey had to be resorted to for the transport of the mirror, other large parts for the mounting of the telescope, and materials for the building of the observatory. Owing to anonymous threats, armed guards accompanied the mirror in its journey up the mountain, this precaution being taken not only on account of the loss which would have resulted had the mirror been broken, but also because of the impossibility of replacing it under war conditions. The mounting for the instrument is naturally on a colossal scale, and the enormous weight is relieved by two huge drum-shaped floats which revolve in mercury-baths when the pointing of the telescope is altered in direction. As must be known to many of our readers, large telescopes have to be slowly moved from east to west to make up for the motion of the earth round its axis. This movement is effected by a clock, of such proportions for the instrument in question as to require a weight of two tons (four thousand four hundred and eighty pounds) to work it. Of course, such a weight could not be wound up by hand, and a powerful electric motor is provided for this purpose. It is of the utmost importance to mount a large telescope on an absolutely firm foundation. In this case the concrete pier supporting the mounting, which rests on the solid rock, measures twenty feet by forty-five feet at the ground-level, and it rises thirty-three feet. At the top is a circular concrete slab, eleven inches thick and fifty-four feet in diameter, the overhanging parts being supported by massive ferro-concrete brackets. Round the edge of this slab is a metal wall eight feet high, which reaches up to the floor of the observatory, where a water-seal renders the joint air-tight without making any actual contact that would transmit vibrations. The foundation pier is hollow, and has three floors, which are used for various purposes. Covering the observatory is the usual dome, in this instance one hundred feet in diameter, and built with an inner and an outer shell, the better to protect the telescope from changes of temperature. A slot from the zenith to the edge of the dome, which can be moved round, allows the telescope to be pointed to any part of the heavens. No less than thirty-five electric motors are required to give the necessary movements to the telescope and dome.

COMPLETION OF THE TRANS-AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY.

The recently completed line between Kalgoorlie, on the Western Australian goldfield, and Port Augusta, at the head of Spencer Gulf, in South Australia, forms the last link in the great chain of railways uniting the eastern and western coasts of the Australian Commonwealth. The new section, the construction of which was begun in the year 1912, is about 1050 miles long. At Kalgoorlie it joins up with the line, some 350 miles in length, which connects that city with Perth and Fremantle. It is anticipated that in the immediate future the traveller will be able to leave the incoming mail-steamer at Fremantle, and, journeying by luxuriously appointed fast train *viâ* Perth, Kalgoorlie, Port Augusta, and Adelaide, reach Melbourne in the course of about sixty hours. Thence, if he so desires, he may continue his journey by rail to

Sydney, Brisbane, and the towns of central Queensland.

PREDICTIONS AND PROPHECIES RELATING TO THE KAISER.

The article in the October issue of *Chambers's Journal* on 'Predictions and Prophecies relating to the Kaiser, Germany, and Austria' has been widely read, and has aroused much curiosity on the part of many readers, who have written to the editor for further information. The questions usually asked have been, who is Mr R. C. Wyndham, and what is his authority for the prophecies of Johannes the Monk? In reply to the first question, Mr R. C. Wyndham is well known in the Roman literary world, and has been resident in Rome for over twenty years. His address is 23 Via Silvio Spaventa, Rome. He was for a considerable time associate editor of *The Roman Mail*, an English newspaper published in Rome, but discontinued during the war, and was the first Roman correspondent to the Paris edition of the *New York Herald*. *Vaticinium Lehninenses*, mentioned in the article, was written in the year 1240, by Hermann, an anchorite of Brandenburg. The manuscript was presented in 1450 to the library of Magonza, and was printed in a publication entitled *Prussia Instructed, Hermann Redivivus*, reprinted several times between 1725 and 1873, the last time by Desclée of Lille in 1891. Napoleon I. declared the prophecy contained things 'superior to mortal intelligence.' Mr Wyndham's authority for the prophecies of Johannes the Monk is that of Signor Giuseppe Ciuffa, the well-known Italian writer, author of *La Guerra Europeo e le Profezia* ('The European War and Prophecy'), published by Descles & Co., Piazza Graziolo, Rome. Letters sent to Signor Ciuffa at this address will reach him, and Mr Wyndham is convinced that satisfactory replies can be given to all inquirers.

To Correspondents who wish fuller information regarding new inventions mentioned here, addresses will be furnished, when possible, provided a stamped and addressed envelope or post-card be sent to the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.

INCHCOLM.

GRAY stones of an olden day!
Time has fashioned your slow decay.
Time has wrought, and its glamour clings,
For ye hold imprisoned the whisperings
Of dim, cloistered, forgotten things.

And still ye echo the seabirds' call,
Gray stones in a gray wall!
And hearken still, as ye did at birth,
To the wind's lament and the wind's mirth,
And the low croon of the troubled Firth.

Gray days and a gray year!
Such the tale of our sojourn here.
But ever within the walls of chance
The ghosts of a happier season dance,
And memory laughs at circumstance.

W. CLARK.

*** TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1*st*. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2*nd*. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3*rd*. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, *should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them* IN FULL.

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EXTRA CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

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CHRISTMAS 1917.

THE LADY OF THE PINES.

By ALFRED COLBECK,

Author of *Wheal Catherine of Trencrom*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

SIDNEY BENTHAM, thin, pale, weary, sat meditating in his bachelor's quarters overlooking a mid-London park, with a distant glimpse of the Thames. As the butler cleared away the remnants of the dinner Sidney watched him. His bald head, his clean-shaven face, his speckless linen, the neat bunching of his white tie were all familiar; so were his quiet and rather slow movements and the clockwork-like exactness and efficiency with which everything was done.

'Poppleton,' said he, 'how long have you been with me?'

'Nine years, sir; and seventeen with your father.'

'Seventeen and nine are twenty-six. Have you ever had a holiday?'

'Two, sir, in your father's time.'

'In my father's time! I had the impression that one was due—from me, Poppleton. So I've decided to give you a holiday.'

'Yes, sir. When, if I may ask, and for how long?'

'When? To-morrow, perhaps, or next week—as soon as I can arrange it. And for how long? Say six months, or twelve, or eighteen—I really don't know, Poppleton—until I want you again.'

'Six, or twelve, or eighteen,' repeated Poppleton, as much surprised as ever he permitted himself to be. 'But, sir, you'll want me before half of the six are gone.'

'I may. Have you any relatives?'

'One sister, sir, in Derbyshire.'

'Would she take you in?'

'For three months, sir? She would be very pleased to.'

'I mentioned six, Poppleton, or twelve, or eighteen. Would she take you in for eighteen?'

'I think so, sir,' answered Poppleton dubiously.

'Mind, it's a holiday, Poppleton. I don't want any one else to snap you up.' Remembering his age, Poppleton knew there was little fear of that. 'Your salary will be paid by my solicitor, Mr Angold—you understand?—monthly, as you receive it now, only by cheque.'

'Yes, sir.'

'And five pounds a month to your sister.'

Poppleton's dubiousness vanished. 'It is very generous of you, sir.'

'Not at all, Poppleton. It's a mere matter of business, and the advantage is with me. I shall leave the flat. One of those accommodating firms that deal in second-hand furniture—better than new, as they are accustomed to advertise—will clear everything out, lock, stock, and barrel, after we have gone.'

'I to Derbyshire, sir; but you—where will you go, sir? Shall I hear from you?'

'I don't think so, Poppleton. Still, you can get at me, if you wish, if there is any real need for it, through my solicitor.'

'You haven't passed the doctor, sir?'

'No! Worse luck! He refuses to have me at any price—says I shall spend my time in the hospital. They have more than enough of my sort already.' And he made a wry face, and bit viciously at the end of a cigar which he ought not to have indulged in. Biting it was a sign of vexation. He usually cut his cigars neatly. His vexation continued. He ejected the badly severed end just as viciously, and added, 'He's right.'

'I'm sorry, sir.'

'Thank you, Poppleton,' Bentham replied, after a pause, and with a swift glance at his servant's sympathetic face. During the pause he had conquered a rush of resentment. Pity, even the kindly pity of his servant, hurt him. 'I shall not require anything more;' and he dismissed him.

Bitter thoughts assailed Bentham. He was very lonely. All his friends, or nearly all, were in the army, officers mostly, some at the front, others in training. Two or three of them had enlisted as ordinary privates. He admired these. His own doctor had told him plainly that he was not fit. The army doctor, after the briefest examination, had shaken his head, and said, 'It's all very well, Bentham. You've pluck enough. But you haven't stamina. We want men as hard as nails for this business, or men we can hammer into hardness; and you—well, you'd soften, and melt away. It's not your fault. I'm sorry.'

And Poppleton, knowing him better, shared the opinion of the doctor, and echoed the doctor's final words.

But Bentham felt that he must do something. He must not be quite out of it. He had formulated a plan. Poppleton's holiday was a part of it. He would fit in the other parts, and prepare to carry it out, on the morrow.

'In a moment, Bentham,' said the solicitor, slipping a rubber band over a batch of papers, and swinging his pivoted chair round to place them in a pigeon-hole of his private desk. 'Now!' and he swung back again. 'I'm glad to see you;' and his quick gray eyes scrutinised the attenuated face of his client as he held out a plump and well-groomed hand. He was old enough to be his client's father.

Sidney explained succinctly what he wished the solicitor to do for Poppleton.

'For eighteen months?' repeated the solicitor, pencilling down the instructions.

'More or less,' said Sidney.

'That's indefinite,' remarked the solicitor.

'I desire it to be,' said Sidney. 'About myself'——

'Yes?' and the questioning affirmative dropped into the pause.

'This is quite confidential, a secret to all but you, Angold.'

'I can keep a secret,' smiled the solicitor, anticipating something utterly different from what his client had in mind.

'You know where I get my income from?'

'The greater part of it—yes: from the Ryeburn Collieries.'

'I have never been to Ryeburn. But I intend to go, not as Sidney Bentham, but as Ben Sidney; and not as a shareholder, but as an applicant for work.'

'In the pits?' remonstrated the solicitor. 'The work'll kill you. If that's your wish, you'd better try the trenches—far better.'

'Perhaps. But, you see, the "far better" cannot be without formalities—medical examinations and what not; and there are hospitals to consider, and their upkeep, and the possible claim to a pension. So my way to the trenches is barred. It isn't barred to the pits.'

'But—Bentham—underground! You'd never stand it. It's a mad idea.'

'I shall try for something on the surface. My purpose is to release a healthier man than I am—to do his work that he may do my fighting. I shall not put it like that. But that will be my purpose primarily. A secondary purpose will be served. I shall get to know the conditions out of which my income springs; and I jolly well ought. Don't you think so?'

'Not in that way. It's a mad idea,' repeated the solicitor.

'Well, there's method in my madness, anyhow. You'll see to Poppleton. I'll see to myself.'

'Shall I remit you any fixed allowance?'

'Goodness!—no! I shall be a workman.'

'If you're hard up?'

'I'll write you.'

'Without delay, Bentham—without delay. You're not strong. And I'm concerned for you, as the son of your father, who was my oldest and dearest friend. I fear—— But there! you've a will of your own; and you're your own master.'

'Until I become a workman.'

'Become! You cannot become. You may try to play the part—comedy, I hope, and not tragedy. Be careful! And may your man, the man you release, fight like a hero.'

CHAPTER II.

THREE days later a stranger entered Ryeburn, carrying a battered portmanteau. He was warmly clad in a mixture of rough tweed. Round his neck was a linen collar of rather conspicuous whiteness, set off by a faded blue tie. This plain attire was a marked contrast to that of the colliers returning from the pits.

They were collarless, leather belts buckled about them to keep up their soiled moleskins and corduroys, vests open, revealing flannel shirts of coarsest textures. Bottle-necks were protruding from their pockets. Square tin food-boxes were swinging listlessly in their knotted and grimy hands. The contrast was intensified by the stranger's gait; for most of the pitmen, powerfully built, drooped sideways and seemed almost misshapen, and their legs, slightly bowed, shambled rather than walked.

'That's a bit heavy for thee, my lad,' said one of the colliers, as the stranger dropped the bag and looked about him. 'Let me tak' ho'd 'n it!' and he passed his food-box into the other hand. 'Theear!' and considering the ease with which he lifted it, the portmanteau might have been empty. 'Ar' t' goin' far?'

'Only as far as where I can get a decent lodging.'

'Lodgin's are scarce. There's seven pubs, but no lodgin's. We don't cater for visitors. Ryeburn's hard to beat for healthiness, but it isn't a spaw exactly. There's too much coil abaht. What says tha to comin' wi' me and axin' Sarah? She'll tell tha if any decent body i' Ryeburn can put thee up.'

'Thanks!' said the stranger, falling into step with him.

'It's nowt,' returned the collier, alluding to the portmanteau. 'Has t' ever been i' Ryeburn afore?'

'Never.'

'It's an airy place. We get some rare winds here. There's pines at t' back on 't, higher up, and they say 'at t' smell o' t' pines is good for folk;' and he glanced inquisitively at the stranger. 'Ryeburn's noan to be sneezed at.'

But the stranger was not communicative. Relieved of the weight of his portmanteau, he breathed more easily, and, without undue strain, he kept up to his helper's shambling pace. Beneath the coal-dust, he saw that the collier's face was shrewd and kindly, and seamed with many lines. The shock of hair escaping from beneath his soft cap was iron-gray. His closely cropped beard was grayer still. He judged him to be a man well over sixty.

'Here we are!' said the collier, stopping at an old cottage at the top of the village; and, pushing the door open, he called, 'S-a-a-r-a-h!' in musical tones.

Sarah, a buxom woman near his own age, appeared, and stared at the stranger. Her husband tersely explained why he had brought him.

'Come in,' she urged.—'Put t' bag dahn, Daniel. We'll talk abaht t' lodgin's ovver t' dinner.—Come in. And what may yo'r name be, mister?'

'Ben Sidney,' replied the stranger.

'Which is it to be—Sidney or Ben?' she asked.

'Ben,' he replied promptly.

'It's more homely,' she assented.—'Nah, Daniel, tak' t' top off o' that coil-dust, and we'll begin. Ben'll relish his meyt more if he faces a man o' natural colour. Not but what he'd do wi' a touch more red.'

Ben acknowledged the wished-for improvement with a winsome smile. He was passing into a new experience under a new name.

As Angold had told him, however, it was only a play. He might try to hide himself under the tweed mixtures, to pass himself off as the needy proprietor of a battered bag, to answer as naturally as he was able to the homely name Ben; but he could not conceal his attenuated hands, his thin, pale face, the delicate handling of the clumsy cutlery, the inadequateness of an appetite that should have been sharpened by Sarah's tempting viands, the refined manners that were habitual to him, the undiluted English, so unlike the idioms of the Ryeburn countryside. He was puzzled somewhat by the Doric of Daniel and Sarah, and obliged to answer monosyllabically, and not always to the point, preferring this to attempts at elucidation by hesitating inquiries. He made a mistake, too, by putting his hand in his pocket after the meal and placing half-a-crown on the table.

'What's that for?' asked Sarah sharply.

'I must pay for my dinner,' he replied.

'Put it back—put it back,' she expostulated. 'Do you want to insult us?' and her comely face flushed with anger.

He flushed also, realising his mistake, and meekly obeyed her.

'As if we couldn't thole a meal's meyt!' she exclaimed indignantly. Then, her anger subsiding, 'It's too late nah for you to go traypsin' abaht Ryeburn after lodgin's. You'd better stay here to-neet, at ony rate.'

'But can you conveniently accommodate me, Mrs Bradley?'

'I can let you have a flock bed, and cleean sheets, and warm blankets, and a room all to yoursen.'

'That would suit me splendidly,' said he; 'only, you must allow me'—— and he paused, remembering his mistake.

'Only what?'

'Don't be offended, Mrs Bradley! You must allow me to pay.'

'Two o' t' lads are sowjers, you see,' explained Mrs Bradley, ignoring the question of pay, 'and it's their bed 'at's empty. We've another lad, t' pick o' t' bunch, 'at's mad to go. He'll be in sooin. Phil's a clever lad, and can talk your talk, or as near as matters nowt. You'll get on wi' Phil.—Willn't he, Daniel?'

'He should do,' answered Daniel, who had risen from the table, and was passing into a back-kitchen to complete his ablutions.

But when Phil came, a tall lad of nineteen, with his mother's amiable features, he was shy

with the stranger. He eyed him inquisitively. He could not place him. Speaking to his father and mother he lapsed into a partial Doric; but speaking to Ben he used the English of the county school, where, because of his aptness to learn, he had attended longer than most lads, and still assisted the master at the evening classes. But Ben's intonation was not his. It increased his shyness. Ben tried to set him at ease, overdid it perhaps, and failed. When Phil excused himself, pleading an evening engagement, and left early, they were both relieved.

Ben stayed on at Daniel Bradley's. No other lodgings offered or were sought for; and he and Mrs Bradley had come to an arrangement which satisfied the pride of both. Ben was a problem to the collier and his wife, and a greater problem still to Phil. He spent the first fortnight mainly among the pines; and the fresh breezes that sang through them, and the aromatic odours inhaled with every breath, strengthened him. A ruddy tan began to spread over his face, and the back of his neck began to burn brown. Daniel suggested that he was a gentleman 'baht brass or nearly,' invalided, and in search of health, and that he would probably stay a month. Sarah was doubtful. Her tentative invitations to the stranger to confide in her had not been responded to. 'He's as cloise as a cockle,' said she—'and as soft,' she added, as a charitable modification, lest her husband should think she referred to the shell only. Phil, who had overcome his shyness, and who had taken quite a liking to Ben, simply awaited developments.

But Phil's time was short. He had heard his country's call. Men were needed. His elder brothers had gone. Why should not he go? The manager at the colliery said he was indispensable. Phil had to do with the time-keeping, the wage-sheets, the insurances, the checking of accounts, and other clerkly work, intricate perhaps, and only efficiently done by close familiarity and training; but surely, he argued, some one else could do it, under the tuition of Bryce, the secretary and cashier.

'Women do it at the banks and in many of the business offices,' said he.

'Ours is different,' objected the manager. 'It isn't ordinary book-keeping. You have to go below sometimes. We couldn't send a woman down the shaft. And what could a woman do with a crowd of rough colliers? Be content, Phil! We must have the coal—that's an essential; and you can serve your country where you are.'

But Phil was not content. He felt that he could serve his country better by enlisting. His mother desired, quite naturally, having parted with two, to retain her youngest. His father was reticent, unwilling to influence him either way. 'Pleease thysen!' said he. Phil, with his increasing confidence in Ben, consulted him.

'What would *you* do?'

'You see what I'm doing,' returned Ben bitterly.

'But if you were in my place, with my work, as strong as I am?'

'I should go.'

'Of course. And I ought to. It's not my look-out—it's the manager's—to provide for the vacancy.'

'Could I fill it?' ventured Ben.

'You?' and Phil regarded him in a new light. 'What sort of a penman are you?'

'My writing's legible,' answered Ben. 'It's not quite copperplate, but people can read it.'

'Do you know anything about percentages, and insurances, and contracts?'

'No,' replied Ben honestly. 'But I could learn.'

'I go underground sometimes. The galleries are low in places, and at the face the ventilation isn't perfect. The men, too, are not your sort. Still'—— And Phil fixed his eyes upon him, as if to appraise his fitness for the position. There were questions he could not ask him. He concluded, 'Will you see the manager?'

'Gladly. And I'll work under you for a month without wages, and try to get into the run of it. If I don't suit I can withdraw.'

'Will you propose that?' asked Phil eagerly.

'Yes.'

They saw the manager. Phil introduced him, and Ben explained his offer.

The manager, impressed by the manner in which the explanation was given, and the bearing of the man, said straight out and brusquely, 'Who are you?'

'Phil told you I was Ben Sidney,' he replied, suppressing his resentment. His cheeks burned, however, and a dangerous light flashed into his eyes.

'Have you any references? The position is a responsible one.'

'I could furnish several, I dare say, in a few days, if you require them.'

'One would do.'

'You shall have it.'

'And in the meanwhile'——

'I could help Phil,' interposed Ben; and the manager, scrutinising him, assented.

Five days later, schooling his face to gravity and summoning all his powers of self-control, Ben handed to the manager the written name and address of his single reference. The manager glanced at it and started slightly. Mr Angold was the solicitor for the company which controlled the whole group of pits.

'Is it quite satisfactory?' asked Ben.

'I will write him,' answered the manager.

'Thank you,' said Ben. 'You will let me know if it isn't?'

The manager nodded, and Ben retired, drawing the door to silently. When he was safely beyond it, and free from observation, his features relaxed into a slow smile.

'Well, I'm blest!' exclaimed the manager in a low tone, afterwards indulging in a somewhat rare reverie.

CHAPTER III.

HE had good reason later to congratulate himself on his blessedness.

As Phil's substitute Ben was doing his work well. Phil had followed a prescribed routine. Ben did more than that; he showed an intelligent interest in many matters outside the range of his own duties; he studied the map of the mines; he obtained a clear idea not only of the underground workings, but, where the pits were contiguous, of their connections with, and relations to, each other. Mining itself, as a scientific occupation—levels and roofs, faults and dips and strata, the lie of the land, the pull on the surface, haulage, lighting, ventilation, machinery—appealed to him, and engaged his thoughts. Not that he said much. He was unassuming, and scrupulously attentive to the work he had to do. But his knowledge, or, rather, his grasp of other work, leaked out, and the manager heard of it; and sometimes, to satisfy himself, to discover, too, who the man was, he put it to the proof. The solicitor's reply had been very brief and not illuminative. He had simply said that Ben was trustworthy, and he had advised the manager to engage him.

The manager knew that Ben was not what he pretended to be. The way he carried himself, a flashing gleam in his eyes, an occasional inflection in the tones of his voice, gave the manager the impression that he had seen him before or met some one very like him. The impression was fleeting. He was only acting the workman; but what did it matter, after all, so long as the work was efficiently done?

Phil had left in the autumn. The winter passed, and spring came, and with it the awakening of a lovely countryside. It was a joy to Ben. He made no companions. He spent his leisure in the fields and woods.

In time, as Ben Sidney, and a clerk, he appeared before the local military tribunal, was medically examined, and placed in Class C3. The manager was satisfied. There would be no need to appeal for the retention of his services. He might be able to keep him, possibly without appeal, to the very end of the war.

The increasing pressure of the war greatly restricted the supply of timber. Props were scarce and very dear. But the pits must have them. Cautiously, with the lapse of the months, the manager had become more intimate with Ben, and one day he mentioned to him the difficulty he was in.

'We've had the props from Norway,' said he, 'but now we cannot get them.'

'Why not try nearer home?' suggested Ben.

'We shall have to. But we shall have to buy the standing trees; and that's new to us. An expert might tell us what a wood is worth; but the employment of an expert would add to the cost, and it's a heavy price already.'

'Dare you trust me, Mr Seldon?'

'What! to appraise the value of a wood?'

'Yes, based on its adaptability to your purpose.'

'Ben, where did you learn such phrases? They're not a working man's. No man here would have put it like that. I shouldn't myself.'

Ben's colour came. 'That's not the question. Dare you trust me?'

'I dare,' replied the manager. 'We'll have a look to-morrow at the small plantation on the farther side of the hill; not the one at the top, the one beyond, a couple of miles away.'

Ben was pleased, for sentimental reasons, that the manager had not fixed upon the one at the top. He had been there often, and three times, once in the late autumn and twice recently, he had come across a young lady sketching there. She was unknown to him. He had made no inquiries about her. When he had seen her, seated in one of the glades, and transferring to her canvas, idealised perhaps, a panel-like picture of the distant country framed by the columnar trees, he had turned aside. He would no more have dreamt of obtruding upon her than if the glade had been a private studio. She was very fair. The contour of her stooping form had not been lost upon him. He associated her with the crown of the hill. He thought of her as the Lady of the Pines.

They had to cross the crest to reach the plantation on the farther slope. A path, diverging from the road, led across a couple of fields and entered one of the glades. Just within it, and unseen until they were nearly upon her because of the sharpness of the declivity, was the artist, palette in hand, and busy with her brush. The golden light of the westering sun glinted between the blown locks of her wayward brown hair. She had heard their footsteps and voices before they came within view, and, at their nearer approach, she calmly levelled her clear gray eyes upon them.

The manager raised his hat. Ben lifted his cap out of courtesy.

'It's a fine afternoon, Miss de Lisle,' said the manager.

'Lovely,' said she, bending to wash one of her brushes.

'May we'—— and the manager indicated the canvas.

'With pleasure;' and she smiled radiantly.

'It's not much to look at—a mere wash as yet, with just a touch of sky.'

The manager was now standing beside her. Ben moved behind him. He glanced at the canvas. The first underlying tints were washed in, as she had said, and the sky was an experiment. The splashes of vivid orange across the violet-blue were so conspicuous as to produce a bizarre effect. Ben was more interested in the artist than in the picture. Unseen, he could take in the poise of her head, the delicacy of her fingers, the lissome slimness of her bending form, a picture finer and more alluring than the fields, light strewn, and framed between the straight trunks of the red-brown pines.

'Is the squire at home?' asked the manager.

'Yes, Mr Seldon. Do you wish to see him?'

'In a day or two—probably,' he added as an after-thought, the certainty depending upon Ben's valuation of the wood. 'Good-afternoon!'

She inclined her head by way of adieu, and continued her sketching; indeed, she had never paused, but painted on, chatting, unperturbed by their presence. She had not spoken a word to Ben; she had scarcely glanced at him; and Seldon had not thought fit to introduce him. He was only a workman; or if not—and Seldon suspected not—he must take the consequences of playing a workman's rôle.

They passed through the wood and emerged into the open. The land dipped into a wide valley. Across the valley, midway up the slope of the opposite hill, Brockwell Manor, the home of the De Lisles, was set back among the trees, its long low façade of yellow freestone warmly illuminated by the sinking sun. The windows flashed like mirrors. Below was the plantation. A trout-stream ran along its nearer margin and parted it from the lush meadows. The trees, well grown, followed the curves of the stream upward into a hollow of the hills, and a few, like scouts, straggled out as far as the windy summit.

'Will he sell?' asked Ben, after a long silence, as they dropped together down the hill.

'Who? The squire?' responded Seldon. 'I don't know. We can try him.'

'It would spoil the valley,' said Ben, 'and deprive him of an excellent covert. Is he a sportsman?'

'Yes. But what of that? We must have props.'

'It remains with him to decide. If the plantation were mine'——

'Well?'

'I should think twice about it.'

'So will he—three times. Still, if he's patriotic—and he is—he'll see that coal just now is much more important than game. Oh yes, he's patriotic. He's offered the Manor to the War Office as a hospital, or a convalescent home, or something of that sort; and any wounded chap would have jolly good reasons to thank his lucky stars if he got in there.'

Ben silently agreed with him.

They viewed the plantation. Ben ran his appraising eyes over it, and noted the closeness and average girth of the trees. Crossing the stream, they paced the lower line of the plantation, then returned and walked up the hollow, the stream dwindling, and then disappearing within the wood, until at last they came out among the stragglers on the summit.

'It's worth buying,' observed the manager.

'At a certain figure—yes,' returned Ben. 'What is the present market price for props such as you require—cut into lengths, I mean, and delivered at the pits?'

The manager told him.

'And, if the squire sells, he'll probably want you to provide your own fellers, and to do your own haulage. H'm!' For several minutes he stood quite still, absorbed in an intricate calculation. Then he mentioned the sum. 'You couldn't afford to pay much more than that—a trifle maybe—and you ought not to pay less.'

'Ought not to pay less! It's a business transaction.'

'And business should be fair.'

'It's always fair to buy at the lowest price possible.'

'You're the manager;' and Ben shrugged his shoulders.

'I am,' acknowledged Seldon, with a curious glance at him, followed by a quiet laugh, 'and I must look after the interests of the company. But you're not a—yes, you are. Excuse me! You're an admirable clerk, and something more—a competent valuer of standing timber.'

'Not quarrelling, gentlemen, I hope?' a voice interposed; and they turned to find the squire approaching. Their voices, in the stillness, had carried farther than they thought. He had come through the wood. His wrinkled, ruddy face wore a pleasant expression. His quick gray eyes were sparkling with suppressed merriment. Except for an observable trimness in his attire, he might easily have been taken for one of his own gamekeepers.

'Far from that, squire,' said Seldon, shaking hands with him. 'I and my'——

'Yes?' and the squire turned to Ben.

The manager was amused. He had paused slightly, and the squire had popped in his interrogative. He resumed, smiling, 'I and my clerk were discussing business.'

'Oh! your—clerk.' The squire put up an eyeglass and stared at Ben coolly, but not offensively, and ended by saying, 'I'm glad to meet your clerk;' and he proffered his hand.

Ben, secretly annoyed at Seldon, but openly pleased with the squire, clasped his hand instantly. For another long moment the squire stared at him; then, as he raised his eyebrow, the monocle fell with a click.

'Discussing business, were you?' said the

squire. 'I had the idea that that was mostly done in offices by managers and—clerks. I may be intruding; and so I wish you good-day;' and he raised his hat to both.

'No, squire—no!' disclaimed Seldon. 'We're the intruders. This is your land; and the business concerns you.'

'Indeed!' and the squire turned again. 'How does it concern me?'

'We're in want of timber.'

'And you wish to buy? Is that it?'

'Yes. We've been looking over the plantation. Would you entertain an offer for it?'

'For the timber? As it is? What do you want it for? Props?' The questions came swiftly, like a series of revolver-shots, and were quite a contrast to his rather slow preceding remarks.

'Yes,' said the manager. 'We cannot get props from Norway. The war's playing havoc with the timber trade.'

'And with many another,' returned the squire. 'But not with the profits of your company, Seldon. Coal's going up, props or no props; and the men are kept at it, with bigger wages, and a war bonus. The men earn all they get, but I wish you could persuade them to make a better use of their money. I'm glad they're kept at it. My game's safer. But—the drinking! What fools they are! So you want to buy the wood? I'll think about it.'

'And you'll write me, squire?'

'No! Send your—clerk—Mr'——

'Sidney.'

'Send Mr Sidney, your clerk, up to the Manor on Monday, and I'll give him my decision. Let me know through him what price you can go to. And,' a trifle sarcastically, 'when you fix the price, Seldon, remember that I'm not obliged to sell, nor, except for the special circumstances, disposed to sell. And now, gentlemen, good-day!'

CHAPTER IV.

ON Monday, late in the afternoon, Ben called at the Manor. He had completed his day's work at the colliery. Notwithstanding the demand for coal, and the higher wages, and the war bonus, many of the colliers kept 'Saint Monday.' They refused to work on that day. Some of them failed to appear on the Tuesday. 'Much would have more.' It was generally the middle of the week before the company could reckon upon its full complement of men. Ben's tasks were always lightest on the day of the colliers' uncanonised saint.

The squire received him in the library.

'You've come about the wood?' he began. 'Well, Sidney'——

The name dropped out so pat that Sidney was taken aback. Only his closest friends had so addressed him. It was his home name, the name of his boyhood, familiar on his mother's lips, and frequently used by his father too, when both were living. The squire's use of it gave him a perceptible shock.

In an instant, and on the impulse, he interposed: 'Ben—that is what Seldon calls me, squire, and all the Ryeburn people.'

'I prefer Sidney,' said the squire, wrinkling up his face—'that is, if you have no objection. Seldon said Sidney; and in transactions of this kind the surname seems to me to be the more appropriate.' He spoke dryly.

'If you prefer it,' returned Ben, a trifle pale. 'Yes, I've come about the wood. Have you decided to let us have it?'

'I was going to ask, when you interrupted me, what price Seldon had authorised you to offer. It depends partly upon that.'

Ben named the sum.

The squire concealed his surprise, and said, 'Was that amount arrived at by a valuation?'

'Yes.'

'Whose?'

'Mine.'

'Yours? My preference for Sidney is justified. The surname is certainly the more appropriate. You may be Ben to Seldon; you are Sidney to me.' The dryness had disappeared from the squire's tone. He was speaking cordially. And yet Ben could not quite follow the movements of his mind. 'I took the trouble myself, Sidney,' the squire went on, 'to have the plantation valued, with the result—a remarkable coincidence—that the amount is yours exactly.'

'By a professional valuer?'

'By a professional valuer. And I infer from this remarkable coincidence that you are not a clerk.'

'What, then?' and Ben was betrayed into a smile. 'A professional valuer?'

'No, Sidney. Believe me, I'm not so dense as to draw that conclusion. You must have inside knowledge of the value of standing timber. The question is, how did you get it? And the answer is, from those before you. You couldn't grow the wood in your own lifetime; you're young yet; but your father, or his father, or the father before him, with excellent foresight, planted, as did mine; and the wood, with the inside knowledge of its worth, came to you through them. Is my inference correct?'

Ben was fairly caught, and said, laughing, 'You've got me.'

'So Sidney's the name between equals—not Ben.'

'I agree.'

'And you'll stay to dinner?'

'I cannot agree to that;' and Sidney glanced at his tweeds.

'Why? Because you cannot dress for it? I can fix you up—not with my own; they wouldn't

fit you—with Jack's. He's tall and slim, like you, but as tough as pin-wire. He's at the front, in those abominable trenches, and'——

'I wish I were.'

'Oh! that's it?' and the squire looked at him with a touch of commiseration, noticing the longing in his face, and aware of the longing in his tone. 'You'll stay—as a favour, Sidney?'

'Well, if you put it like that'——

'I do. Besides'—and there was a twinkle in his eye—'we haven't settled yet about the sale of the wood. We must leave it over. It wouldn't interest Phyllis, or, if it did interest her, you would find her against you. On artistic grounds she would oppose the sale of the wood. Props wouldn't appeal to her.'

'Not if they were linked with patriotism?' put in Sidney.

'Perhaps,' mused the squire. 'You would bring in another factor then that might possibly balance the artistic. Still, as a matter of policy, I would advise you to defer the discussion until after dinner.'

Sidney had clean forgotten Miss de Lisle. How would the squire account for the sudden invitation to dinner? He would have to introduce him—under what name? It was useless to keep up his masquerade as a quasi-clerk in the presence of the squire. Was it worth while to begin it with Miss de Lisle? He had a secret wish to meet the Lady of the Pines on equal terms. He would risk it, and trust to the squire to pull him through.

He felt more like himself in Jack's borrowed plumes than in his own well-worn tweeds—more like himself than he had felt since his arrival in Ryeburn. He had entered his own world again. As the drawing-room door opened, the squire, pleased at his transformation, came forward to meet him, and turned with him towards his daughter.

'Phyllis, this is Mr Sidney.—My daughter, Miss de Lisle.'

She acknowledged the introduction, and glanced at him keenly, critically, but without the slightest recollection of having seen him before. The transformation was complete. Her father had simply told her that there would be a guest for dinner, a gentleman who had called to see him about the plantation in Brockwell Hollow. She had asked no questions; but she had expected some one nearer her father's age.

At the dinner-table mutual opportunities presented themselves of closer observation and acquaintance. They sat opposite each other. She was indeed very fair. Her filmy evening-dress, silvery, with a tinge of azure, enhanced her fairness, and confirmed Sidney's first impression when he had caught sight of her among the pines. Her clear gray eyes shone lamp-like in the delicate oval of her face. The frankness of her gaze pleased him—a gaze without a shadow. Her hair was brushed back in open waves and caught up in a mass behind her shapely head. The colour of it reminded him of the sunlit bark of the pines.

The conversation turned upon the acceptance of the Manor by the War Office as a centre for convalescents. A small medical staff had been appointed, and a few nurses; for it was intended to send men who still needed attention, men recovering from surgical operations more or less severe.

'And Phyllis,' remarked the squire proudly, 'is to superintend the domestic arrangements, to see to the creature comforts of all our guests.'

'And fill up my time nursing,' added Phyllis.

'If you have any time to fill up, Miss de Lisle,' returned Sidney. 'Your time will be fully occupied, I fancy, with the domestic arrangements. It will be no light task to cater for them all.'

'My experience at the camp will help me,' responded Phyllis. 'Have you seen the camp, Mr Sidney?'

'Only from a distance,' he replied. 'What experience have you had there?'

'I have taken my share in the work of the canteen,' said Phyllis, 'and got to know the tastes of the men.'

'But you are to have men here back from the firing-line—men who have been in the thick of it, and suffered; and their tastes may change.'

'While they are suffering, Mr Sidney; but we are to have them afterwards. And their tastes will revive.'

'So they will, Phyllis,' said the squire. 'A reviving taste is a sign of convalescence.'

'They are to be guests?' questioned Sidney.

'What else?' demanded the squire. 'We shall treat them like a happy house-party.'

'And so,' commented Sidney, 'they will be both favoured and fortunate.'

Then they spoke of the training-camp, half-a-dozen miles away, and Miss de Lisle entertained them with incidents connected with the canteen, and the gathering of the men for their sing-songs. Her only regret in relation to the new work at the Manor was that she would have to relinquish her visits to the training-camp, where, in the 'hut' provided by her father, she had contributed in many ways to the healthy recreation and enjoyment of the men.

When she retired the squire said abruptly, 'You'll fell the trees and move them?'

'Of course,' replied Sidney.

'Then that's settled,' returned the squire.

'At the price I named?' queried Sidney.

'Certainly. I cannot haggle,' said the squire. 'I'm not used to it. The valuations agree, so the price must be right. They're independent valuations. You don't know my man?'

'I don't,' assented Sidney. 'But he knows his business.'

'And you?' The colour crept into Sidney's face. 'You needn't answer,' the squire went

on. 'And now that that's done with, will you come into the library and have a smoke with me; or shall we rejoin Phyllis?'

'I'll forgo the smoke, squire, if you don't mind.'

'Or defer it. Will you stay the night?'

'I must get back—thank you! Mrs Bradley will be wondering already what has become of me.'

'Mrs Bradley?'

'Of the cottage where I lodge—a miner's wife. And I'm due at the office at six-thirty in the morning.'

'Self-discipline, Sidney!'

'And self-imposed. It's worth it. The fellow I've released is at the front, and he's doing well—better than I could do. I think of him as my substitute, to salve my conscience partly, and partly to outmanœuvre those over-scrupulous doctors who wouldn't dare to pass me. I'm relegated now to Class C3,' making the confession with a wry smile.

'Who is he?' asked the squire, after a reflective pause.

'My substitute? Mrs Bradley's youngest. She's three, and they're all there.'

'A generous contribution;' and the squire, aware of a sudden moisture, began to blink his eyes. 'I honour Mrs Bradley,' said he huskily, 'and her husband too. We're giving the best we have, rich and poor alike. God help us! We ought to win.'

'We shall.'

'With God's help,' repeated the squire, 'we shall.'

Phyllis was a little surprised when they rejoined her so speedily.

'Will you play for us, Phyllis?' asked her father.

'With pleasure,' she replied, placing her needlework on one side, and moving towards the piano. She fingered it softly, an improvisation that did not interfere with the talk, and merged itself presently into a well-known air.

'That's the sort,' remarked her father approvingly.

'And not this;' and from the well-known air she drifted into a classical sonata. When she had finished, she said, 'Your taste needs cultivating, dad.'

'I am past it, my dear.'

The drawing-room door was ajar. In a lull of the music they heard the thrill of the electric bell. The outer door opened. A wave of cool air rushed into the room.

'Is Ben here?' asked a rough voice.

'Ben?' queried the butler, in suppressed amazement.

'Excuse me,' said Sidney, hastening into the hall.

Phyllis, more amazed than the butler, rose and walked across the room, seeking, open-eyed, an explanation in her father's face. Nor was her amazement lessened when she saw that he was quietly smiling.

'I say, mayster, where's Ben? This chap's lost his wits,' said the voice.

'Daniel!'

Silence followed, then an exclamation, accompanied by a resounding slap. 'Well, I never! Has' tha fun' new lodgin's and ta'en up wi' t' squire?'

'No, Daniel. I was coming home.'

'And time, too. It's nearin' midneet.'

'I'm sorry, Daniel. I'll be ready in a few minutes. Were you uneasy about me?'

'Sarah's uneasy.'

'I ought to have thought about the time.'

'Or dropped a hint 'at t' squire might keep tha; then it wo'dn't 'a' mattered. I'll wait.—How do, squire?' for, as Sidney disappeared, the squire came into view.

'You must forgive us for keeping him, Daniel.'

'It's nowt. You've a reight to keep him, and he's a reight to stay; but Sarah—my wife, squire—were upset a bit, and fearful 'at some'at had happened him.'

'It's greatly to her credit, Daniel, that she's so concerned about her lodger.'

'Ben's more 'n a lodger, squire. Sarah thinks as much abaht him as if he were one o' t' family.'

'He needs motherly care.'

'You're reight theear, squire—and motherly, that's Sarah.'

'And yet I hear that all her sons have gone.'

'Ay! All t' three;' and Daniel's face sobered. 'Phil's t' youngest. He went t' last. God bring him back! If owt happens to Phil, it'll break her heart. And you've one theear, squire,' he ventured sympathetically.

'My only lad.'

CHAPTER V.

WHEN the squire returned to the drawing-room Phyllis faced him with a puzzled look in her eyes. 'Who is he, dad? What is he to Mr Sidney? Why has he come for him? I cannot understand it.'

'First, my dear, lest I forget, Sidney wished me to express his regrets to you for so abrupt a departure.'

'But the man who came for him,' urged Phyllis, a little impatiently—'who is he?'

'Daniel Bradley, a miner, who works at the Ryeburn pits. Sidney lodges with him. That is the only connection between them, I believe, except'——

'Except what?'

'Sidney told me that he had taken the place of Bradley's youngest son. He was a clerk at

the collieries. He enlisted some time ago, released, I think, by Sidney's offer to fill his place.'

'Then is Mr Sidney a clerk?'

'He 's acting as a clerk.'

'Acting? He 's a clever actor.' She felt that she had been taken in, and she very naturally resented it.

'You 're mistaken, Phyllis. He 's not a clever actor.'

'But, dad, a clerk! And see how he carried himself off here.'

'Which proves my statement, Phyllis. He carried himself off here as he really is—a gentleman. He 's acting as a clerk, and not cleverly; still, efficiently, I believe, so as to satisfy the manager. Your point of view is inverted.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Phyllis dubiously. 'Why did that man fetch him?'

'Because his wife was concerned about him. It is late, my dear, and she expected him back hours ago. It is my fault mainly. I pressed him to stay.'

'Knowing he was a clerk?'

'Knowing he was a gentleman.'

'You should have told me before, dad.'

'Perhaps I ought to have told you. But there was very little time, my dear. And, besides, I thought it didn't matter. Does it?'

'It might have made it easier for me,' responded Phyllis. 'I should have understood better when—when—Mr Bradley came. It puzzled me. Did Mr Sidney call about the wood?'

'On behalf of the colliery company.'

'And not on his own behalf? My impression was that he had called to consult you about the preservation of the game. And you can see now, dad, that that was absurd. It put me in rather a false position. The colliery company, you say?'

'Yes. They want to buy the wood.'

'To buy it! Why, pray?'

'For pit-props.'

'Dad!' incredulously.

'Sidney made me an offer for it.'

'A useless offer, of course. You 'll not sell.'

'I have sold.'

'Dad!' reproachfully.

'It 's like this, Phyllis. The timber is needed. There 's no foreign timber coming in. We must have coal. It cannot be got without props. And the wood is specially suitable for props. I told Sidney you would object. To cut the wood down would utterly spoil the artistic beauty of the Hollow. He countered the objection by connecting props with patriotism.'

'Patriotism?'

'Yes. Rather a curious connection, Phyllis, brought about by the war. We must sacrifice the artistic beauty of the Hollow to the exigencies of the war.'

Phyllis was quiet for a time, musing; and at last she said, 'What about the money, dad?'

'It 's yours, my dear.'

'To provide for our guests;' and her face brightened as she lifted it to his to give and receive a grateful kiss.

Ben and Daniel arrived home about midnight. Sarah was listening, ill at ease that Ben should be out so late, and a little fearful lest Daniel should return without him. When she heard their footsteps she flung the door open, and encountered Daniel's laughing face.

'Here we are,' said he.

'Then he wor at t' Manor?' queried Sarah.

'Ay,' returned Daniel laconically, and with an intonation which implied that he had something more to say.

Turning to Ben, she said, 'I 'm all on pins and needles. There 's two letters, a blue 'n for us and a white 'n for you. Has Daniel mentioned 'em?'

'No,' answered Ben eagerly. 'Where are they?'

She opened a canister which she had taken down from the high self, and drew them out. 'T' white 'n first,' said she. 'That 's yours. We 'll wait.'

'If you 'll allow me, Mrs Bradley, I 'll read the other one first.'

'Hearken to him, Daniel!—Well, read t' blue 'n if you 've a mind to; but'——

He had taken advantage instantly of the permission, and suddenly jumped up, holding out both hands. 'Congratulations, Mrs Bradley,' said he.

'Whatever for?' and, mechanically, she stretched out her hand to grip his.

'And to you, Daniel.' The collier gripped his other hand. He beamed upon them both. 'Phil has won the D.C.M. Why don't you cheer? Hurrah!'

'Is he mad, Daniel?' asked Mrs Bradley, concerned.

'It 's abaht Phil if he is, and he wants to smittle us,' responded Daniel.—'What mun we shaht hurrah for? T' naybors 'll hear us, and we s' wakken 'em up.'

'Then they 'll cheer.'

'For Phil?'

'Certainly. He 's won the D.C.M.'

'What 's that?' asked Mrs Bradley with bated breath.

'The Distinguished Conduct Medal.'

'O-o-o-o-h!' she exclaimed.

Daniel was very quiet.

'Owt else?' inquired Mrs Bradley.

'Yes. He 's wounded, and he 's been taken back to the base. But he 's won the D.C.M.'

'I don't feel much like cheerin',' said Mrs Bradley. 'Where 's he hurt?'

'A lame leg and a disabled arm—that 's all,' answered Ben. 'He 'll come home. Then you 'll cheer.'

[*Christmas Number.*

'Not mysen,' remarked Mrs Bradley. 'T' naybors may, and ah 'st be fain to hear 'em; but not mysen. He 's my awn lad.'

'Wheear 's t' base?' asked Daniel.

'Rouen, I think,' said Ben. 'They deal with hospital cases there, and at present he 's in hospital. These official communications are always brief. He 'll write himself probably in a day or two, and we shall know more. We must keep a sharp look-out in the newspapers. They 're certain to record it.'

'What?'

'The winning of the medal.'

'You 've forgotten t' white 'n,' put in Mrs Bradley.

'So I have;' and he tore it open. They watched him. He controlled himself with a visible effort as he read it.

It was his letter. They had no right to ask him what was in it—no right to show any inquisitiveness even; but, as it had been delivered at the same time as their own, and bore the mark of the censor, they surmised that its contents concerned the winner of the D.C.M. Neither Daniel nor his wife could read well. To spell out a letter was a slow process for them, and by no means a sure one. Long words and carelessly formed characters tripped them up, and often gave them a wrong impression.

'Yes, he 's at Rouen,' said Ben. 'One of the nurses has written.'

'And what does she say?' asked his mother.

'He 's progressing,' returned Ben. 'He sends his love to both of you. He 's told the nurse to say that you needn't worry about him, and he hopes to see you before long.'

The same thought assailed the minds of both —why hadn't the nurse written directly to them?

The wife turned to the husband with a tearful smile. 'We 'll pray for him, Daniel, and for t' other two as well—Jim and Caleb. And,' as she dropped upon her knees, 'we 'll not forget that there 's lots o' aching hearts besides thine and mine.'

The nurse had written to Sidney at Phil's request. Phil wanted Sidney to pass on part of the news—as much of it as he considered desirable—not to alarm them, and to prevent them, if possible, from brooding over his disablement. The flesh-wound in the thigh was a mere trifle. The bullet had gone clean through it, missing the bone and sinews, and cauterising the perforation in its passage by its own heat—a wound he could laugh at. But the right arm, the arm he earned his living by, had been ploughed up from the base of the palm to the elbow by the jagged fragment of a shell. The elbow-joint had been shattered. The nurse wrote at Phil's dictation, 'It 's made a mess of it;' and she added, without Phil's knowledge, 'A case for amputation, the surgeon says, and soon.' There was no reference to the official recognition of his bravery, and no explanation as to how the wounds had been incurred.

Was it wise to suppress any part of the news? Daniel and his wife might have slept better if they had known all. Sidney, notwithstanding Phil's request, felt like a culprit. Both Daniel and his wife understood perfectly well that Sidney had not revealed the worst. They understood, too, why the news had been sent to him, and not to them. Suspense is a doubtful cure for anxiety. They said nothing. But Daniel went to his work next morning sad-eyed, and Sarah stayed her busy hand many a time as the day went on to think about and to pray for her youngest.

CHAPTER VI.

SELDON was far from pleased with the squire's request that the negotiations for the sale of the wood should be continued and possibly completed by his clerk. He demurred inwardly to an arrangement that seemed to relegate him, the manager, to a secondary place; and, but for the risk of losing the wood—a risk he did not care to take—he would have demurred outwardly. An invitation to the Manor, on business even, was a social distinction he secretly coveted.

His displeasure was mingled with irritation. The clerk was a mystery. He scarcely knew how to deal with him. He was afraid of committing a blunder worse than the loss of the wood. The settled tone of the squire, and the slightly ironical hesitation when he said, 'Send Mr Sidney, your—clerk,' had left him no option.

'There is very little to report, Mr Seldon,' said Ben in response to his inquiry. 'The squire accepted the sum we offered him.'

'Readily?'

'There was no bargaining.'

'At our own valuation?'

'No. He had engaged a valuer, and his estimate was the same as ours.'

'Exactly?'

'Just the same.'

'H'm! That 's strange.'

'We must provide the labour; that is the sole condition.'

'The felling, and sawing, and cartage?'

'All. We buy the wood as it stands.'

'Did the squire mention a solicitor?'

'No; he said nothing about a legal agreement. But he 'll naturally expect one. He evidently means to leave the preparation of it with us.'

'Your transactions with the squire seem to have been unusually simple and very brief.'

'They were.'

'I will write to Angold, your old master'——

'My old master!' Sidney was surprised into a spirited interpolation, and his eyes flashed

dangerously; then, recovering himself, he smiled, and said, 'I beg your pardon, Mr. Seldon. I ought not to have interrupted you.'

'Wasn't Angold, the solicitor, your old master?'

'He permitted me to give you his name as a reference.'

'That is no answer to my question.'

'The question is the preparation of an agreement for the purchase of the wood,' Sidney reminded him, with an access of quiet dignity.

'This is unpardonable rudeness!' the manager blazed out.

'Not unpardonable, I hope,' returned Ben, as quietly as before, and fixing his clear, steady eyes on the manager's empurpling face; 'and not rudeness. But, if you take it as rudeness, I can only express my regret, and assure you to the contrary. I am your servant, Mr Seldon, for the time, and my only desire is to serve you faithfully.'

'For the time?' repeated the manager, not yet appeased.

'So I said. What I was before you engaged me, what I may be when I retire or am—dismissed'—the pause was significant, and disconcerted the manager—'is my own affair, so long as I serve you faithfully for the time.'

'That is an extraordinary view of the relations between master and servant. A master generally judges of the worthiness and efficiency of a servant by a personal knowledge of his past, or by a knowledge acquired from the testimony of others.'

'After he has engaged him?'

'Before.'

'It is too late now, Mr Seldon. You must judge of me by what you know of me while I have been with you. Are you satisfied?'

'Quite.' The manager was calm again now. 'I don't want to part with you. But a man cannot cut himself adrift from his own past.'

The shaft went home. Ben bowed assent, and said, 'You were speaking about writing Mr Angold when I unfortunately interrupted you.'

'Yes, about the agreement. He'll draw it up; he's the company's solicitor. Then, when the document is signed, we'll start in with the felling. We're running short of props. They're needed.' Swerving suddenly from what he felt had been rather a critical conversation, Seldon said, 'What is this I hear about Phil? You're lodging with his people, aren't you? Is it true that he's been severely wounded?'

'I am sorry to say it is—in the right arm'—Seldon whistled sympathetically—'and slightly in the leg. But he's come out of it with honour, and the company—ours—should be proud of him. He's won the D.C.M.'

'What! Phil?'

'My s'—I mean, your old clerk.'

'Glorious!'

'I'm glad you appreciate it.'

'Appreciate it! I should think so, indeed. We'll decorate the pits when he comes home, and give him an ovation.—Phil!' mused the manager. 'I always said he'd something in him.' Then, raising his head, 'Let me know how he goes on. You'll be sure to hear;' and he nodded towards the door to indicate that the interview was at an end.

Later, when he reviewed the conversation, he remembered that Ben had never once used the word 'sir,' but always the name 'Mr Seldon.' He rarely, if ever, addressed him as 'sir.' He had noticed it in previous conversations. The omission again impressed him as peculiar. How sensitive the clerk had been about the reference to Angold as his old master! And—yes—he, the manager, had forgotten himself. But, having accepted Angold as a reference, he had naturally concluded that Ben had once been in Angold's employ.

There were other points in the conversation that puzzled him. Ben might have used the word 'ours' to distinguish between the colliery company and Phil's regimental company, but it dropped familiarly from his lips—*ours;* and, on his own confession, he was only a temporary clerk. He was a little embarrassed, too, and quickly corrected himself, in referring to Phil, when he began, 'My s'—— What did the sibilant stand for? The more Seldon thought of it, and of the whole conversation, the more mystified he became.

'The directors meet on Monday,' said the manager on the Friday following, 'and I want you to go with me and take charge of the books and papers.'

'But,' demurred Sidney, 'it is not my place. It is Mr Bryce's place.' Mr Bryce had been longer in the company's employ than the manager himself. Sidney liked him. But he had never attempted to break through his courteous reserve. Bryce was always courteous, but his reserve ringed him in. He was an excellent servant, silent, sedate, industrious, and much more keenly observant than either Sidney or the manager gave him credit for. He was sensitive, too, and Sidney thought he might secretly resent his displacement at the directors' meeting by a recently engaged junior clerk. So, sensitive for him, as well as for a reason of his own, Sidney concluded, 'Mr Bryce is more conversant than I am with the company's affairs.'

'But not more conversant,' returned Seldon, 'with the purchase of the timber from Squire de Lisle.'

'That can only be a small part of the business which will be brought before the directors,' objected Sidney.

'It ought to be sufficient,' said Seldon, annoyed, 'that I want you to go with me. You have no right to raise the question as to whether Mr Bryce's presence is necessary or not. I am the manager.'

'And, as the manager, you order me to go; is that it?'

'Certainly. You have strange ideas of our relationship if you think otherwise.'

'An order leaves me no option except'——

'Except what?'

'A week's notice. I draw my wages weekly.'

'Don't be a fool, Ben!'

'Thank you for the advice. I'll consider it.'

'You'll consider the advice?'

'In connection with the order.'

'No! I cannot allow that. The order is an order.'

'I'll let you know to-morrow.'

'If you can obey the order? No!' Seldon thundered in justifiable exasperation. 'I'm not accustomed to be parleyed with by a subordinate. You can go at once. Mr Bryce will pay you a week's wages in lieu of notice;' and he stretched out his hand to ring the bell.

Sidney had to decide on the instant. He said to himself, 'I'll risk it;' and to the manager, 'Don't ring, Mr Seldon. I'll go with you.'

'And'——

'Yes?'

'I think you owe me an apology.'

'I am sure of it. I apologise, Mr Seldon. You see, it is difficult for me to accommodate—that is,' for he felt he was on the verge of a disclosure, and he reddened unpleasantly, and bit his lip, 'I was betrayed into objections which a subordinate has no right to make.'

'And still less right to urge,' added the manager. 'However, the matter is ended, and I shall expect you to attend me on Monday;' and with that he dismissed him.

There was still a chance to prolong the play—one chance only. Sidney thought it over, and decided not to take it. It involved a reopening of the conversation with a confidential excuse that would bring Seldon into the play.

Sidney smiled, and said to himself reflectively, 'The play is approaching its end—comedy, as Angold hoped it would be, and not tragedy.'

At the directors' meeting he would have to face not only Angold, but the chairman and two others, who all knew him. It would be impossible before them to play the clerkly rôle. Seldon was springing a surprise upon himself unawares with which Sidney was disinclined to interfere by a previous and voluntary disclosure.

CHAPTER VII.

ON Saturday morning, soon after ten, Sidney raised his head from the desk, and glanced through the window. A few men, with grave faces, were gathered about the mouth of the shaft; others were running towards it; and others again, near and far, had stopped work and turned to look wonderingly at the group and at the runners.

'There's something amiss, Mr Bryce,' said Sidney.

The cashier stepped across the room, and, after deliberately viewing the scene, replied slowly, 'I fear there is.'

'Not an explosion, I hope?' Sidney continued.

'No. It cannot be an explosion,' returned the cashier. 'We should have heard it, and the smoke of it would be rolling up the shaft. An accident, probably, or the cage has jammed.'

'Shall I inquire?' asked Sidney.

'Please,' replied the cashier, quietly resuming his work.

Sidney hurried out and up the incline. 'What is it?' he panted, arriving breathless, and addressing the winder.

'Water,' said the winder laconically.

'Water? Where?' persisted Sidney.

'Beyond the long dip,' answered the winder.

'The water's always there,' said Sidney, who knew the place.

'But this is a reg'lar rush of it—a swampin' rush,' explained the winder.

'Who's gone down?' asked Sidney.

'The manager, and Mr Riley, and Burdett, the overman; and, of course,' continued the winder, 'the men are there, working at the face and on the road.'

'Is it serious?'

'I fancy so.'

Sidney ran back, informed Mr Bryce, seized a safety-lamp, slipped into his overalls, and, returning, was ready to step into the cage with the first batch of descending men.

The cage dropped into the darkness, dropped and then seemed to rise. The sensation was illusory. He stepped out with the others eight hundred feet below the surface. The customary muffled quietness of the mine was broken by the ominous sound of water, faint, because of the distance it had to travel, but distinctly perceptible. And yet the long dip was nearly two miles away.

He started with the men. He was fairly familiar with the way. The sound increased with their advance until the gallery was filled with it. They had to turn and shout to each other to make themselves heard. Every man trod on the heels of his fellow. The lights they carried were like a procession of glow-worms. They burned but dimly behind the protecting gauze. The men were shadows, moving in single file, the sound of their feet drowned in the sound of the cataract.

The man leading stopped suddenly, his feet in the water, and Sidney, who was second, bumped into him. The other five avoided the bump and came forward in a cluster. Before them was the long dip, submerged; murky wavelets were breaking at their feet, rising, too,

so that they stepped back involuntarily; and the seven lights were reflected in wavering, and dissolving, and reuniting gleams upon the troubled surface of the water.

Sidney yelled into the ear of the man beside him, the man who had led the way, 'The pumps must be got to work, and a length of hose paid out from the bottom of the shaft. Can you hear me?'

'What?' bawled the man.

By short repetitions Sidney dinned it into him.

'Cannot you see to it?' the man asked.

Sidney shook his head, and pointed across the water, indicating that he meant to go forward. The man thought it was rather a mad idea, but he did not attempt to dissuade him. He went back to report, with two of his fellows, and to convey Sidney's suggestion to the loaders at the bottom of the shaft, and to the engine-man and mechanics on the surface.

Sidney shed his overalls, divested himself of part of his garments, tied them together, slung them round his neck, and ventured on. The three who had stayed with him watched him curiously. Two of them shouted, but their voices were lost in the tumult of the waters. The third, perceiving his intention, followed him, and soon came up with him. The flood deepened. Where the running waters met with submerged obstructions swirling eddies threatened to sweep them off their feet. They had much ado to keep their lamps alight by holding them high above their heads. As for their garments —those they wore and those swinging from their necks—they were saturated. The man, Crabtree by name, a powerful fellow, full-fleshed, wide-shouldered, long-limbed, gripped Sidney as he stumbled into a depression, and drew him, spluttering, to the side. Here the water was a little shallower, and the protuberances of the rough wall gave them a measure of support. Sidney struggled on. Crabtree aided him. In comparison with Sidney's efforts, Crabtree took it easily and almost made a child's-play of it. They passed the lowest part of the curve and began to rise. The sound of the waters, confined in a space so small and hollow, drummed upon their ears, and, increasing in intensity, nearly deafened them.

'Look out!' shouted Crabtree at the pitch of his lungs.

Sidney barely heard him. In a moment they were both beneath the water-spout; their lamps were extinguished instantly, and they were drenched through and through. It is doubtful whether Sidney would have succeeded in edging his way up the incline but for Crabtree's support. When they had passed the inrush of the water—an inrush from the roof, which, with the constantly resounding and commingling echoes of the gallery, accounted for the deafening sound—the going was easier. They reached the top of the incline. Farther back a lamp shone dimly—only one lamp, resting on a ledge of rock, with a man's shadow standing beside it.

Sidney, exhausted, stumbled toward the shadow, and against it, and found it to be articulate and solid enough to resist his weight.

'Hallo!' shouted the shadow, wheeling about, and with a note of alarm; and Sidney recognised the voice of Riley, the underground manager. His back had been turned toward them, and he had thought he was quite alone until Sidney's stumbling figure suddenly touched him. 'Where have *you* come from?'

'Through the long dip,' answered Crabtree.

Sidney's gasps were unheard.

'Ben too?' inquired Riley.

'Both of us,' bawled Crabtree.

'Then it's passable,' declared Riley, but with an anxious query in his tone.

'Well,' commented Crabtree dubiously, 'we've done it; but it's fillin' up fast; and'—— The comment lapsed into a significant silence.

Sidney, who had recovered a little, drew them farther away from the resounding inrush.

'Where is Mr Seldon?' he asked.

'Gone forward with Burdett to collect the men,' answered Riley.

'Are there many of them?' inquired Sidney.

'A score at least—maybe more,' said Riley.

Crabtree resumed his comment. 'And no way back except through the long dip. Golly! We're in for it.'

Sidney said nothing. He sat down and waited. Every minute lessened the chances of a return through the long dip. If the water filled it to the roof, an expert diver, with a cultivated sense of direction and unusual staying-powers, might possibly manage it; but a crowd of colliers—no! The filling of the long dip would cut them off from the other workings, and not only increase the difficulty of their rescue, but render it extremely problematical.

Notwithstanding his drenched condition, Sidney felt no chill. At that depth underground it was very warm. From the bottom of the shaft, the workings descended in the direction of the long dip, and the rise toward the coal-face did not bring the workings anywhere near the level at which they began. In one way this was fortunate; for it would retard the flooding of the mine long enough to start the pumps and to reduce the depth of the water. In another way it was unfortunate; for it would drive them back toward the coal-face, and interfere seriously with the ventilation.

The men began to drop in. Seldon came with them. Burdett brought up the rear. Penned together like sheep, they were ready like sheep, most of them, blindly to follow the lead of the first among them who would take upon himself the responsibility of an adventurous initiative.

[*Christmas Number.*

'Are we all here?' shouted the manager, running his eyes rapidly over the bunch of dusky figures revealed by the glimmering lamplights.

'Every man Jack, sir,' responded Burdett, who had collected them, and checked them one by one as they passed from the face and the few side-roads into the main gallery.

'Keep together,' the manager warned them, 'and I'll see what we can do.' He went forward towards the inrush.

'Be careful, Mr Seldon!'

'Who is that?' he demanded, his footsteps arrested instantly. 'Ben Sidney?' In the indistinguishable cluster he had not observed him. 'How came you here?'

'Through the long dip,' answered Sidney.

'Why?' the manager asked sharply.

'To help, if I can,' said Sidney.

'It was a fool's errand,' retorted the manager.

'Then I'm a fool, too,' Crabtree struck in, 'for I came with him.'

'You?' questioned the manager, whose nerves were on edge. 'How many more are there?'

'Fools?' queried Crabtree ironically. 'Only two. The others stayed behind or went back.'

'What others?' shouted the manager.

Crabtree told him. He mentioned the pumps, and the paying out of the hose, and gave Ben the credit for the suggestion. And he finished by saying, 'T' long dip's full, chock-full, mayster; and, until they get them pumps at it, and lessen t' watter a bit, I reckon we shall ha' to mak' t' best on 't, and stay where we are.'

There was no need to verify Crabtree's final statement by a personal investigation. The water was already lapping about the manager's feet. He stepped back, and summoned Riley and Burdett to attend him; the three, pressing through the men, retreated out of earshot, and discussed the situation. Presently Burdett returned and asked Sidney to join them.

Sidney's reply was a resolute shake of the head.

'Mr Seldon's sent me,' urged Burdett.

'Mr Seldon?' said Sidney. 'I thought'—— and there he paused, and asked, a trifle sarcastically, 'Cannot Mr Seldon come himself?'

'We're in a hole, Ben,' continued Burdett.

'Evidently,' said Sidney.

'And likely to be drowned in it like rats,' Burdett went on.

'And I with you,' added Sidney, 'having come on a fool's errand;' for the manager's remark rankled deeply, and he resented it.

Burdett was about to go back, when Seldon appeared.

'I spoke hastily, Ben. I'm sorry,' said Seldon; and all the men heard him.

Sidney was instantly appeased. 'You were not aware, Mr Seldon,' said he, 'until Crabtree told you, that we had brought you word through of what they were doing on the other side. Perhaps I *can* help you;' and, without further parley, he joined them.

The deafening rush continued; the water steadily rose; the men were gradually forced back nearer the place where the four were still engaged in anxious consultation.

'Have you brought your tools with you?' shouted the manager.

Quite half the men responded, 'Ay!'

'We may need them,' said the manager. 'Listen! You have heard that pumps are being rigged up, and hose paid out. But the water's rising, and, to judge by the sound of it, there's no diminution of the inrush. It will take them a long time—how long not one of us can say—to cope with the water, to lessen the depth of it sufficiently to allow us to venture through. There's no connection between this section of the mine and the other workings except by way of the long dip. While we are waiting for the rescuers we must not be forced back to the face. The water might win. So'——

He was interrupted by a tremendous fall of rock. The thundering roar of it covered for a moment the hoarser sound of the plunging water. The air, displaced, rushed by them, sucked out, then in. The lights wavered uncertainly behind their gauze protections. The water increased in volume, pouring through a huge rent in the roof, and beneath the rent, blocking the way to the long dip, was a mass of stone and débris.

'That is what I feared,' said Sidney.

'When you warned me a little while ago?' returned Seldon. 'I might have been caught by it.—So,' he continued, turning to the men, who had instinctively huddled together when the crashing interruption came, 'we have decided to risk a passage, long disused and little known, connecting this pit with Number 3. Bring your tools along. Don't straggle. What food you have, use sparingly. Ben will lead the way.'

'A cheer for Ben!' cried Crabtree.

And they gave it lustily.

CHAPTER VIII.

SIDNEY'S memory acted like an acid, and etched in upon his mind, as upon a waxed metal plate, the details of any plans in which he was vitally interested. He had pored frequently over the map of the whole group of mines. Their relation to each other, and their depths, varying according to the inclinations of the seams, were as clear to his mental vision as if the map were unrolled before his eyes.

He led the men back half-way to the face. Here, on the south side of the gallery, was a narrow opening used as a dumping-place for all kinds of unwanted or worn-out materials. The men had always regarded it as a recess. It had

never been explored within living memory. It was indicated on the map by dotted lines. Riley and Burdett had an idea that it had once communicated with Number 3, but that it had been abandoned years ago, and, to save timber, and to prevent the inevitable draw upon the surface, tightly packed with 'gob,' or refuse from either side. As an outlying part of the underground workings, now unprofitable and finished with, Seldon, since his appointment, had given little thought to it, and practically dismissed it from his mind.

The supposed recess was quickly cleared out. Sidney went forward, accompanied by Seldon and Riley; Crabtree came next; and Burdett remained in the rear. Any man dropping too far behind might have been lost.

For a thousand yards or so the way was fairly open, and they had nothing worse to contend with than a low roof, causing many of them to bend double-fold, and bad ventilation. The lamps burned dimmer. The air was heavy. The shuffling feet of the men raised the hitherto undisturbed dust in powdery clouds which filled the eyes and nostrils, and, adhering to their perspiring hands and faces, made them ten times blacker than they were before.

Sidney went slowly. The stooping position and the powdery clouds distressed him. The dust was worse for those behind than it was for him, except that they were stronger men, and more accustomed to liberal doses of it. Leading the way, and unwarily raising himself, he received many a hard knock; he grew weary, and began to wonder whether he could keep up even that slow pace, when, to his relief, he met with an obstacle which compelled the whole company to halt.

'I'm no use here, Mr Seldon,' said he, as he sat down, and leaned his back against the side of the gallery.

'What's in the way?' asked Seldon, peering past him.

'A big dump of some kind,' answered Sidney. 'It's the turn for the picks and shovels.'

'If'—— interjected Riley.

'Why *if*?' inquired Sidney, glancing up at Riley's shadowy form as he stepped over his outstretched legs.

'Because picks and shovels are poor tools against the packing in of the "gob,"' responded Riley. 'Pressed together by a settling roof, it hardens into adamant.'

'Are you sure it's "gob," Riley?' Seldon said, moving forward to examine it.

'I fear so,' answered Riley. 'I've been expecting it.'

'This isn't "gob,"' asserted Crabtree, who was also examining it.

'What, then?' asked Riley.

'Roof stuff,' replied Crabtree. 'It's too loose for "gob." Raise your lamps! There! Cannot you see? There's a long gap aboon it. It's roof stuff—rock, and shale, and earth. If we get t' picks and shovels at it we s't sooin win through.'

'Thank you, Crabtree,' said Sidney.

'Eh?' queried Crabtree.

'I said, "Thank you,"' repeated Sidney, 'and I mean it.'

The obstacle might be serious. It might delay them too long. Still, there it was, and it had to be tackled. Sidney, seated before the obstacle, had felt ashamed at his relief. The relief had been spontaneous; and the shame was dissipated, somehow, by Crabtree's encouraging words.

He was very weary. His body was aching with the unusual strain. His throat was parched, dry and hot as an oven, and filled with irritating particles that impelled him to cough incessantly, and so to weaken himself further. He heard the cataract sounding in the distance. He wished he were under it. How refreshing its pelting coolness would be! And there he might ease his cough and slake his tormenting thirst.

The men had closed up. Seldon pushed his way through them. Burdett was still at the back, unaware as yet of what was arresting their progress. Seldon told him, and said, 'Return, and ascertain whether the water is still rising, and how far it has run back toward the face. In the meanwhile I will set the men to work, and keep them at it, clearing the way. Report privately to me.'

'Can we get through?' asked Burdett anxiously.

'I hope so,' returned the manager; then, decisively, 'We must. It is our only chance, unless the water has ceased to flow.'

Burdett slipped away. The men, under Seldon's orders, ranged themselves along the passage; two of the strongest—there was no room for more—swung their picks against the barrier and loosened it; and those behind passed the stuff back from shovel to shovel and strewed it thinly along the uneven floor.

Sidney found a recess large enough to squeeze his body into, and crouched there, coughing, and awaiting the result of the men's efforts. The recess was dark. He could only see the feeble glow of a single safety-lamp in the long line of similar lights that marked the positions of the sweltering men. He was nearly choked with the dust. He was almost dazed by the din. Presently the one light was blotted out by an intervening shadow.

'Sup!' invited Crabtree, passing him a bottle, uncorked.

Sidney moistened his lips with the beverage, and handed the bottle back, smiling. Needless to say, the smile was unseen.

'I said sup, not sip,' protested Crabtree, refusing the bottle. 'Sup!' he reiterated emphatically.

Sidney drank of it, and remarked gratefully, 'It's innocuous, but refreshing.'

[*Christmas Number.*

'Nockywes? What 's that?' asked Crabtree.

'The cup that cheers—I mean, the *bottle* that cheers, but not inebriates,' answered Sidney.

'I 've heard it called that afore,' returned Crabtree. 'But nockywes is a new name to me—a classy name, too. I 'll remember it, and get my wife to order more o' t' same brand. Now you 'll be ready for a bite.'

'But what about you, Crabtree? You 'll want it.'

'Shall I? Not as much as you. Feel here, Ben;' and he drew Sidney's soft hand over the thick muscles of his upper arm. 'What do you think o' that? And if you felt me all ovver you 'd find 'em laid across me like whipcord. Ay! There 's plenty more o' t' same sort.'

Sidney laughed, and said, 'I 've had ample evidence of it, Crabtree, and I believe you 're the happy possessor of a frame that corresponds.'

'Corresponds?' echoed Crabtree dubiously; then, as he grasped Sidney's meaning, 'I see—a frame 'at fits in? So it does, Ben. It 'll tak' some wastin'. A man feeds on hissen when he 's nowt else to feed on.'

'A commendable form of cannibalism,' commented Sidney.

'And you 'd be done for quickly if it came to that,' responded Crabtree. 'Here! Tak' these sangwidges, and put 'em away—inside. It 'll be more to your credit if you have to turn cannibal.'

Sidney could not refuse. 'The tea was nectar, Crabtree, and the sandwiches are ambrosia.'

'By gum, Ben! you 're t' rummest chap I 've ever met wi' for inventin' jaw-crack names.'

'And you are one of the most generous, Crabtree. I 'll finish them even to the crumbs.'

While the crumbs were being eaten, Seldon, far back, was listening to Burdett's report. It was not encouraging. Burdett told him that he stepped directly out of the tunnel into the water. Splashing through, he visited the face. The water was lapping against it. The rapidly contracting space resounded with the booming of the cataract. He could hear nothing beyond it.

'No sound of the pumps?' inquired Seldon.

'No,' answered Burdett; 'and no shouts of the men.'

'Then we must do our best here,' said Seldon, adding, after a slight pause, 'God help us!'

The men toiled on far into the night; and at last, after clearing a hundred yards or so, and seeing no signs of an exit, they flung down their tools in utter weariness, and refused to do another stroke.

Many sank exhausted just where they were, and lost the sense of their desperate situation in merciful sleep. Others, more imaginative, squatted upon their haunches, and stared into the darkness, fearful lest the flood should follow them and slowly end their misery. The lights in the lamps waned, and several flickered out, a symbol of the waning and flickering out of their hopes. They were ready to abandon the digging and to resign themselves to their fate.

Seldon was keenly alive to a peril more threatening than the obstacle. If the *moral* of the men failed, if the heart went out of them and they gave way to a sullen despair, they would be lost indeed. He did not disturb the sleepers; but he gathered about him the men who were awake. He told them that every rock rolled back, every spadeful of shale and earth removed, was a step nearer liberty. Their rescue depended entirely upon themselves. The roof could not have fallen in along the whole length of the gallery. They would meet with places where the débris was less plentiful and much easier to tackle than that which had been already strewn behind them. He proposed that they should work in three relays, each relay taking two hours on and four hours off; and he volunteered to lead the first relay. Riley would lead the second, Burdett the third, and they would keep going incessantly until the barrier had been broken through.

'What do you say, men?' he demanded.

'We say like you, sir,' answered Crabtree, amidst a chorus of assents.

'You must leaven the relays, Mr Seldon,' put in Sidney from his recess.

'Leaven them? How?' asked the manager.

'Let those who are here, and have assented to your proposal, be divided among the three,' said Sidney. 'Their spirit, the willing spirit, will favourably affect the remainder.'

'And stiffen them,' added Crabtree.

'Or leaven them. It matters not which,' said Sidney, 'so long as the end is gained.'

Seldon accepted the suggestion. The sleepers were roused, and the proposal explained to them. The men told off for the first relay silently acquiesced. They shook the sleep out of their eyes, joined their fellows, and set themselves again to the attack of the barrier. The others settled down, some for the two and some for the four hours' rest.

Relay after relay, they worked on, and the morning came, with no light, and no sign that they were any nearer the end of their task. Another hundred yards of the barrier had been broken through, but the obstacle still faced them. They had finished their food long since. Hunger pinched them. Weakness began to tell upon them. The removal of the débris did not proceed at the same pace.

Sidney, sleepless, moved up with the advance, and cheered all the three relays. He handled the shovels of weary men, relieving them briefly, although he was weary himself, and tremulous through lack of food. They acquired the habit of appealing to him when a heavier rock than usual barred the way. If they could not remove the rock, they went round it, or over it, burrowing onwards through the softer and more yielding mass.

By the afternoon they had cleared another hundred yards. And now they were groping their way, for the last of the lamps had gone out—groping feebly, for but few of the men were equal to the continuance of the task. The end of it seemed to be as far off as ever.

Riley's relay came on, with Crabtree as foreman. Riley was the only one of the imprisoned company who carried an electric torch. While the lamps burned he concealed it, purposely, for the battery was nearly exhausted. He and Crabtree led the attack. The men were ranged behind them with their shovels. The second man, the one immediately behind Crabtree, groaned, and then dropped, declaring weakly that he was past it.

'My good fellow,' said Sidney cheerily, 'you 're not past it. You only think so. Give me your shovel!' But as he seized it and thrust it under the loosened earth he staggered, and almost fell.

Crabtree's pick rang musically on a hard rock.

'Hallo!' shouted Crabtree, on a falling inflection.

'Knock again,' counselled one of the men.

'Hallo!' repeated Crabtree, the inflection rising, and the pick ringing musically as before.

'There 's nobody in,' said the counsellor.

It was a respite for the men. They leaned upon their shovels and awaited investigations. Crabtree felt at the rock, and found it bigger than any they had yet encountered. Riley felt at it also, from the top to the base, or as near to the base as the ground would permit. Then, considering it an emergency for the use of the torch, he switched the light on, and revealed a narrow slit, the entrance to the cavity left by the rock's displacement.

'That 's our way,' said he.

'And I 'm the slimmest,' added Sidney. 'If you 'll oblige me with the torch, Mr Riley—thank you—I 'll use it sparingly.'

Crabtree lifted him bodily to the rock's upper edge. He drew himself through the slit slowly, and cautiously crept forward, feeling his way inch by inch, until he reached its outer edge. It had evidently fallen whole, a huge rock, impossible for the men to move, or even to break up in their present enfeebled condition. At its outer edge he held the torch at arm's length and switched on the light. Earth and shale sloped away at an easy gradient beneath him, and beyond him a timbered gallery opened up as far as his eyes could see.

The immense relief of his discovery subdued him to a thankful quietness. For a full minute he gazed intently into the dimness to assure himself that the way was really free. Then he thought of his fellows. He began to push himself back, feet foremost, for in that manner he could best negotiate the slit. He was suddenly arrested by an ominous crackling of the roof. Immediately an overwhelming shock bereft him of all consciousness, and he lay inert, face downwards, upon the rock.

CHAPTER IX.

TWO hours later the cool air from the shaft of Number 3 helped to revive him. It played upon his pale face. It ruffled his dark hair. It coaxed him back to consciousness. He was laid upon a couple of outstretched coats, and another couple covered his legs and body. First-aid had been rendered him. His legs were fastened with splints and swathed in bandages. Pick-handles had been improvised for the one, and to supply the other some of the men had almost stripped themselves naked.

Seldon was bending over him.

He opened his eyes.

'When is the directors' meeting? I think you will have to excuse me, Mr Seldon, after all.'

The manager was taken aback, and answered lamely, 'Of course—of course. How are you?'

There was no reply. A spasm crossed the thin face. The perspiration stood in drops upon Sidney's brow. He had fallen back into a death-like swoon. He lay motionless except for a slight flickering of the eyelids. His face was an ashy white; his lips were blue. Seldon was alarmed. Most of the men were already on the surface. A surgeon had been summoned, and Seldon awaited his arrival anxiously. He might come too late.

Sidney had been saved, temporarily at any rate, by the backward movement on the top of the rock, and the brief pause when he had heard the roof crackling. The loosened shale might have caught him across the head or body; as it was, it had caught him across the legs, smashing them.

Crabtree, when he heard the fall, guessed immediately what had happened. He sprang at the slit, dug his fingers in, and dragged himself through. Riley followed him, then two of the men. Sidney was half-buried. The concussion had flung the electric torch clean out of his nerveless fingers and sent it rolling to the bottom of the slope; so, for the first few minutes, they had to work in the dark. Another of the men, feeling his way forward, and slithering down the slope, touched the torch accidentally with his open palm, clutched it, and switched on the light.

By this time the manager and Burdett and the rest of the men, roused from their uneasy slumbers, had rushed up; and soon the whole party, with Sidney swinging hammock-like between them, pushed their way forward to the foot of the shaft.

To the manager's surprise, Squire de Lisle

descended with the surgeon, and betrayed the greatest concern in the surgeon's superficial examination.

'Well, Blyth, what do you think of him?' asked the squire.

'He's not past help,' replied the surgeon diplomatically, 'but very near it.'

'Can he stand the journey?' the squire inquired eagerly.

'Up the shaft? He must. I can do nothing with him down here.'

'Home, I mean? To the Manor?' explained the squire. 'The car is ready.'

'I'll go with you,' responded the surgeon, without committing himself. 'I must get these things off, and see what his injuries are. It's a pity, too; for, considering the appliances available, the fellows have made a neat job of it. But'—— and he shrugged his shoulders.

'But what, Blyth?'

'He's suffered from strain, dampness, lack of food and air; and—there's not much of him, squire. He's weak constitutionally.'

'Or he wouldn't be here,' said the squire. The surgeon stared at him. The manager wondered what he meant. But neither of them asked for an explanation. Indeed, he gave them little or no opportunity, for he went on at once, 'There isn't much of him—that's true; but every bit there is of him is worth saving.'

'I quite agree with you, squire,' returned Seldon.

'And you would be sorry to lose him?' the squire put in.

'I should,' confessed Seldon.

'As a clerk?' queried the squire.

'As a man,' said Seldon.

'So should I—as a man,' repeated the squire. 'The news of the flood reached me this morning. I heard that you were cooped up, dammed in, unreachable, about thirty of you; and I ran over to ascertain the facts. I have kept the car about all day. But no one suggested that you could find a way into Number 3.'

'Ben did it.'

'Ben?'

'Sidney.'

'Oh! I had forgotten for the moment that his name was Ben. Here's the cage!'

The last batch of men, under the surgeon's supervision, lifted Sidney into the cage, and when they had reached the surface, carried him to the squire's waiting car. Boards were fixed within the tonneau, from seat to seat, to accommodate Sidney's bandaged legs; the surgeon sat beside him, and steadied his swaying and apparently lifeless body; the squire slipped in beside the chauffeur; and, amid the silent commiseration of a group of villagers, the car glided away.

Phyllis came to the door as the car drove up.

'What's the matter, dad? An accident?' she inquired.

'Your first patient, my dear,' he replied.

'Not from the war?—Oh!' for she had caught sight of the patient—the death-like pallor showing beneath the grime, the limp form leaning inert against the surgeon's shoulder, the closed eyes, the blue lips—and it distressed her.

'No,' responded the squire. 'From a nearer battle-ground, Phyllis—one of the Ryeburn pits.'

'But—but—why have you brought him here?'

'To give him a chance, my dear—a bare chance—to recover.'

'And to give me a fighting chance, Miss Phyllis,' the surgeon seconded, 'to beat back the enemy who has gripped him, and who has refused so far to loosen his hold.'

'Is it—is it—Mr Sidney, dad?'

'Disfigured, Phyllis, and injured, I fear, desperately; but—yes, it's Sidney.'

He called for two of the gardeners, and they, with the chauffeur and the butler, stood ready to carry him in.

'On the boards,' said the surgeon. 'The squire and I will support his body. Gently, now! Don't shake him. Gently! There!' and they rested in the hall.

'Where shall we put him?' asked Phyllis. 'We are not ready yet. Our soldier patients are not due for a week or more.'

'Jack's room is always ready,' replied the squire. 'Put him there. And, I say, Phyllis, gather a few of Jack's things together, all that Sidney is likely to need when Blyth has finished with him.'

Phyllis hastened to obey.

In an hour or so Sidney was much more presentable. The disfiguring grime had been cleansed away. Jack's clothing had replaced his own. The pick-handles and the strips torn from the shirts of the men had been removed, and the shattered limbs set between properly shaped splints and swathed in surgical bandages. Blyth had found a compound fracture of the thigh, a simple fracture of the shin-bone, a crushed ankle, and a mass of bruises, now discolouring badly. But the bruise that troubled him most, a slight one outwardly, overlooked and unsuspected by the men, was at the base of the skull, where the flat side of a flying piece of shale had struck Sidney without cutting the skin. He remained oblivious to his surroundings, still inert, but plastic, yielding to the surgeon's touch and to the handling of the squire and his men, and breathing softly. The blueness left his lips; but he never once opened his eyes, or gave any sign whatever that he knew what was happening to him.

'Will he pull through?' asked the squire when he and the surgeon were together in the library.

'The bones will knit,' returned Blyth, 'and the bruises will heal.'

'Answer my question, Blyth, candidly,' persisted the squire. 'Will he pull through?'

'I cannot say. No one can. In my opinion, it is doubtful, squire—very doubtful,' admitted Blyth.

'Why, if the bones will knit and the bruises will heal?'

'You heard what that fellow told us who helped him through the water?'

'Crabtree?'

'That's the man. The patient's feverish—a complication not very desirable, squire, and uncertain in its development—feverish, the outcome of his wet clothes clinging to him, and steaming in a hot and foul atmosphere. And that is not the worst.'

'Then what is the worst, Blyth? Tell me. I must know.'

'Concussion.'

'Concussion?'

'Of the brain, squire. I suspected it. He's so limp, so unresponsive, and, mercifully, so unconscious of his pain. There's no abrasion, and very little swelling; but the shale must have struck him smartly between the base of the skull and the top of the spine.'

'He spoke to Seldon.'

'For a moment or two.'

'And that's a good sign.'

'Perhaps. It depends upon what he said.'

The squire, after a pause, altered his previous pressing question to an urgent and appealing demand. 'You must pull him through, Blyth.'

'I will, if I can.'

'You've no idea who he is?'

'A lodger in the village who took young Bradley's place, and so released him for military service; that's what I've heard. I suppose it's correct. And,' said Blyth, wondering the while why the squire was so deeply interested in him, and, notwithstanding the squire's reply to his daughter's inquiry, and his own addition thereto, why he had kept the car waiting for him, and why he had brought him straight on to the Manor, 'it was a fortunate release, for Bradley's done good service, and won the D.C.M.'

'And Sidney's done good service—an exchange of places, Blyth, that neatly fits in. Ben Sidney—that's the name he's known by as Bradley's substitute; but, a word in your ear;' and the squire whispered another name, not dissimilar, which caused the surgeon to start visibly, and stare at him. Question and answer followed. The wonder passed away. The squire's exceptional behaviour was satisfactorily explained. 'Not but what I would do it for any other man if it would give him a better chance of recovery,' the squire went on; 'but, you see, Blyth, he's one of us; and you simply must pull him through.'

'As I would pull through any other man, squire, God helping me,' responded the surgeon. 'I was a little puzzled, I confess, by your special interest in him. Now I understand. Thank you for your confidence.'

'It's a guess, Blyth, and unconfirmed.'

'But a very shrewd guess, squire, and as near correct as a guess can be.'

Before a fortnight was over the small medical staff had arrived, including a few nurses, and the Manor was occupied by soldiers, many of them maimed, all of them convalescent. Their rooms were at the other end of the building. Sidney was undisturbed and unaware of their advent. A rumour spread among them, and was passed on to new-comers during the next two months, that a member of the family was ill; the nurses knew little more than this; and neither Phyllis nor the squire enlightened them. It would not have made the slightest difference to Sidney, however, if he had been in their midst. For he was mentally immersed in a subconscious world of his own.

But it would have made a great difference to Phyllis. She had engaged a trustworthy and capable housekeeper. Supervision was reduced to a sinecure. The nurses worked under a matron; Blyth attended Sidney; and Phyllis, fairly free from other responsibilities, took Sidney under her own wing, and scrupulously carried out all the surgeon's orders. The matron offered to relieve her. But she did not need the relief, and therefore courteously declined it. For, almost from the start, she was assisted by a servant who came unexpectedly and quietly assumed the duties; who soothed Sidney by his touch and awakened a response to his initiative; who attended to his wants as to the manner born, with a devotion so tireless and a serenity so unruffled that Phyllis could always leave him in his care.

'Dad,' she said one day, in an outburst of confidence, 'he's a treasure—a perfect treasure.'

During the first fortnight Sidney never spoke an intelligible word. From the second day onward his face twitched at times, and was occasionally drawn as if with conscious pain. An inadvertent movement would sometimes wring a groan out of him. But this phase of his recovery subsided with the knitting up of the fractured bones. He gradually grew easier. He would lie quiet, gazing steadily, but dream-like, at Phyllis. She was not disconcerted, nor did she turn her face away, because his eyes had in them no conscious recognition. He was living in another world. This phase subsided also, or, rather, merged itself into another. Memory stirred. Speech began. It lacked consecutive relation. He spoke about things of which she had no knowledge—happenings of his childhood and of his later life, mentioning names that were mostly strange to her; not all, for, to her surprise, a few of the names were familiar. His memory was uncertain. He was feeling his way forward, slowly, and with lapses more or less frequent, to the time of his arrival at Ryeburn. It was like the recovery of personal possessions suddenly snatched from him and

scattered over a wide area. He had to wander aside from the straight line to collect them. But bit by bit they were collected. Recent happenings were referred to. He spoke of the pines, of the Lady of the Pines—confessions unconscious, but tender, affectionate, worshipful; and she listened, absorbed, wondering, a little afraid, beholding herself in the wavering mirror of his mind; until a day came when, as she fancied, his eyes changed. A new light seemed to be dawning in them. He was coming to himself. And, unprepared to meet the flash of recognition after what she had heard him say, blushing, a trifle annoyed, not with him, but with herself, and more than a trifle excited, she summoned the assistant, and left the room abruptly.

CHAPTER X.

'HALLO, Poppleton! Is it late?'

'Not very, sir—about a quarter past four.'

'A quarter past—Poppleton!' reproachfully. 'Have you allowed me to sleep all day?'

'Sleep is good for you, sir. I'm glad you know me.'

'Know you! Why shouldn't I know you? I say, Poppleton, where am I?' raising himself upon his elbow, and looking around him curiously. 'This isn't the flat. And what's amiss with my legs?'

'No, sir, this isn't the flat. This is Mr Jack's room, sir, at Brockwell Manor; and your legs are mending.'

'Brockwell Manor?'

'Squire de Lisle's, sir.'

'Oh!' and he began to think. After a while he said, 'Poppleton, I've been dreaming.'

'Two months, sir.'

'As long as that? Is it two months since I was brought to Brockwell Manor?'

'Two months yesterday, sir.'

'And how long have you been here, Poppleton?'

'Two months to-day, sir.'

'Nursing me?'

'Helping, sir.'

'Whom?'

'Miss de Lisle.'

Again Sidney was silent, thinking, recalling the incidents of the flood, and all that had occurred up to the time of the roof falling; and then he said, 'How did you hear of it, Poppleton?'

'By wire, sir, from Mr Angold.'

'And you came at once?'

'Immediately, sir. My sister's is not far away.'

'Your sister's? Ah! I remember. You were having a holiday, Poppleton.'

'A long one, sir.'

'I hope Angold sent you the cheques regularly, Poppleton.'

'To the day, sir; I might almost say to the tick. He never failed.'

'It seems to me, Poppleton, that I've a lot of leeway to make up, considering the drift of my dream.'

'Very likely, sir; but you'll make it up easily, now that the dream is over. It's a pleasure, sir, if you'll excuse my saying so, to hear you speaking like your old self.'

'Quite rationally, Poppleton?'

'Quite, sir. Not that you spoke irrationally. You were very quiet, sir, for the first month, and since then you have only said what a sane man would say.'

'You shall tell me some day, Poppleton, what I did say, and I will test the sanity. The sanest thing I can do now is to fall asleep.'

'It is, sir—sleep!' And, as Sidney closed his eyes, Poppleton whispered to himself, 'Thank the good Lord, he's through it!'

With his continued progress Phyllis left him more and more in Poppleton's care. She took a larger share in the entertainment of the convalescent soldiers. Poppleton was quite equal to the discharge of Dr Blyth's orders. Sidney was not aware of the lessening frequency of her visits, for Poppleton had not told him how sedulously she had attended to his needs during his prolonged 'dreaming.' He could not discuss her with Poppleton. He asked no questions about her. He accepted her absences as natural. The convalescent soldiers had a prior claim. His eyes brightened when she came in, and her eyes met his frankly, without a suggestion of shyness; and yet, if he had only known, shyness had much to do with the absences, and with the brevity of the visits also; for she could not forget his unconscious confessions about the Lady of the Pines.

Except for his dress, not khaki, but civilian, he might have been mistaken for one of the soldiers, as he made his first tentative efforts towards walking again within the limits of his room. He had not yet left his room. Blyth would not hear of it. He could sit by the window and watch the men; but until he was stronger, and better able to use his crutches, the surgeon peremptorily forbade him to join them.

'Cannot I have some of them up here?' he pleaded.

Blyth laughed, and said, 'Ask your nurse.'

'Poppleton will agree.'

'I meant Miss de Lisle.'

Sidney mentioned it when she came again.

'Would you like to see Jack?'

'Jack? Your brother? I should be delighted to see him. Is he here?'

'He came yesterday.'

'I must thank him for the use of his room. And I must clear out of it. I wonder if Mrs Bradley would take me in again.'

'With Poppleton?'

'I hadn't thought of Poppleton;' and he made a wry face. 'Poppleton could prolong his holiday.'

'Mrs Bradley has one patient already.'

'Phil?'

'So you will have to stay here—with Poppleton. Jack will tell you about Phil. I have a letter for you;' and she placed it in his hands.

He saw the address, and, before he opened it, he said, 'Miss de Lisle, this is not my name. I am Sidney Bentham.'

'I know,' she replied simply. 'Father told me.'

'Before Poppleton came?'

'The day before.'

'He guessed it?'

'When he met you first at the top of Brockwell Hollow.'

The back of the envelope was impressed with the stamp of the Ryeburn Collieries. He opened it, and drew forth a letter signed by the chairman of directors and Seldon, as manager, and a cheque for fifty pounds. The letter was eulogistic; the cheque was a token of appreciation and gratitude.

'May I borrow your pen?'

'Certainly,' said she, drawing off the cover, and shaking the ink down to the point.

He endorsed the cheque, and passed it to her, saying, 'That's the last time I shall sign myself Ben Sidney.'

'But,' she protested, 'the cheque is yours.'

'No, Miss de Lisle; it's yours. Write your name under mine, and use it for the soldiers.'

To refuse it would have been ungracious; so she thanked him, and said that the men would welcome the extra comforts provided by the gift.

He wrote to Angold, releasing him from his promise of secrecy, and telling him he had resumed his proper name; and Angold replied, saying that he had kept the secret under stress—kept it even at the meeting of the directors, when, on Seldon's proposal, the directors had generously voted him fifty pounds. 'I smiled inwardly,' penned the solicitor, 'and wired Poppleton. The latter, I agree, was risky, considering my promise; but what could I do?'

Jack de Lisle limped in, his arm in a sling, his other arm resting on his sister's shoulder, only a little less lame than Sidney himself. Phyllis left them together.

'I've heard of you, Bentham,' said Jack cheerily. 'Oh yes, I have, from several sources—dad, and Phyllis, and the men, and one or two chaps out there who know you, and say it's pretty hard luck for you that you are left at home. They'll alter their tale now. You've had your scrap here.'

'I'd no idea you were wounded.'

'Hadn't you? I should have left my bones in Flanders but for you.'

'You're joking.'

'Am I? Ask Phil. We'll have him over, and he'll tell you. No, he won't; he's too modest. So I'll tell you. He was one of my lot. We were raiding. The star-shells were going up, and a sniper got me twice—once in the thigh, and down I dropped; and once in the arm as I lay in the open. Phil brought me in. I was nearly done for. I lay there, between the trenches, seven mortal hours. Phil had brought four in already. He came out for me, dragging his leg with him, perforated; and as he flung his arm about me a shell burst, and he caught a fragment of it in his open palm—caught it, but couldn't hold it, for it ran up to the elbow. He thrust the other arm under me, and rolled me over, and over, and over, until he tumbled me into the trench, the shots spitting viciously all around both of us, and, fainting, he tumbled in after me.'

'And they gave him the D.C.M.'

'Yes. He won the disc.'

'And you were joking.'

'No. Ask Phil. You took his place. He took yours. You're quits—both convalescent together.'

'I'm proud of him.'

'And he's proud of you.'

Phil came over. An empty sleeve was pinned across his breast. Before he left, while he and Sidney were alone, he quietly placed a small packet upon the table, and said, 'Mother sent it.'

'What is it, Phil?' asked Sidney, fingering it, and finding it heavy.

'Your wages. Bryce brings them up every pay-day. And,' Phil went on, for Sidney was silent, 'Bryce always says, "For Mr Bentham, madam," gravely, then raises his hat and walks away. He knew your father. From the start he knew you. But he kept the knowledge to himself.'

'I am greatly obliged to Mr Bryce,' returned Sidney slowly. 'I must write him, and prevent the further payment of wages I am not entitled to. In the meanwhile'—— and he pushed the packet of coins across the table.

'Aren't you going back?' asked Phil.

'Not as a clerk,' Sidney replied; 'that has become impossible. I may, as a director. In the meanwhile,' he continued, picking up his interrupted thought, 'Mr Bryce has placed me in a delicate position. What must I do with this? I cannot send it back to your mother.'

'That would never do,' asserted Phil.

'I am afraid not,' mused Sidney. 'Your mother might resent it. And yet—— Oh, I have it! Will you do me a favour, Phil?'

'Gladly.'

'Then pass it on to Crabtree. Tell him I have sent it, with my compliments, in exchange

—not in payment—in exchange for the nectar and ambrosia.'

His acquaintance with Jack ripened into intimacy. The squire was the same as ever—genial and free. But Phyllis retired behind her shyness. He saw her frequently. She never avoided him. He was not aware that it was shyness. But he was aware that between them there was a barrier of some kind. It was indefinable. She was very courteous, almost too courteous; she was specially considerate, almost too considerate. He could go so far; then he was checked, held up, by an inflection of the voice, by a contraction of the brows, by a clearness of the eyes, by the slightest possible straightening of the figure.

'Poppleton,' said he, 'the time has come when I must test the sanity of what I said in that dream-like state. What did I say?'

'Lots of things, sir.'

'Did I mention any names?'

'Sometimes, sir.'

'Whose?'

'People you knew, sir.'

'And people you knew, Poppleton?'

'Most of them, sir—not all. You spoke, sir, toward the end of the dream, about some people in Ryeburn; and you mentioned particularly a Lady of the Pines.'

'Oh! A Lady of the Pines? Did I mention her frequently, Poppleton?'

'Fairly often, sir.'

'In what way?'

'Well, sir, if I may say so, commendably, as a lady you had been taken with, sir, and had a deep respect for.'

'Did I say anything foolish, Poppleton—anything I have any cause to regret?'

'Not in the least, sir. You were as sane as you are now.'

Sidney reflected upon it. He decided to push at the barrier, and, if possible, to break it down. 'Phyllis,' he began, and immediately, by some subtle communication, he knew that she was on her guard. It was the first time he had so addressed her. 'In my wanderings through the woods I came across an artist, painting. She seldom saw me. I did not disturb her. We never spoke to each other, not even that once when I stood behind the manager of the mines, a clerk, socially unworthy of an introduction. But I never forgot her. And I was accustomed to think of her as the Lady of the Pines.'

She unbent a little, and her eyes softened, as she waited for him to proceed.

'In my wanderings through the other woods, the woods of my dream,' he went on, 'I came across the same gracious lady, the Lady of the Pines. What I said I know not. I only know what Poppleton has told me—that all I said was sane. And so, whatever it was, Phyllis, I shall not withdraw it. I would repeat it if I knew what it was. Shall I ask Poppleton? He may remember.'

Her colour rose. She bent toward him, and whispered, 'There is no need.'

The barrier had gone.

THE CHRISTMAS GUEST.

LITTLE feet that came unheeded,
Helpless hands that knocked in vain,
Eager guest who stood and pleaded,
In the winter storm and rain!
So they tell the old, old story,
Of the gracious gift of love;
Dim reflection of His glory,
Shone the radiant star above.

Mothers, with a shelter o'er them,
Rocked the babies on their knee;
Surely never child before Him
Was as shelterless as He.
Driven from His kingly splendour,
To the cruel world's unrest,
To the children, young and tender,
Came the children's Christmas guest.

Still, as in those distant ages,
Through the wintry wind and sleet,
Where the power of darkness rages,
Come those soft and shining feet.
Peace, the herald, goes before Him,
Where the fiercest perils are,
And within the darkness o'er Him
Shines the solitary star.

With the angry world unheeding,
And the clouded sky above,
On the thresholds stands He pleading
For the little homes of love!
Peace is shorn of light and glory,
Unacknowledged—dispossessed—
But, as in the old, old story,
Christ is *still* the children's guest.

G. R. GLASGOW.

CUTE M'CHEYNE.

By JOSEPH LAING WAUGH,

Author of *Robbie Doo*, *Betty Grier*, *Thornhill and Its Worthies*, &c.

CHAPTER I.

JOHN M'CHEYNE was a tall, lantern-faced, narrow-shouldered man, with a pawky, wheedling way, a parochial outlook, and an easy, quiet confidence born of the knowledge of a good bank-account and an extensive thriving joinery business.

As members of Shinnel School Board and fellow-parishioners in a not over-populous glen, we had often met, and I had had many opportunities of noting his peculiarities, but never had he seemed to me so gaunt, out of place, and ill at ease as he did one July evening sitting in the low basket chair in my little sanctum.

Only once before had he been within my manse gates. He called to offer his services in connection with any joinery repairs needed, and I remember he left very wroth and disgusted because the work had been already entrusted to his brother-in-trade, James Mouncey. But that was shortly after I came to the parish—nearly two years before—and as we sat talking spasmodically and smoking assiduously, I wondered what his motive could be in visiting me now.

We had discussed the weather and crop prospects—a subject in which he was interested, for, as a hobby, he farmed the hundred acres or so round his house; lamented the uprooting of Auchengibbert fir-wood by a recent storm; and eulogised the laird of Craigbank, who had been buried the previous day.

So far, our crack had been forced and scrappy; but the funeral was productive of much easy comment, for M'Cheyne had been entrusted with all the arrangements, and everything, to the smallest detail, had gone off without a hitch.

'Yes, Mr Crosbie,' he said as he held his pipe aloft and leisurely blew bogey-roll smoke towards me, 'though I say it myself that shouldn't say it, it was an orderly, well-arranged affair—a—what I would call an—an unqualified success. An unqualified success, sir, it surely was. But, as you know, I gave it my personal attention; saw to everything myself, even to the distributing of the cords; and—well, "if you want a thing well done"—you know the rest, Mr Crosbie.'

I noticed he discarded the Doric when he began to speak about the funeral and the part he had played, and his talk was deliberate and restrained; but when he had thus elevated his subject and impressed me sufficiently, he gradually slipped into more homely forms and let himself go.

'But I was due the laird personal supervision, Maister Crosbie,' he continued. 'Mony a hunner pound I got from him—ay, mony a yin. When he fell heir to Craigbank he applied to me for plans for the new steadin'—never thocht o' employin' a Dumfries architect—no, sir—not he!—an'—an' I set to, prepared plans, gave him a probable estimate, an' got the job withoot opposition. You see, he had confidence in me; an' though I say it mysel', it wasn't misplaced, for I feenished the contract in sic a wey that he never efter gaed by me. It was me, sir, that detected dry-rot in the drawing-room o' the big hoose, and it was me that cured it. Every gate on the lairdship cam' oot o' my workshop, an' the storm windas on the Shinnel Brig cottages were thrown oot by M'Cheyne & Son—a' laird's work; never a price speired; an' peyed on the nail, sir—*peyed on the nail.*'

The memory of these prompt cash transactions evidently afforded him keen enjoyment, for he smacked his lips as if he were eating sugar, and repeated the last four words with an accompanying tattoo of emphasis on the arm of the chair.

'As regards the funeral, Mr Crosbie,' he continued, 'I don't mind tellin' you that I would as lief had nothing to do wi't; for ever since I launched oot in the big contractin' line I have gi'en the undertakin' the—the go-by, as it were. It was different in my faither's time, for the business was sma' then, an' the black trade wasna to be sneezed at, I assure you. But circumstances hae altered, and as I am noo, it's no' juist exactly what I would ca' a dignified branch, Mr Crosbie; no, it is not; an' I can well afford to let it slip. But the laird's funeral—well, it was no ordinary occasion—zinc shell, polished oak box, hearse and sixteen coaches a' the way frae Thornhill, forby the issuin' o' three hundred and fifty intimations and invitations. Oh, it was a by-affair, and, more than that, I had aye dune a' his work, as I've said, and I was sweir to let that ploitterin' body Jeemes Mouncey into Craigbank even at the eleventh oor.

'Then there was anither consideration,' and he gave me a sly side-look; 'I had a polished oak misfit on my workshop laft which I judged wad juist fit the laird to a T. It was eye-measurin', of coorse; but every time I lookit,

what ye micht ca' professionally, on the laird I thocht o' that box, and when I was assured that death was in the cup, so to speak, I made a point o' ca'in at Craigbank just in a neibourly wey, ye understaun', an'—an' it cam' off a' richt. Ay, it cam' off; and the box—well, he couldna hae been neater nested if I had measured him to the sixteenth o' an inch wi' my ain fit-rule. Imphm! They say, keep a thing for seven years and ye'll find a use for it; an', faith, Maister Crosbie, there's some truth in it, for it's just within a cat's jump o' that time since I mistook five-feet-three for five-feet-eicht; an' as the Glesca firm that supplied it wadna tak' it back, it lookit lang as if I wad be the loser by my stupidity. Hooever, it's away noo. Eh—did ye notice it, Maister Crosbie?'

'Notice what?'

'The—the box.'

'No, not particularly. Why?'

'Oh weel, it disna maitter. Ye wad never hae kenned it wasna new if I hadna tell't ye. That's the warst o' me. I'm aye sae open an above-board wi' my affairs, Maister Crosbie. It disna aye pay, but it's gran' to be honest. Imphm! I was wunnerin' a' the road frae Craigbank to the kirkyaird if Jeems Mouncey wad spot it. Bein' in the trede, he kens its weys, an' he likes me sae weel that he wad juist glory in a handle against me o' that kind. Efter a', what aboot it? Certainly the colour had darkened, and the polish wasna juist what you wad ca' skinklin', but for the purpose it was as guid as new—och ay, better.'

'You'll make some allowance on the price probably?' I ventured.

He looked at me sharply and keenly. 'What's that ye say?'

'You'll take your own time to tell the widow, and make an allowance.'

He gave a short, dry cough and stroked his beard. 'Are you juist sayin that, or askin' a question?'

'Oh, any way you like, Mr M'Cheyne—say as a question.'

'Imphm! Weel, it's—it's awfu' like the kind o' unbusiness questions a minister wad ask. It's so—so'——

'Stupid. Eh?'

'Stupid. Ay, man, that's the very word. Allow you—faith, ye ken the crack o' the whup, Maister Crosbie;' and he chuckled and laughed to himself. 'Seriously, though, sir,' he said after a pause, 'do you really think I wad be justified in sayin' ocht aboot it to the weeda? The thocht o' ocht second-haun' wad juist hurt her feelin's, an' in the dark oor o' her adversity she has plenty to thole. No, no! I'll juist—imphm!—just so. By-the-by, Maister Crosbie, are you takin' ony interest in this singin'-class that's practisin' in the schule the noo?'

The basket chair in which he sat was very low—so low, indeed, that when he sat forward his knees touched his chin, and when he lay back and stretched out his legs, from where he sat in the middle of the floor he could easily have rested his heels on the mantelpiece. I thought he was about to do that, but on asking the question he contented himself with putting his toe between the ribs of the grate.

The conversational tangent amused me, and the drift of the question was not quite clear; but I answered shortly that as it was a local venture and the musical as well as the moral and spiritual well-being of my parishioners was my consideration, I was very wishful it would turn out a success.

He puffed thoughtfully for a little; then, drawing in his meandering limbs and sitting forward doubled up like a Greek E, he looked sideways at me.

'It's what they ca' a cantata, I'm tell't.'

'Yes; the cantata of *Ruth*. My musical education is quite rudimentary,' I continued, after a pause, 'but it seems a nice composition.'

'Just so—a nice composition—imphm!—of the play-actin' order. Eh?'

'Well'—and I laughed good-naturedly—'I wouldn't say it is exactly of the play-acting order.'

'But there are characters in it—a' takin' different pairts. Is that not so?'

'Oh yes,' I said. 'The principal singers take parts, and in song and chorus bring out the story.'

'But they sing what's no in the Bible,' he persisted.

'Well, that may be; in fact, I know they don't sing the exact words as they are written in Ruth; but in a composition of this kind license is permissible, you know, Mr M'Cheyne.'

'Is it permissible to tak' a license wi' the Word o' God, Maister Crosbie?'

'Come, come, now!' and I laughed again; 'you know'——

'Come, come, yoursel', sir. It's no a lauchin' maitter. I look upon it in a serious licht. Of course, you're a young man, Maister Crosbie; you're a stranger in a mainner, an' you bring toun's notions wi' you. You mebbe think you're doin' richt in countenancin' this affair, but I wouldna be actin' a freen's pairt if I didna tell ye you're—you're wrang. This cantata is an innovation, sir—an innovation. We never had ocht o' the kind in the parish before, and we've lived langer withoot doctors and died as happy withoot ministers as parishes that have. The whole affair is play-actin', pure and simple. Liberties are ta'en wi' the Word o' God. Young lads and lasses are brocht thegither wi' naebody richt to look efter them, an'—an'—weel, ye never can tell what'll happen. An' this teacher o' music frae Dumfries'——

'One moment, Mr M'Cheyne,' I interposed. 'Before we go further let us know where we stand. You know as well as I do that this

class is not under the auspices of the church. It is a venture by a very deserving man who, on account of ill-health, has had to leave his work in Dumfries and take up a temporary residence in our health-giving glen. I never advised him; all I did was to move at our board-meeting that he should have the use of the school, and the vote was unanimous. If you are so jealous of the good name of Shinnel, why did you give your vote in favour of my motion?'

'I didn't know it was to be a cantata.'

'And, in the name of goodness, how do you imagine a cantata is likely to corrupt the morals of the parish?'

'Now, Maister Crosbie, I didna come here to be cross-examined. I cam' to warn you an' advise you, an', if possible, get you to use your influence to bring the meetin's to an end. They 're upsettin' the whole young community. There 's my son Robert, noo—a better all-round joiner never lifted a jack-plane; he 'll draw a plan, mak' oot a specification, or keep a job gaun like a lever-watch—never took up his time wi' ocht but his wark. Noo, he 's a buddy ca'ed Boaz—a Jew buddy, of coorse, and he roars and sings nicht and mornin' aboot a family o' the name o' Elimelech. Nae workin' at the books noo efter oors. No, no! Then there 's that gabbin', hallockit dochter o' Mary Fraser's. I daur say she spends as muckle on lavender-water in a week as her mither spends in soap in a twalmonth—and she 's Naomi—michty! Wad she no be better employed, think ye, at her sewin'-machine, daein' something to help to pey her faither's doctor's bills? Ruth, they tell me, is Jeems Mouncey's dochter. Imphm! Him or his maun aye be in the eyes o' the public. I say nocht 'gainst the lass. She 's maybe a' they say o' her, but I ken her kind, an'—weel, the least said the sunest mended.'

'James Mouncey is one of my elders,' I quietly said, 'and a finer man I never met in my life. Since you came into this room you 've never let slip an opportunity of disparaging him. No more of it, please. Though you happen to be in opposition to him in trade, that is no reason why you shouldn't be friendly towards him.'

'Friendly towards him—friendly towards him! Maister Crosbie, was it friendly o' him to start opposition to me efter bein' in my employ for over forty years? Was that, I ask ye, friendly?'

'It 's every man for himself in this world, Mr M'Cheyne, and James Mouncey was quite justified in taking steps to better himself. But we 're wandering from our subject. You didn't call to tell me about the laird's funeral, or to—or to unburden your mind regarding the second-hand coffin'——

'Stop, sir!'

Before the words were formed on his lips I felt I had said a wrong and an unkind thing, but the temptation was great. 'I—I take that back, Mr M'Cheyne,' I quickly said. 'I presume you told this to me in confidence, and you may rest assured'——

'I did, sir. It was between you and me, and I trust it 'll gang nae further. But ye nippet me up very sharply aboot Jeems Mouncey. I wad juist like to say that he 's'——

'I refuse to discuss James Mouncey with you.'

'But, mercy me, man, he 's doin' his best to tak' the bread oot o' my mouth!'

'Are you not doing your best to take the bread out of his? Besides, you can afford to allow him a few crumbs without a grudge. You employ a lot of hands'——

'Fourteen journeymen an' five apprentices—three o' the apprentices in their last year; an' that 's no the whole squad, for there 's twae cairters an' my son Robert an' me mysel'.'

'Well, dear me, why should you talk about the bread being taken out of your mouth? James Mouncey has only one man'——

'An' he 's a gomerel—canna tell pitch-pine frae white.'

'That may be; I don't know the man's capabilities. But James is in a very small way, and I know he talks very respectfully of you.'

'He might well do that, Maister Crosbie. He had one pound a week—twenty shillin's upstaunin' a' the time he was wi' me. He micht weel speak respectfully, as you ca' it.'

'He worked for that pound per week, at any rate; and, from what I know of him, he would serve you honourably and conscientiously. But enough. We are still wandering from our subject. Your object in visiting me to-night is to ask me to use what little influence I have to stop the singing-class?'

'That is so;' and he solemnly nodded his head.

'Solely because in your opinion this cantata will have a demoralising effect?'

'Well—yes; an' for ither reasons. I 'm against play-actin', an' the congregatin' o' young men an' women on ploys likely to be o' little service to them in the battle o' life. Then this singin'-maister 's an incomer. I understaun' he canna sing to keep himsel' warm, an' that he hasna the voice o' a peesweep. Oor ain precentor, Rory Rorrison, could sing him blin', they tell me. A'thegither, I honestly think it was a big mistake to gi'e him the use o' the schule. You talked very glibly on your motion, an' on thinkin' back I 'm no sure that we werena, in a mainner, hustled. Onywey, it wasna discussed as it should hae been, an' it strikes me the only wey to rectify it is to refuse the use o' the schule for ony future meetin's.'

I looked at him as he complacently smacked his lips and turned his eyes to the ceiling; but I was too astonished for speech. And, taking my silence for acquiescence, he continued: 'I 've been takin' note o' you, Maister Crosbie, since

ye cam' to Shinnel, and often when I hear you speakin' at meetin's the thocht strikes me, "Dod, if I had that man's gab an' eddication I wad mak' the Shinnel folk toe the line." Mind you, I can see as faur aheid o' me as the next man, but the want o' learnin' keeps me frae gettin' a' the plooms I wad like to pu'. Man, you an' me between us could rule the board—ay, rule the haill parish. As for this wee bit business we 're talkin' aboot, the twae o' us, by pu'in' the richt strings, could hae the motion rescinded as easy as A B C, an'—an' in that wey do the trick.'

'You 've used the proper word. It would be a trick, but one in which I shall take no hand; and more, Mr M'Cheyne, I 'll oppose you tooth and nail in any endeavour you may make to harm the project.'

'You 're croose, Maister Crosbie.'

'And candid,' I said promptly; 'and that 's more than you are with me.'

'Have I no been candid?'

'You haven't; and you know it. There 's something behind all this palaver about play-acting and demoralisation. Of that I am sure. But probably it 's a way you have, and we have all, I dare say, our peculiarities.'

'Imphm! Well, there 's nocht mair to be said. Only, they 'll have to look out for anither Boaz. I 'll put my foot doon where my ain 's concerned. Robert will have to obey me or look oot for anither job. That 's a' I hae to say.'

And as he got up from his chair and rose to his full height, I imagined his tousled hair screeved the whitewash on my study ceiling.

The interview had left a nasty flavour in my mouth, and I was nothing loath to be rid of my visitor; but, as was my unvarying custom with all my callers, I convoyed him to my avenue gate. It was a beautifully quiet July evening. A refreshing shower had fallen during the early afternoon, and the fragrance from my herbaceous borders, mingling with the pungent aroma from boxwood and yew, was a welcome exchange for bogey-roll smoked through a briarwood pipe. We were walking noiselessly on the turf, for the gravel had recently been raked, and were just nearing the gate, when my companion suddenly stopped.

'Shish!' he said in a whisper. 'That—that 's surely Robert's voice on the ither side o' the hedge. What 's he daein' here at this time o' nicht? And whae 's wi' him?' And he clutched me by the arm and pulled me behind a laurel.

A moment later young Robert M'Cheyne and James Mouncey's daughter passed the gate, and his arm was round her waist. A faint murmur of blithesome words like the distant tapering cooing of a cushat—a rippling laugh, sweet, low, and girlish—and a happy couple passed on, leaving behind them, and with me, a suddenly summoned memory. . . . A mist before my eyes blotted out the gate, and in its stead uprose a silver birk on an auld quarry knowe. In the twinkling of an eye, a lassie figure, in a blue print gown, glided forward to me. I felt the glamour of her presence, the touch of her hand, her breath on my cheek. In the gloamin silence I heard the familiar drip-drip of the oozing water from the red sandstone crevice above, and saw the sunset glow catch each drop as it fell. . . . Like a lightning-flash it had come; like a lightning-flash it passed.

As suddenly wakened from a dream I looked up to my companion. With fixed, glinting eyes he was staring straight in front of him, and his clasp on my arm was pulsing and unrelaxed.

'My God!' he said slowly and painfully; 'juist as I jaloused. John M'Cheyne's son wi' Jeems Mouncey's dochter! Has it come to this?'

He flung aside my arm as he would a circling pine-wood shaving. Then he turned to me.

'What did I tell ye? *That 's* your damned cantata!'

CHAPTER II.

I NEVER knew what Matthew Hird, my Shinnel beadle, thought of me as a preacher, but I know he had the most supreme contempt for me as a gardener.

When work in the manse garden and grounds was getting behind, and my parish duties were not many or pressing, I sometimes volunteered to give him a hand. He never, of course, actually refused my help, but he took his own way of repressing my ardour by putting me to what he called 'the very job for ye'—that is, push-hoeing gravel-walks, or picking out weeds with a table-fork from between causeway-stones—work not at all to my liking, but which, after volunteering, I couldn't very well refuse.

And while I was perspiring over the drudgery of the former or racking my back stooping at the latter, Matthew, from amongst the roses and geraniums, was wont to encourage me in well-doing by reminding me that 'an acquaintance wi' weeds was as necessary to a gairdner as a knowledge o' flooers.'

At other times, when he was engaged at grave-digging—which was infrequent, as our glen was a veritable sanatorium—or when attending to the stable, I seized the opportunity, and sallied out with a pruning-knife, cutting here, or with grass string tying up and staking there. And I derived great satisfaction from the result of my labours, until Matthew levelled my castles by telling me that 'thae deevils o' boys frae the Brig En', that made ower free wi' their gullies on ither fowk's property, deserved to come by a bad en',' or that 'the man *or woman* that staked thae carnations wad be better employed blawin' saep-sud bubbles through a clay cutty-pipe.' His observations, levelled, of course,

at some one unknown but suspected, were not generally encouraging; but my zeal was not lessened, and, prompted by the desire to help, I started one morning with a light heart to nail to the wall the Gloire de Dijon which the recent storm had wrenched from the side of the front-door porch.

Matthew wasn't about. If he had been, I should probably have continued the study of my sermon; but, as ill-luck would have it, no sooner had I placed my ladder against the wall than he appeared round the corner with a scythe over his shoulder.

It was the morning following my interview with M'Cheyne, and my mind was still much disturbed by what I had seen and heard. Matthew, too, was connected, or at least remotely concerned, for he was brother to Mrs Mouncey, and being a widower, with no one left to look after a house, he had, some time before I came to the parish, taken up his abode with my respected elder and his wife. He was thus Mary Mouncey's uncle—yea, her guardian and protector, for he wouldn't allow the wind to blow upon her if he could help it. In his estimation there was no lass in the countryside like Mary—no one to take her place in the choir, or to grade the colourings of a garden border as she could. I'll never forget the glow of pride that lit his eye when she got the first prize at the great Thornhill Show for oatmeal-cakes and soda-scones, and with what importance and zealous care he hovered all day near her little exhibit.

And as I stood on the ladder in the early morning sunshine, I wondered if he knew that young Robert M'Cheyne could without fear of rebuff put an encircling arm round Mary's waist, or if—— But my cogitations were suddenly cut short. Speculative meditation on a shaky nine-foot ladder surmounted by twisted prickly branches that 'turn and rend you' is not an exercise of easy accomplishment, and I soon found out that the work I had tackled demanded my undivided attention.

It had seemed a very simple job as I had viewed it, pipe in mouth and hands in pockets, from the gravel-walk; but now, with the thin rung of the ladder pressing painfully into the ball of my slippered feet, in my hand a hammer that, from my awkward position, I couldn't wield, and weighted to one side by a pocketful of three-inch nails which I couldn't get at for jaggy branches, I felt downright sorry I had made the attempt. Time and again I shoved that Gloire de Dijon from over my head and shoulders, and for a short moment looked out distractedly from the shadowy gloom of foliage and bloom upon a sunlit world, and as often it swung itself down and around again, clawing at me as if with steel-tipped tentacles, and flinging me into a shadow deep as night. I wrestled long and manfully, for I was, in a way, determined, and I also had the feeling that Matthew was critically watching me every time he stopped to hone his scythe. But progress was impossible, and after exhausting my vocabulary of permissible imprecations and others perilously near the forbidden, I gave up the struggle, and lustily called up my old stand-by.

'Was that you, sir, cryin' "Damn you"?' he asked, peering up at me through the leaves.

'Matthew Hird! how dare you—— It was "Matthew"'——

'Oh, I beg your pardon, sir. I'm no sae gleg o' hearin' as I used to be; but if it had been me that was up there rivin' an' fecthin' wi' that "Glorydeyjohn," I'm thinkin' I wad hae been tempted to say what I thocht ye said;' and, catching hold of the entangling branches as if they were privet, he made a way for me, and, flurried and torn, I stepped to the ground.

'Matthew Hird,' I said, with as much dignity as I could command, 'you're a very clever gardener and you know a lot, but allow me to tell you you haven't got the correct way of pronouncing the name of this particular rose. It is Gloire de Dijon—pronounced thus, Matthew, "Glaur dae Deeshong."'

'No in Shinnel, Maister Crosbie.'

'Perhaps not; but the Shinnel way is wrong.'

'Ay—well, mebbe, sir; but we'll no argue the point. Glaur or no glaur, it has ruggit ye terr'le;' and he laughed—rather unfeelingly, I thought.

'There's not much to laugh at, Matthew,' I said, as I wiped my scratch-scored face and put the breast-tab of my clerical collar inside my vest.

'I'm no lauchin', sir; but—I mebbe smiled.'

'Oh! And what might you be smiling at?'

'Nocht parteeclar, Maister Crosbie—nocht parteeclar; juist—juist something that crossed my mind.'

'Out with it, then, Matthew, and let me smile too.'

'Weel'—and he slowly drew the back of his hand across his mouth—'weel, sir, if ye will hae it, an' beggin' your pardon, Maister Crosbie, I was juist thinkin' that if ye hadna been a better preacher than you're a gairdner ye wad never hae smelled Shinnel;' and without more ado, and with indifference to my opinion of his summing-up, he lifted the ladder from against the wall, and, placing it underneath the main stem, he carefully and slowly pushed it upwards until the leading branches were pinned against the wall. 'There, sir, it's noo as through-gaun wark as suppin' parritch. Work your wey up an' roon aboot ye, an' the nearer the tap the lichter 'll be your haundlin'; only, you 'll hae to change your tool. Ye canna drive a three-inch nail into cement between ashlar wi' a carpet-tack hammer; mair than that, your rhin' should be clippit into lengths and bored ready, an'—— Ay—imphm! Weel, my job can staun' a wee.

I see I'll hae to gi'e a haun'. Every man to his trade, sir. Whaur 's your nails?'

I emptied my pocket into his hand, and together we started. For a time we worked in silence, for I was disappointed and not a little aggrieved, and it wasn't till Matthew had chipped his thumb-joint with the hammer and set free some of the old Adam within me that I spoke.

'How 's the cantata getting on?' I asked. 'Is Mary pleased with her part?'

'Oh, brawly, I think. I 'm no' a musicioner mysel', but Mary tells me things are gaun fine, an' she got her bit up like A B C. She can play the haill rick-ma-tick on the peeany, an''——

'The piano! I—I didn't know Mary possessed one.'

'Auch, dod, dash it! I've gi'en the show away, sir. No, I daur say ye dinna ken she 's got a peeany; few, if ony, in the parish ken, an' I was a bletherskite to mention the name o't; but it slippit oot before I thocht. Ye see, we keep it quate, for Jeems, her faither, thinks it what ye wad ca' uppish, an' he canna abide ocht o' the criestin' order. She keeps it ben in her ain room, no in the parlour, so orra veesitors see nocht o't, an' as we hae nae neibours within ear-soun', she can rattle it up like hie-ma-nanny whenever she has the mind. She 's a forby lass is Mary, though I say it that 's sib to her. Her mither an' faither an' me wad be puir thowless sowls withoot her, for she looks to everything aboot the hoose, an' has aye a cheery word an' a happy e'e. An' as for singin'—weel, she has lilted sin' she could walk, an' when she was nearin' her teens her mither an' me made up a pack between us that she should learn the peeany. But Jeems had to be consulted, an' a terr'le job we had talkin' him ower. Dod, he was stubborn! As I've said, he canna staun' criestin'. An' then he took it into his heid that the parish wad think he had been overchairgin' them in their accoonts, when he could launch oot into a peeany an' him only a year or twae sterted on his ain, an' that he was cancie, an' tryin' to bring up Mary abune her station—as if ony station was ower high for her—humph! Hooever, to mak' a lang story short, we managed oor point. Mary gaed for a lesson yince a week to the Toun o' Scaur, an' Jeems an' me traiket to Dumfries a'e Setterday an' bocht the—the instrument. It wasna yonder for twae hauf-croons, Maister Crosbie, I assure ye. Faith, there 's siller in yon polished affair. But what 's the guid o' money if ye dinna use it? An' then, *it was for Mary*. Then, sir, we got the len' o' Rab Linn's cairt, an' brocht it hame—efter dark, I may tell ye, which was very stupid; but Jeems was feart the neibours wad see it, an', faith, he peyed for his stupidity, for in the dark we couldna weel see what we were daein', an' in takin' it oot o' the cairt we dunted it terr'le in some wey, an' it lost the soun' o' three o' its teeth. Ay, weel, sir, that 's on for six year sinsyne, an' mony a happy nicht we 've had. Mary 's noo what ye wad ca' a flooery player, she 's by-ordinar' nacky at the fingerin', an' can play a' the music that thae lang-haired, ferocious-lookin' foreigners make. She has an awfu' job, though, pleasin' us a'. The mither 's keen on the himes—"Abide with Me," "Rock of Ages," "Little Pilgrims," an' sic-like. Jeems, he sweers by St Asaph an' Martyrdom an' Dundee. As for mysel', gie me "The Lea-rig;" an', dod, sir, she plays and sings that well. An' she 's improvin' in it every day, for the nicht afore last, nae faurer gane, she was at it, withoot me askin', an' the way she said, "My ain kind dearie o'"—the he'rt she put into it, an' the kin' o' sweet low trimmle in her voice—gosh, sir! as shure as—as you 've a scart along the brig o' your nose, I—I grat like a wean, for it brocht back to me a time lang, lang bygane, when I gaed through the darkest, dunkest bit o' Shinnel Glen as croose as a spunkie, on my wey to meet a lass that was a' the worl' to me. . . . But, michty me! I 'm—I 'm haverin'. A gabbin' gairdner an' a Muscovy tam-cat 's rare, they say, an' so they should be.'

'Oh, I don't know, Matthew,' I said. 'Conversation lightens work, and what you tell me about Mary and her music is quite interesting. I must take a walk down some evening and hear her play.'

'Weel, you 're no' everybody, an' ye 'll be made welcome. But if ye want to hear Mary sing at her best, gang quately up, as I gaed, to the end winda o' the schule some nicht when they 're at the practisin'. Her an' young Robert M'Cheyne sing thegither—juist by their sel's, an' if it disna dirl your he'rt-strings, I 'm a Dutchman. Frae what I can learn the twae o' them are supposed to be in a cornfield amang a wheen sheaves. Robert 's a man in the Bible ca'd Boaz, an' Mary 's Ruth; an' they hae a great cairry-on between them, singin' nice things at yin anither; an' then, betimes, the shearers come in, in the chorus, singin' as cheery as if hurdy-caikle was a thing unknown in the Holy Lan'. Oh, ye maun gang doon, sir, an' hear them at it.'

'I surely will, Matthew, if for nothing else than to hear young M'Cheyne and Mary sing their duets. I didn't know he was a singer. He 's not in the choir.'

'No. His faither wadna alloo him to join because at the last election o' elders—six year bygane—he didna get on. Dod, sir, he was mad aboot that—couldna forget it—and gaed aboot for lang efter glum an' moody as a wat Setterday. The young lad used to be very feart for his faither—mony a wallopin' he got for daein' deil a'; but he 's grown-up noo an' has mair smeddum. He 's a nice, decent laddie is Robert, aye cracky an' blithe when ye meet him, an' there 's an honest, strechtforrit look in his

e'e that a'maist mak's yin doot his paternity. He takes efter his mither—*she* was a fine woman, an' he lost a guid freen when she dee'd.'

'And who is the second Mrs M'Cheyne?'

'Oh, she's an incomer—frae the Galloway side, I unnerstaun'. A very ambitious woman she is, they tell me. She's airtin' M'Cheyne on to be a somebody in the locality—no that he needs much airtin', for he has grabbit a' he could lay his haun's on, an' wad like to crack the whup ower a' oor heids. God help ony puir sowl that has M'Cheyne's heel on his neck! Ay, he sits on his ain property—a bonnie place it is—an' he micht weel be content, but he has cuist an envious eye on the land o' Croftmains that mairches wi' him. There's no much in't, an' I dare say he could buy it withoot bein' obleeged to his banker, but he disna mean to pey for it—oh no, not he! It belongs to a bit simple, delicate lass that comes north for a month or twae every year, an' it's said that faither an' stepmither are movin' a' abune an' below to get young Robert to step in an' hing up his hat. He could dae sae, they tell me, for the lass is ta'en wi''m; but'——

He stopped short, and grasping one of the rose-branches, he put his rhind round it and began fixing it to the wall.

Never before had I discussed parish folk and their doings with Matthew, or, for that matter, with any one else; but, following so closely on M'Cheyne's visit, the subject of our conversation was so particularly significant and interesting that I had no scruples of conscience in continuing it.

'And will Robert M'Cheyne oblige his parents by marrying this young lady?' I asked, after a pause.

Matthew looked at me for a moment, and a smile played round his mouth.

'No, I dinna think he will,' he slowly said. 'There's nocht queerer than fowk, but if young Robert's the man I tak' him to be, he wad suner leave his faither's hoose than be forced to gi'e his haun' where his he'rt can never be.'

'I'm glad to hear you say so, Matthew. He seems a very honourable, straightforward young fellow, and though I don't know him well, I have a very high opinion of him. Unlike his father, he seems to be everybody's body in Shinnel, and when it comes to choosing a wife I trust he'll not go outside the parish.'

All at once Matthew had started to work with a great birr, and was hammering nails with tremendous energy, and pulling and twisting the Gloire de Dijon branches with more violence than care.

Suddenly he flung his hammer on to the gravel-walk and came down from his perch on the ladder. 'Dash it, Maister Crosbie! I canna keep it in ony langer. I really believe the Almichty tak's tent to airt a crack in the same wey as He airts the wun'—aye in the direction that's best for us. Ay, He does. At ony rate, what we've been speakin' aboot has paved the wey an' made it easier for me to say what I've on my mind to tell ye. Oor Jeems—that's Jeems Mouncey—had a very waukerife nicht last nicht, an' I dinna think he'll be in what I wad ca' full bloom this mornin'. This is oor auld Fast Day; but it's a holiday noo amang tradesfolk an' merchants, an' he could have had a lang lie if he had wanted, but he was oot afore I got up, so that I didna see him to get his permission to acquaint ye wi' what I've to say. Hooover, my sister Marget an' me talked it ower at oor breakfasts, an', kennin' that Jeems thinks the worl' o' ye, an' that if advice was needed he wad suner ask it o' you than ony man in the parish, we arrived at the conclusion that it wad be better to gi'e ye an inklin' o' what happened, an' then leave it to yoursel' to consider whether or no ye shouldna daunner doon the day an' see Jeems.'

He stopped for a moment to adjust his cravat. In a flash it came to me that probably M'Cheyne, after leaving the manse, had gone directly to James Mouncey's with an angry, bitter heart and a biting tongue; but before I could say a word Matthew resumed.

'Last nicht, juist aboot the darkenin', Jeems an' me were sittin' thegither in the gairden on the simmer-seat amang the ramblers, takin' a quate blaw o' the pipe before gaun in for the nicht. We had howkit tatties, cuttit cabbage, snippit parsley, an' pu'd turnips, a' for the morn's denner, an' were puffin' away, no sayin' muckle, but—but enjoyin' oorsel's. Ay, sir, we were enjoyin' oorsel's, for, mind you, to them that work among flooers an' vegetables an' ken every yin o' them, a gairden's a pleasant place at ony oor o' the day, but mair sae juist about nichtfa', when ye canna weel see to dae ocht mair, an' ye're contentedly tired; when the souns that are lounest are sweetest, an' when the smell o' the clean, fresh mools mixes wi' that o' roses an' sweetbrier an' aipple-ringie. Dod, sir, it's graun'! Weel, as I say, we were sittin' cheek by jowl, an' Jeems was juist daudin' oot the ash o' his pipe on the airm o' the seat, when he happened to turn sideways an' look doon the road. He gi'ed his pipe a'e jerk that sent the heid spinnin' an' left the stapple in his haun', an' he never lookit to see where it gaed, but keepit starin' before him.

'"Mattha," says he, "that's oor Mary. I ken her walk, but—but whae's that wi' her?"

'Dod, sir, it was young Robert M'Cheyne, prood-like, wi' his heid in the air, airm-in-airm wi' Mary, an' she was walkin' like a very queen, an'—an' a smile on her face that tell't me something I had till then but hauf suspeckit.

'"That's Robert M'Cheyne," I said as unconcerned as I could.

'Jeems raise to his feet; then he sat doon again, an' he lookit at me as much as to say, "What dis this mean?" I put my haun' on his knee, but I said nocht. By this time they were

juist aboot the gairden-gate. Then Jeems got up again.

'"I juist want a word wi' him, Mattha," he said; an' as he gaed, switherin' like, doon the walk, I slippit away, an' gaed into the hoose by the back-door. In a meenit or twae I heard Mary comin' in her lane, so I jaloused that Jeems had sent her into the hoose, so that he could freely say to Robert what was on his mind. Never wi' disrespect, but aye wi' dread, was the name o' M'Cheyne mentioned by Jeems an' his wife to me, an' never in Mary's hearin' was a word said o' his ill-will an' persecution; so, puir lass, she wasna likely to ken o' ocht that wad come frae Robert's side to damp her happiness.

'I wanted to say guid-nicht to her as I aye had dune, but thocht better o't; an' for the first time feelin' fremit in a hoose that had been sae lang my hame, I gaed away ben to my ain room.

'It was lang ere Jeems cam' in. What he said to Robert, an' what Robert said to him, I dinna ken; but o' this I 'm shure—Jeems needs a helpfu', freenly word this day, an' you 're the only man in Shinnel that can say it.'

CHAPTER III.

I DIDN'T consider it either judicious or necessary to tell Matthew what I had seen the previous evening, nor did I say anything about the visit Robert's father had paid me. It was very evident my beadle had a keen eye for evidences of the tender passion, and I wasn't sure, so far, at least, as he personally was concerned, that in thinking of Mary Mouncey and young Robert M'Cheyne as lovers the wish wasn't father to the thought.

But I couldn't understand how James Mouncey had so quickly arrived at the conclusion that there was anything between the young couple. According to what I had just heard, he had seen them together only once—arm-in-arm, it is true; but did that justify the inference? I thought not, and said neither yea nor nay to Matthew's appeal at the end of his story, but left him to wrestle alone with the Gloire de Dijon while I took a walk round the garden, turning the matter over in my mind as I sauntered slowly along. But much thinking made the point no clearer, and I returned to the scene of our labours.

'Matthew,' I said, 'within your own mind are you quite sure that Mary and Robert are truly in love?'

'Ay,' he readily replied; 'as shure as—as the sun 's shinin'.'

'But what you have just told me is not, in my opinion, sufficient ground on which to base the belief.'

'Maister Crosbie,' he said impressively, 'a lassie 'll no sit doon, withoot bein' asked, and sing "The Lea-rig" as Mary sung it withoot love—love o' the very best—in her he'rt. Nae man 'll gang three-quarters o' a mile oot o' his road in splashin' wat weather and when he 's pushed for time juist on the off-chance o' seein' a lassie's face at a winda. Na, na, "a wink 's as guid as a nod to a blin' horse." You 've only to hear them singin' their sangs thegither in the cantata to ken; an, forby a' that, michty me, sir! did the twaesome no come up the road linkin'?'

'I ve no reason to doubt your word, Matthew; but surely a lad and lass may walk arm-in-arm and yet not be in love with each other.'

'What say ye? Airm-in-airm an' no—— Dod, sir, in Shinnel here that wad be coonted rank heresy. Na, na; that 'll no haud water.' He paused for a moment, and, taking off his old straw hat, thoughtfully scratched his head. 'Hereaboots,' he continued—'for ither places I canna speak—but hereaboots, when a lad and lass gang linkin' on the public road, they 're—they 're what we ca' booket.'

'Oh, indeed?' I said with a smile. 'I 'm surprised to know that. But if it is viewed locally in that light there 's nothing more to be said, and I 'll go down after dinner and have a chat with James.'

Shinnel Glen, like Matthew's garden, is a pleasant place at all times. Its charms, whether of hill or meadow—wreathed in snow or basking green in summer sunshine—are always present. Everywhere has nature showered her favours with a lavish hand—silver birks of the silveriest, lissome and graceful, wave their sheeny, wispy branches above the purple foxglove and fronded mountain fern; spreading oaks, gnarled and hoary, mark the byways to green hillside or flower-flecked meadow-land. Far from the madding crowd, fanned by the tangy, free hill air, unspoilt by the handiwork of man, solacing and sweet as if fresh from the hands of the Creator—such was my Shinnel home. And as I walked down the loaning this late July afternoon, under the grateful shade of the leafy canopy overhead, preceded by chirping linties and shilfas, and within ear-sound of the rippling stream, I closed my eyes and thanked God from my heart that my lines had been cast in such pleasant places.

It was a holiday in the glen, as Matthew had reminded me, and M'Cheyne's woodyard was silent and the workshops closed. The faded green gimp blind in the merchant's shop-window was lowered almost to full length, hiding from view the usual roll of bacon, fancy-biscuit boxes, and white-capsuled bottles of his famous 'Shinnel Blend.' A corner had, however, caught on the bottom shelf and left a space exposed, in which reclined an old shop mouser blinking in the sunshine, and doubtless wondering how another Sunday had come round again so soon.

Standing in front of the little shop was a dusty pedlar, with an empty mutchkin bottle in his hand, a square tin box at his feet, and a surprised, disgusted eye fixed on the barred and padlocked door. On noting my approach he slipped the bottle into his pocket, and slowly lifted the box. Reluctantly and resignedly he limped across the road to the village pump, and in passing he smiled and said woefully, 'Hivin help me, sorr! it's any port in a storm.' I know I ought to have been glad he was forced to substitute wholesome Shinnel water for unwholesome aqua-fortis, but I really wasn't; and though I didn't say a single word to him, I turned the corner leading up to James Mouncey's cottage with the wearied pedlar's words in my ear—'Thank yer riverince for yir sympathy.'

I could smell jam-making in progress—late strawberry, I surmised—as I went up the garden walk, and I also intuitively knew that a baking of cottage bread and soda-scones had already been put through. In common with country ministers in general, I had acquired a wonderful facility in diagnosing certain domestic conditions, and not wishing to trespass on the valuable time of Mrs Mouncey and her daughter, in whom, moreover, I had no immediate concern, I turned to the right and made for the workshop, thinking that although it was a holiday James might be within. One-half the door was open—a door streaked and dimpled by innumerable brushfuls of multi-coloured paints—and as I peeped in a big rooster from the top of a half-finished chest of drawers gave a gurring, warning cackle. A dozen hens raised their heads from unprofitable food-prospecting among sawdust, and looking steadily and inquisitively at me, asked me what the blazes I wanted. It was rather disconcerting, for a hen, when suddenly disturbed, can put a question very plainly in an unblinking look, and, my vocabulary of chuckie phrases being limited, I retired without deigning a reply, and continued my search in another direction.

I went round to the back of the house, through his modest woodyard, and ultimately found him, where with ordinary forethought I ought to have made for first, in his little rambler-covered bower at the south side of the garden. A large envelope, on which was a foreign stamp, was lying on the seat beside him, and a letter, which was evidently giving him much food for reflection, was tightly stretched across his knee. I made an apology for disturbing him, but James would have none of it.

'Na, na, Maister Crosbie, your veesit's no ill-timed, an' you're no disturbin' me. I'm ayegled to see ye, but—but, as it happens, mair sae the day than usual. Come your weys, man; come your weys an' sit doon here.' He lifted the envelope and carefully inserted the letter. Then he flicked the dust off the seat with a large red handkerchief. 'Black braidcloth's bad for showin' the dust,' he said, 'but'—giving the boards an extra rub—'ye'll tak' nae scaith noo. Dod, sir,' he continued with a smile, after I had seated myself beside him, 'it's queer that you—yin o' the best freens I hae in the parish—should ca' the day, an' that no hauf-an-oor bygane I should hae had a veesit o'—weel, I was gaun to say my warst enemy, but I maunna say that noo'——

'Has M'Cheyne been here?' I asked with surprise.

'Noo, Maister Crosbie, I mentioned no name. Kennin' hoo he has treated me in the past, it's only naitral ye should think o' him. An' ye've guessed richt. Maister M'Cheyne was here, an' he's no lang oot at the high yett there.' I looked keenly into my honest elder's face. There was lacking his usual placidity and repose, but I could detect no evidence of simmering agitation and excitement such as I reckoned a visit from M'Cheyne would leave behind. 'Ay,' he continued, 'it's lang, lang since him an' me spoke face to face. We've never opened mooth to yin anither for years, though we hae lived in the same parish, breathed the same air, an' drank the same watter, an'—an' it's kin' o' queer that on this, oor auld simmer Fast, he should come as he did to me'——

'James,' I interposed, 'before you go any further I wish to tell you that Matthew, with your wife's concurrence, told me to-day about what took place last night. I didn't come to you out of curiosity or to interfere in what is a very personal and delicate matter. I—I only wish to assure you of my loving interest, and to offer you what advice I may be able to give.'

'It's—it's very kind o' ye, sir—very kind indeed. But it's juist like ye, an' what I wad expect at your haun'. I've said it often ahint yer back, an' I'll say it again afore yer face, that if the lave o' ministers were to tak' as much what you weel ca' lovin' interest in their fowk's concerns as ye dae, not only wad they please the Almichty better, but they wad be shuttin' the mooths o' mony that hae ower muckle cause to cry them doon. Ay, an' as for Mattha's story, man, puir soul, I think he's mair put aboot than I am mysel'. Where Mary's concerned he's a'maist weanish. Ay, him an' me hae watched her growin' up, an' to baith o' us it seems but yesterday since she was in daidlies playin' wi' a gruesome-lookin' rag-doll, hushin' it to sleep in a bit creddle I made, an' trundlin' it up an' doon the walk in a shauchlin' wheeled perambulator. It seems, as I say, but yesterday, an' we can hardly believe she's come to the time o' takin' ony man-body's e'e except his an' mine. She's my ain. I'll say nocht aboot her looks or her character binna that whaever may be her choice—be he the highest in the land—she's worthy o' him. That's a' I'll say. As for young Robert M'Cheyne,' he continued after a pause, 'I've no objection—none in the world. He's a wice-like, respectable, an' respected lad, an' I

dinna think he has an ill-wisher in the parish o' Shinnel; only, of coorse, he 's young—in fac', they 're mebbe baith ower young to ken their ain minds or for serious thocht o' the future. Last nicht, though, when I saw them thegither for the first time, I—I got a he'rt-stoun' sic as I 'll no forget, an' a thoosan' queer, conflictin' thochts struck me a' at yince—my ain bit lassie, that never kenned ocht but a peacefu', happy fireside—that I 've guairded frae a' approach o' strife an' envyin' an' ill-will, linkin' wi', nae less, an' smilin' into the face o' yin whase faither swore he wad rook me to my last stick till there was nocht for me an' mine but the puirhoose. An' then, the persecution I 've had to staun', an' the slichts. But I needna tell ye, Maister Crosbie; ye ken an' ye unnerstaun'. Weel, I thocht too that the young lad should ken what my feelin's were; so, as Mattha wad tell ye, I gaed doon an' met him when he cam' up wi' Mary to the gate. Efter she had said guid-nicht to him, him an' me took a daunner up the brae, an' I was switherin' an wonnerin' hoo to begin, when, dod deavert, he sterted first—tell't me that he was gled o' the chance o' speakin' wi' me, that he had liket Mary a' his days, hoo vexed he was at the dispeace between his hoose an' mine, an' what he wadna gi'e to ken his faither's he'rt softened to me. Maister Crosbie, he juist took the breath frae me, an' it wad be unfair to the lad to tell ye what else he said; but my he'rt warmed to him Man, I put my haun' on his shooder, and says I, "Robert, I believe a' ye say an' a' ye profess. I 've nae objections to you gaun efter Mary—that 's if she wants you—but ye maun first tell your faither. I dinna want," says I, "ony hole-in-the-corner wark; everything," says I, "maun be above-board an' approved o' where my lassie is concerned. Tell him the nicht whenever ye gang hame. Mebbe he 'll oppose ye. If he does, he 'll gi'e his reasons, an', as his son, you 'll hae to consider them, an' then act as the honourable lad I ken ye to be." He promised he wad do as I asked him, but couldna speak to his faither that nicht, as he was juist stertin' to walk ower the hills to the Tarnie Loch for an early fishin', had left his rod an' creel at the merchant's hoose, an' was liftin' it on the by-gaun, but that he wad tak' the first chance whenever he cam' back. An' we left it at that. Noo, that 's hoo maitters staun', Maister Crosbie, between Robert an' me.'

'Well, James,' I said, 'I think you gave him very good, sound advice, and that you have acted very wisely and honourably under trying circumstances. But what, then, brought his father to you to-day?'

'Ah'—and James laughed cheerily—'that 's anither story. It had nocht to dae wi' Mary an' Robert; though when I saw him at the gate, it struck me that mebbe his son had come hame suner than he expectit and had spoken to him, an' that he had come—fresh off the erns, as it were—to me in either peace or war. Bein' an off-day, I had little to dae but sit at the winda, an' was daein' sae when he stoppit at the gate. So I said nocht to the wife, but hurried oot, so that if there was ony ill-will on his mind I wad catch him ower far doon the walk for his voice to cairry the length o' the hoose. But, dod, sir, he cam' up to me smilin', haudin' oot his haun', an' ca'in me Jeems, as he used to do when him an' me were 'prentice boys thegither in his auld faither's time—true as ye sit there, Maister Crosbie. "Jeems," says he, "your hoose is on the brae-face here an' in view o' the haill community o' Shinnel, and I come to ye wi' a contrite he'rt an'—an' ootstretched haun'. Will ye tak' it?" Dod, sir, ye could hae knocked me doon wi' a strae. Surprised! I was dumfoondered; but I looked forgi'en, for as I turned an' cam' slowly up the walk he followed close ahin' me till we landed where you an' me are sittin' the noo. We baith sat doon, an' I looked at him, an' as I did sae auld times an' auld faces cam' back to me—the ploys him an' me had in oor boyish days—pentin' his mither's black hens pink, mixin' his faither's snuff wi' pepper, nailin' auld Mary Frizzel's door up, blawin' shavin'-reek in an' cryin' "Fire!" an' sic-like daft ongauns; an' d' ye ken, Maister Crosbie, the speerit o' forgiveness cam' ower me an' gruppit me ticht, an' I held oot my haun', an', says I, "If ye come to me wi' a contrite he'rt, as you say, John, an' want the sclate wipet clean, it couldn't be weshin' on a better day than oor auld simmer Fast. What, John, what, I ask ye, airted you to come to me the day?" An' he tell't me he didna ken, but that it had been on his mind for a long time to come an' see me, but he had held back, no kennin' hoo I wad receive him; but the Lord had wrestled wi' him a' nicht, as He did wi' Jacob, and had prevailed. Ay, sir, he sat for a long time deplorin' a' that had come between us. He acknowledged that mony a time he had cut below cost prices, juist to keep me oot, but that it wad never happen again. "Fair hornie, Jeems," says he, "the richt stuff an' a conscionable price efter this" These were his very words, Maister Crosbie. An' then he asked kin'ly for the wife, an'—an' praised Mary—praised her till my very face flushed—said he had often ta'en notice o' her walkin' up the aisle o' the kirk, an' been sorry he hadna sic a dochter to set him an' his off as Mary did me an' mine. Oh, what a come roun, sir—what a come roun! I could scarcely believe it. Truly, "God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform." An' then we got on the crack aboot the rise in the price o' yella-pine, an' screw-nails, an' aboot a new mortisin'-machine that was on the market; and efter a wee he raise, an' said he wad hae to gang, for that Robert was away fishin', and the dug at the wudyaird wad be wearyin' on a bite o' meat. Man, when he mentioned aboot Robert no bein' back I kenned he was still in the dark

aboot him an' Mary, an' it made the Almichty's weys o' workin' a' the mair mysterious. It did that, sir. "By-the-by, Jeems," said he, juist as he was gaun oot at the yett, "the postman delivered this letter to me this mornin' in a mistake, an' I opened it withoot lookin'; but I saw at yince it wasna for me, an' withoot readin' mair than the first line I faulded it up, an' here it is." "Oh, that's a' richt," says I, an' I thanked him, an' shook haun's warmly wi' 'm, an' saw him through the yett wi' an uplifted feelin' I haena experienced for years. So that's that, Maister Crosbie, an' isn't it a great come roun?'

'It is, James,' I said thoughtfully. 'It's a great come round, as you say. Did he appear to be sorry for all the pain and anxiety he has caused you?'

'Nae man could hae been mair sae, sir; an' nae man could hae promised mair faithfully to make amends.'

I was quite perplexed, and on the horns of a dilemma. John M'Cheyne had certainly not learned from his son's lips of his love for Mary Mouncey, but he had seen what I saw, and had formed his own conclusions. 'Has it come to this?' he had said with alarm and disgust. And now, the very next day, he calls on James, protesting friendship, deploring past differences, promising fair future treatment, and, above all, praising Mary. What had brought about the sudden change?——

'An' noo, Maister Crosbie,' James continued, interrupting my flow of thought, 'as ye 've been made aware o' this buryin' o' the hatchet, as it's ca'ed, I maun tell ye aboot the letter. It 's frae Ameriky—the toon o' Washington—tellin' me that Gavin, my only brither, has dee'd. He was six year aulder than me, an' has lang been abroad —aye daein' weel, but no botherin' to write very often. He never was mairret, an'—an', puir fella, he 's gone, an' he 's left everything to me.'

He handed me the letter, and this is what I read.

'WASHINGTON, *June* 25, 18—.

'MR JAMES MOUNCEY,
Carpenter,
Shinnel, by Thornhill,
Dumfriesshire.

'DEAR SIR,—We regret to inform you that your brother Gavin died here on the 24th.

'Under the will, which is dated 1st June 18—, his whole estate personal and real has been left to you. We are not yet in a position to let you know the amount of the estate, but, from a perusal of the papers and documents in our possession, we would put it approximately at one hundred thousand dollars ($100,000).

'We shall be glad to receive any instructions which you may forward.—We are, very truly yours, KINDER & BLAINE.'

'James,' I said, 'I congratulate you with all my heart. This is a most extraordinary windfall, and you are taking it very complacently. Hang it all, man, why should you worry about contract prices and feel elated because M'Cheyne is going to play fair hornie with you? Do you realise what this letter means?'

'Oh ay, it 's a fell lot o' money. Dod, the wife 's lang been kerkin' at me for a new dolman. There 's hauf a chance o' her gettin' it noo. An Mary 's wantin' to get her photographs ta'en at some big Dumfries shop, an' I dare say I 'll hae to fit that bill as weel; an' I 'm—let me see, noo—I 'm in desperate need o' a new fit-rule. Oh, we 'll sune get through it, Maister Crosbie.'

'But, goodness me, man! it 's thousands of pounds. Do you know you 're one of the richest men in Shinnel?'

'Maister Crosbie, not only am I yin o' the richest men in Shinnel, but I 've been, an' I ken I 've been, *the very richest* since I mairret Marget Hird. Ay, I could be happy withoot siller if I had Marget, even though I was reduced to sittin' behin' a dike-back makin' besoms. Man, Solomon spoke the truth when he said o' a guid wife that her price was above rubies; an' that minds me I 'll hae to gang into the hoose an' tell them aboot this legacy. Come yer weys wi' me, sir.'

I can mourn with those who mourn, and at times rejoice with those that rejoice, but I didn't accompany James. For I knew that, on his knees before his old arm-chair, he would give adequate heartfelt thanks to his Father above, and that a fremit face, even though it were the minister's, could well be spared from the little family circle.

CHAPTER IV.

SO excited and elated was I over James Mouncey's good fortune, and so engrossed was I in his affairs, that I passed the Brig En', and to this day have no recollection of having done so. But I remember coming to earth when walking up the manse loaning. It was late afternoon, and the sun's rays were striking from westward above the Glencairn hills. Coles of sweet-scented, new-made hay dotted the meadow, and among the ears of corn in the field beyond a faint yellow hue was already stealing, heralding the approach of an early harvest.

It was long past my tea-hour, but I was loath to go indoors, and, leaning on the meadow gate, with the west hill wind on my brow, I gave myself up to a dispassionate review of all I had seen and heard that afternoon in James Mouncey's rambler-covered bower. All the details were recalled, and considered in their proper relation and perspective. John M'Cheyne was long on my dissecting table, and when I had finished with him, and later, when going up the manse avenue, I was fully convinced that he had read the letter from Washington, and

that he had very quickly concluded that Mary Mouncey, as the daughter of a wealthy legatee, was more worth considering as a daughter-in-law than the delicate proprietrix of Croftmains. In making up the peace with James he had taken time by the forelock, and made a swinging stride in the right direction. But, I argued, he had last night's work to undo. In his rage and chagrin he had too clearly shown his hand, and, knave and sanctimonious wheedler that he was, I knew he was no fool, and that he would visit me again before Janet Armstrong called me at nine to 'tak' the Beuk.'

I went round to where Matthew Hird had been working all day, but he was nowhere to be seen. I was sorry I had missed him, as it was grand to be the bearer of good tidings, and, moreover, I was curious to know how a man of his temperament would receive such unexpected and extraordinary news. However, when I entered the manse, and was hanging up my hat, I heard his voice in the kitchen, and was just in the back lobby on my way to him, when I judged it wise to halt for a moment. He was talking to Janet, and the subject of conversation was M'Cheyne, in particular relation to what Matthew called a 'low-doon soople trick' he had played on John Todd, the farmer of Crofts. He was letting himself go, much to Janet's delight, for she enjoyed his quaint beadle ways and his pawky, direct handling of a story.

'An', mind you, it's true, Janet Airmstrong,' I heard him say—'true as you're staunin' in Shinnel Manse kitchen. I kenned "Crafts" weel. Him an' me were at the schule thegither; we—we were in the Toun o' Scaur Volunteers thegither; we curled thegither; ay, an' we should often hae been in the jile thegither, for he was a gallows falla was "Crafts," an' aye made ithers galravitch wi''m. Weel, as I say, I kenned him weel; a guid freen an' a guid fermer he was, but onfortinately his wee finger was ower often cocket in the air, an' his liver and kidneys gaed a' to the mischief. So he took to his bed an' lay lang, an' at the lang hinner en' the doctor tell't him—as nicely an' dacently as he could, of coorse—that he was a—a—a what ye wad ca'—a gone corbie, an' that he would hae to put his hoose in order. He gied him three days—fower at a stretch; an', faith, the auld doctor kens his trede, for "Crafts" slippit cannily away on the mornin' of the fourth. But that's by the wey, an' I'm no at that pairt o' my story yet. It got aboot, of coorse, that "Crafts" was in a bad wey, an'—an' what the doctor had tell't him, an' Jeems—that's Jeems Mouncey—*set to* an' lookit oot some nice wud—deid certain the box wad come his wey, for he had lang dune a' "Crafts'" cairtwricht wark, ye see, Janet. At a'e time M'Cheyne had a' his wark, but he did "Crafts" broun ower a second-haun' cairt that was brawly pented, but had mair putty than wud in the spokes o' the wheels. Dod, Janet, I mind that weel. I met "Crafts" at the Brig En' that nicht efter he had settled the accoont, an' frae what he tell't me he hadna missed M'Cheyne, I'm tellin' ye. There was a terr'le collieshangie in the joinery office, an', to smooth things ower, M'Cheyne got "Crafts" awa' up to his hoose to gi'e him a dram. It was efter he had got it that I met him at the Brig En'; an' when he had tell't me o' the row, I said to him, says I, "'Crafts,' never mind; ye got a guid dram oot o'm." "Crafts" looked at me, and, Janet, I'll never forget his look or his words. "Dram!" says he. "I got nae dram—juist as mony draps as tell't me it was wat. As for yon auld skin-flint, Mattha man, he could first-fit the haill parish o' Shinnel on a twae-gill bottle!" Them's his very words, Janet—but I'm wanderin' frae my point. Where was I? Oh ay. Weel, ye see, Jeems reckoned on gettin' the box. But he reckoned without M'Cheyne. *He* wasna gaun to let the job pass withoot a shie, an' kennin' he had nae chance by fair means, he got haud o' an airm-chair that for some reason had been flung on his haun'; an' when he reckoned "Crafts" was ower far gaen to be consulted or ca' the deal in question, he lugs it up to the "Crafts'," an' sets it doon on the kitchen flaer. "Mistress," says he, "this is the chair at last that the guidman ordered. Ye should have had it lang syne, but we've been very busy." "Chair!" said the puir begrutten woman. "I ken nocht aboot ony chair, an' ye maun juist tak' it away back wi' ye, for I've mair chairs than sitters; an' as for 'Crafts'—puir falla"—— 'Oh, but, mistress," says M'Cheyne sharply, "when a chair's ordered it maun be ta'en an' peyed for. 'Crafts' 'll tell ye aboot the order—— What's that ye say? Dyin'! Sorry to hear that, woman. It's a peety, for a chair's a chair when wudd's dear. Weel, in the circumstances, I'll oblige ye an' tak' it back; but it's a deid loss to me, an' ye maun mak' it up some ither wey when the chance comes roon." Janet Airmstrong, listen to me. The dacent woman thanked him, an' next day the chance cam', an' she made up the loss o' a chair that was never ordered by gi'ein M'Cheyne the burial. An'—an' he's on the Schule Board. What think ye, Janet, o'——

I slipped back without waiting to hear what Janet had to say, and tiptoed upstairs to my study. Long ago I had heard the story of the chair, and refused to give it credence. But I believed it now, and in my mind's eye, placing father and son side by side, I had, like Matthew, my doubt as to young Robert's paternity.

On going downstairs later, I found Matthew had gone home, and my curiosity as to how he would receive my news was not gratified after all.

We had no golf-course in Shinnel; the nearest was at Thornhill, some six miles distant; so, in order to keep my hand in at putting and approaching, I had a few small greens laid out,

about thirty feet apart, on the turf round the laurels, and I was busy with my putter when the gate creaked, and M'Cheyne appeared. I wasn't surprised; in fact, as I have already said, I was expecting him, and I had all my wits about me, but the sudden presence raised my choler, and it nerved me somewhat to repress it.

I greeted him without effusiveness; but I dissembled, and concealed my repugnance, for in him I, as a student of human character, had a most interesting specimen, and I was anxious to analyse him as dispassionately as possible.

'Ay, Maister Crosbie,' he said, 'gowffin', I see. My word, but time works wonders! Ten years ago—ay, and less—if Shinnel minister had been catched playin' a game at gowff—ony game, in fac'—on this blessed Fast Day, he wad hae been brocht afore the Presbytery as shure as a leek 's a leek. Ay, I doot if times are changed for the better. This has been a holiday; the parish has been gallivantin' in Moniaive, Toun o' Scaur, an' as far as Thornhill. But I wad like to ken if that is preparin' them for the sacrament on Sabbath? I doot it, sir—I doot it.'

He shook his head dolefully, and ran his nimble, sensitive fingers along the splicing of my putter.

'What does a thing like this cost, noo?' he suddenly and, in the circumstances, irreverently inquired, looking with a professional eye at the grain of the wood and the tapering of the shaft.

'Oh, about six-and-six,' I replied.

'Ay, sir. Weel, six-an'-six is not oot o' the wey. It 's ash, I see—guid seasoned ash it 'll be, an'—— Imphm! It wad cost ye that here in Shinnel for the shaft withoot the heid, for wud 's dear, an' if Jeems Mouncey has chairged ye that already, he 's only chairgin' a fair price. By-the-by, sir, talkin' aboot Jeems, I 've juist ca'ed to thank ye for the advice ye gi'ed me last nicht.'

'Indeed, M'Cheyne, but—on what did I advise you?'

'Oh, ye mind—aboot grudgin' Jeems Mouncey a crumb or twae. Dod, sir, I didna think much aboot it at the time, but when I gaed hame and considered hoo the Lord had furnished my table, an' hoo leeberally He had provided me wi' a' the comforts o' life, the truth o' your remarks cam' hame to me—it did, sir—it cam' hame to me. Then aboot bein' freenly wi' Jeems, altho' we 're in opposition—that 's another thing that I pondered ower, an' efter deleeberation I own up—strecht, sir—that you 're in the richt, an' I 've been for years in the wrang. You 're a young man b' me, but, faith, there 's something I can learn frae ye. Ay, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength"—imphm!'

'Go on, M'Cheyne.'

'Go on where, sir?'

'I mean, finish the quotation,' I said with a smile.

'Noo, Maister Crosbie, I could splice the shank o' that gowff thing if need be. Ye couldna. Every man to his trede. Feenish it yoursel'.

'I will,' I said, 'with pleasure. Strange how you should drop on this verse, for it is very appropriate—"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Now, I would like to give you a little sermon on this'——

'A barley! a barley, Maister Crosbie! I hae nae time to listen to a sermon. A' I wanted wi' ye was to thank ye, as I 've said, for your advice, an' to assure you that the words ye spoke to me last nicht fell upon good soil, an' that the seed sawn will grow up an' ripen. Frae this day forth I 'll be a different man to Jeems Mouncey; an'—an', Maister Crosbie, I'll tell ye mair. I humbled mysel'—put my pride in my pooch, an' gaed up to his hoose this very day, an' begget his pardon. I did that, sir.'

I wanted to laugh, but dared not; and having to say something, I ventured the remark that I trusted the change would be a lasting one. 'Your—your conversion, you know, M'Cheyne, has been sudden.'

'A' conversions are that, Maister Crosbie.'

'But has yours not been unusually sudden?'

'No, I wudna ca't by-ordinar'. Saul on the road to Damascus—ye min', Maister Crosbie. Ay, they 're sometimes swiftish, but they 're convincin', a' the same. Ye see not a'e thing, but everything, in a different licht. There 's the cantata, for instance. Nae faurer gane than last nicht I objected to it—objected to it very strongly, an' wanted to stop it. Noo I dinna. Ye see it 's like this. I 've mebbe been ower auld-fashioned, an' wantin' things to be as they were, but when I think hoo a gallivantin' holiday has ta'en the place o' the blessed Fast Day, an' we seem nane the waur, I needna be alairmed at a cantata bein' played in the parish. I maun juist try to conform wi' the times, Maister Crosbie.'

'Then you are not now afraid of the young folks becoming demoralised?'

'Oh no! Let us houp they 'll no be—we 'll juist trust that they 'll no be, Maister Crosbie.'

'And you 'll allow your son to—to'——

'To what, sir?' he asked sharply and eagerly.

'Well—to continue being Boaz?'

'Oh ay! I 'll no seek to hinner him. I thocht ye were gaun to ask if I wad alloo him to—to gang wi' the lassies, as he was, the rascal, last nicht. My word, but I was angry when I saw him gaun by the gate there; no because he was wi' Mary Mouncey, mind you, but for bein' oot when he should have been makin' up a very important estimate. "Work first, play efter;" that 's my motto, sir. Dod, but I *was* angry; an' I 'm no shure but I swore. Mebbe you 'll mind, sir.'

'Yes, you forgot yourself, M'Cheyne; you were in a great rage, and to me it seemed it was

because your son Robert was in Mary Mouncey's company.'

'Ye never were faurer wrang, sir. As I've already tell't ye, it was because he was mislippenin' his work. Why should I be angry wi''m because he was wi' Mary Mouncey, yin o' the best-faurt, best-behaved lassies in the parish? Dod, man, if ye only kenned, I was pleased—delichted, I should say. Faith, Robert has good taste—eh, Maister Crosbie?'

'Yes,' I said, 'he has, if Mary Mouncey's his choice. But is he not young enough to be thinking of matrimony? Ought he not to be in some larger centre gaining experience, and, by learning how work is carried out in other places, making himself thoroughly proficient in every line of his business?'

'No, no. He has already learned frae me a' that's necessary. It wad only unsettle him gaun frae hame. He'll be better here in Shinnel, settled doon wi' a decent lass that he's kenned a' his days. And tho' she be a puir man's dochter, it'll no maitter a strae. A' that I hae will be his some day, an' what I leave will be plenty for baith. Ocht new aboot the parish the noo—eh?'

Going off at a tangent when the conversation was drifting into unwelcome grooves was evidently one of his peculiarities.

'Oh yes,' I said with alacrity. 'James Mouncey received a letter to-day telling him his brother in Washington had died and'——

'Oh, I ken. Before ye gang further, I maun tell ye that letter was handed in among mine in a mistake, an'—an' I opened it—never thinkin', of coorse. A' that I read was that his brither was deid. I gaed nae faurer, because—weel, it wadna be honourable; an' mair than that, I juist thocht that, as Gavin had been a ne'er-dae-weel here, he wad be the same foreign, an' that, havin' left nocht, the lawyers wad be writin' Jeems to repey what they had laid oot on buryin' him.'

His astuteness and finesse were standing him in good stead; but I was more suspicious than ever.

'Then, M'Cheyne, you're quite wrong. His brother Gavin died worth a great deal of money, and everything is left to James.'

'Megstie me! Maister Crosbie, ye're—ye're no—— Come away noo, sir, ye're jokin'.'

He was overacting, and I was beginning to feel myself bemeaned by having further converse with him, but, given a little more rope, I thought, he'll trip himself.

'What I tell you is true,' I said shortly. 'I read the letter.'

'Well, well, if that disna beat a'—an' me to bring the letter! I—I can hardly tak' it in. My word, but that is guid news! Jeems will be very uplifted, an' so weel he micht be. A hunner poun', or mebbe twae hunner, will come in michty handy. It will that. Some fowk tak' guid fortune very quately an' modestly. I mind, when Wattie Carmichael, the hedger, got a hunner an' fifty poun' left him, a' that he did oot o' the ordinar' was to pit a crimson cushion alang his kirk seat—that was a'—imphm! Weel, we'll see what Jeems dis. Dod, sir, juist when the fresh flush feelin's on him ye should touch him for a stained-gless winda for ahin' the pulpit. I'm in the wey o' daein' business wi' a gless-stainin' firm in Glesca that maks a speciality o' that kin' o' wark, an' I'll see ye get it cheap. What say ye to that, Maister Crosbie?'

'Certainly not, M'Cheyne. I would never dream of such a thing. "Touch" is rather a good word to use in the connection. Is it common in Shinnel?'

'Eh, Maister Crosbie! ye will hae your joke, an' ye will mak' me oot in earnest when I'm juist in fun. A' jokin' aside, though, Jeems should remember you through the kirk in some wey, for ye've been a' alang a guid freen to him. Ye've gi'en him a' the jobbin' aboot the manse—time an' stuff, I dare say, nae price asked or gi'en; an' noo he'll be abune joinerin', so ye ken where my warkshop is. Ay, wi' a hunner thoosan' dollars he'll'——

'A what?' I exclaimed.

He stared at me for a moment with wide-open eyes, his teeth denting his lower lip, and a flush spreading across his lanky cheek. Then he fumbled nervously in his waistcoat-pocket for his pipe.

'How do you know, M'Cheyne, that James Mouncey has been left a hundred thousand dollars?'

'Did—did ye no tell me yersel'?' he asked, turning his back on me and facing the wind to strike a light.

'No,' I said emphatically, 'I did not. I took good care not to mention the amount, thinking you'—— But it doesn't matter. I've work to do in my study to-night, so I'll walk down to the gate with you now.'

'Oh, indeed—imphm! Ye'll—ye'll walk to the gate with me now. Just so, an'—an' you took good care not to mention the amount? Jer-ooslem! you're a sicht ower clever for Shinnel, Maister Crosbie, an' you're on the dooble cute side for a minister. Damn ye, man, ye wad shine in the cheap furniter line!'

In silence we walked to the foot of the avenue, and, without looking at him, I stood aside to let him pass through the wicket. I watched him slouching down the loaning till the gathering dusk obscured him; then I closed a gate upon him which he never opened again.

THE BRONZE IDOL.

A NATURE STORY.

By F. ST MARS,

Author of *On Nature's Trail*, *Feuds of the Furtive Folk*, &c

THERE walked a golden sovereign in the sunshine, and it was worth only half-a-crown. Moreover, to get it you would have to expend a cartridge, which cost twopence. Nay, more, for already cartridges had been expended upon it, but it was still there. In all the pride and pomp of its uniform it flashed there; metallic helmet gleaming green, blue, and purple; scarlet cheek-guards; tunic, orange-red, purple, yellow, brown, black, and green, reflected and positive; long train of eighteen divisions, of which the middle one was the longest; and snow-white necklace, the whole effect being generally of bronze surmounted by a green 'winged hat,' as Mr Kipling would say, such as the Vikings wore. My, what a regalia for a king! And he was a king, too, in his way—ruler, with other kings, of many thousands of acres of the greatest empire in the world, though really only a bird, the above being, on my word, simply and truly the colours of a fine old cock-pheasant, who had cost a pound to rear, under a hen, and now was worth a bare half-crown of any man's money.

Kings, however, have enemies; assassins are abroad at every hour of night and day, and though big, bronzed, six-foot police with guns, and in their livery of velveteen, were patrolling this king's realm night and day, they could not always keep him shadowed, he being a wayward and capricious monarch.

With proud, haughty stride, he strutted across the clearing, and all the little erring sunbeams that had escaped through the branches combined together to make him a wonder and a glory under his palace roof of amber and pink and purple and bronze, supported by a thousand gray columns and carpeted with gold. Yet in such a setting our king was not conspicuous. Rather he harmonised in his robes with his surroundings, for every hue in his magnificent robes was duplicated somewhere or other in his palace, save one. There was no white there, not a touch of marble anywhere; and the white circlet on his neck, which was the Order of the Dragon and proved his ancient Chinese descent, was conspicuous therefore. *It*, and not the bird, caught the wandering eye on the instant and held it. There lay the danger. That white was a fine mark for the assassin's eye.

Suddenly there rang through the shaded chambers of state the quick, sharp challenge of a sentry. Another took it up, and a third, till the silent, columned halls fairly rang with the thrilling alarm, as, one after the other, they hurried by the blackbird guards of the outer gates, in uniforms of jet with daggers of pale yellow, to the place of the original challenge.

At the first sound the king among the bushes turned to a carving in bronze—head up, one foot up, tail up, immovable, rigid. Once he blinked an eye in that odd, wise way some birds have. It was necessary. Otherwise you would not have known he was alive.

Meantime, the guards of the outer gates increased the racket and drew nearer. The alarm, whatever it might be, was approaching.

The king, without moving, glanced up; but the bushes met overhead in a thick basket-work. Even he, past-master at the game as he was, could not rise—though he might come down—through that. He would have looked behind—for even a king may run, and few as well as he—but the sudden soft chiding of a little wren told him there was danger there also. Nothing remained, therefore, but to 'freeze' where he was, and trust to luck. He 'froze' accordingly, and as he did so he noticed that, whereas there had before been three rabbits in sight, feeding off hazel-leaves, now there were none. They had vanished like smoke.

Like smoke, too, came the assassin, soundless, sinister, almost seeming to swim along. Only its eyes, the cruel yellow-green orbs with the vertical black slit, showed at all plainly. The rest was a shadow. But shadow or not, it was a cat, and the king knew it.

Then the king did a clever thing, but you must please yourself whether you call it intentional or not. Very gradually, so gradually that I would have defied any one to see that he moved, his head sank. His neck shut down telescope-fashion, after the manner of birds, and the white collarette, the Order of the Dragon, the one conspicuous thing about him, faded and went out. As a matter of fact, the other neck feathers had shut down over it.

What followed was strange and awkward. Although he was bolt-upright, save for his neck, the cat did not see him. She walked up to him, and, suddenly, within twelve inches, started, and crouched, motionless. She had *smelt* him.

The king was wonderful. He moved as much as a stone. He kept his head grandly, though the strain must have been almost unbearable.

[*Christmas Number.*

The guards of the outer gates were cursing aloud overhead, and a page in doublet of salmon-pink and white, and soft leaf brown, which was a chaffinch, rushed up to help them. I don't know whether they saw the king. I doubt it. The cat certainly didn't; though she was so near, and looking straight at him, she didn't see him.

Then she did. The king had moved, blinked an eye, tightened a feather, or something. It was ever so little, but enough. The spell was broken, and the cat drew back and flattened, without saying anything.

Next moment, with a rush, she charged, and then—and then. I like to think of what the king did then. I should have liked some members of Parliament to see what the king did then.

The cat was aware of something resembling a shrapnel-shell, with feathers and legs *and* spurs, bursting in her face; but she was aware too late. It was so utterly unexpected that she had no fraction of time to prepare against it, and those who misjudge character in the wild, like the beloved of the gods, die young. She felt as though an electric spark touched her twice on the face and once on the chest. Then she invited herself out of that attack gone wrong, by the undignified but quick expedient of rolling over sideways—while the king danced a royal highland fling on her ribs, it seemed—up on to her feet, and—away. She had no wish to go back and renew the argument. She had reasons, two on her face, one on her chest, and some small affairs along the ribs, red, angry reasons, growing redder and more angry every instant, though you never would have believed, if you had not seen them, how hard a pheasant's spurs, with a good lusty old cock behind them, can strike.

As for the king, he ran to clear ground—where, be it whispered, I guess he knew as well as you and I that he could rise if the cat came again—and flapping his wings, crowed like the boastful old rascal he was, crowed like a good un; whilst, in the silent intervals, from afar through the woods, the black guards of the outer gates could be heard escorting, not at all quietly, the assassin from the precincts of the palace.

Thereafter the king stalked to his banquet. Among a horde of blue and gray wood-pigeons, but newly arrived from the Continent, he scrambled in most unkingly fashion for beech-mast and acorns.

After that the king, being a very thirsty king, repaired to a stream to drink; but was careless, and forgot to look behind him when his beak was down. The result was a long, lean, leggy, reddish body, shooting across a last copper bar of sunshine near at hand; a blow that knocked him head-over-heels into the shallows, and a madly desperate leap upwards on whirring wings—mind, he had had no warning to prepare him to act—out of reach of a grinning lurcher dog, across whose slobbering jaws he could see one of the most beautiful and cherished of his own tail-feathers reposing.

From a great height he volplaned, on his short, rounded wings, down the length of the serried pine hangar, crashed into the dark depths of the wood in a manner that seemed sheer suicide to an outsider, and came to rest on the scented carpet of generations upon generations of pine-needles beneath. For three minutes he remained like a bird carved out of lacquer; then he walked away, moving quietly and by devious paths, to a certain oak, paused a moment, crouching, and, with a whir and a shout that told all the wood where he was, flew up to roost on a low bough.

A lean, dark snout, with glistening nose, the reddest of lolling tongues, and fangs that shone like new-worked ivory, shot out of a bramble tangle close at hand, regarded him with keen, intelligent eyes for a moment, and shot back again. The snout had come forty seconds too late. Its owner knew the fact; but, being a fox, its owner also made a mental note of the place, pheasant kings being, as he knew, rather conservative about selecting the place for their royal couch.

Then night came sweeping westwards over the tree-tops, and an owl hooted far away in the gloomy depths of the hangar.

How long the pheasant had been asleep I know not, but he was not half a wink getting fully awake again. Something had done it, though. There was a sound of claws scratching upon bark. He heard it plainly, and felt it too, I think, through his body, for trees carry sound as vibrations throughout their length.

A half-moon hung poised high above beyond the gaunt branches. Not a thing moved. The stillness was the stillness of a well—dank and cold.

Beyond taking his head out from under his wing, the pheasant had not moved. He knew better. He looked like a bunch of leaves as he was, and that was his best protection.

The sound came again—scratch, scratch, scratch. It was coming up, working towards him. If it was merely a squirrel—no odds. But what if it was not?

He craned his neck. He peered over. The gray columns of the tree-bole, lit on his side by the moon, ran straight down into a sea of darkness, and up out of the darkness, slowly, very quietly, came a head. He saw the reflection of the moon in its amazingly bright eyes. He beheld the flash of a sulphur-yellow shirt-front. And no more was needed. He knew the title of that gentleman in evening-dress who called during the dark hours. They had met before once or twice. The visitor was a butcher by trade, official slaughterer to dame Nature, one not to be trusted by night or day—a long, cruel stoat.

Up went the pheasant's head, out went his

neck, down dropped his tail, and the stoat, startled by the movement, flattened instantly to the rough bark against which he clung. His eyes told him now what his nose had been telling him all along. The question was, was he seen?

There was no need to ask it, however. As a rocket bursts, the king launched himself, terrified, into the night, and with almost that hopeless *abandon* in the dark affected by fowls.

There are few things more terrible than the grim determination of the stoat when once he has set his heart on a victim. Risking death by many nasty ways is a trifle to him. Also, all stoats, weasels, and ferrets seem to accept falling as part of their daily life, like washing. And this explains how the stoat came to kick himself off from the trunk of the tree in a last reckless effort to reach the pheasant as he flew. What is more, too, he did reach him, or part of him, anyway. And for a few seconds the spectacle of a cock-pheasant blundering crazily along through the branches, towing a stoat, pinned to his long tail, behind him, astounded the night and the moon.

Then a feather of that useful long tail—specially designed, I take it, to attract the eye of an enemy and cause him to spring short, and to come out conveniently, like the tail of a lizard, when required—gave way, and down went the stoat, all claws abroad, teeth set, grimly silent, still gripping the feather, crashing headlong through the twigs, till he fetched up in a larch-tree, and hung on, dazed, and on the borders, it seemed, of a heart attack.

The king's rest was, however, short-lived. Another sound awoke him an hour later, the crack of a dead twig, which sounded like a pistol-shot in the utter silence. Already unstrung a little, he was awake in a flash, peering down furtively. Not at all anxious to move in the horrible darkness, but half-afraid to stay.

He saw a dark form pass underneath. It kept carefully to the shade, and it was followed by another. No eyes were needed to tell the pheasant what *they* were. No wild creatures made so much noise going through the wood. They were men, and not only men, but poachers, one of them the poacher who had watched him fly up to roost.

He saw them make straight for the tree he had just left, and, halting exactly beneath the bough that had formed his royal couch, produce a tiny kind of stove. To this they fitted a chimney, a telescopic one, which, when extended and manœuvred into position, would have come close beneath his sleeping form. When, with guarding hands and a coat to hide it, a match was struck, something within the stove, that spluttered, was lit, and a most infernal, acrid smoke poured out of the top of the extended telescopic chimney. They intended, though he did not know it, to asphyxiate him while he slept, and cause him to drop incontinently and helplessly into a sack held ready open beneath for his reception. A plot, this, worthy of even his rank, and needing but one thing for its successful completion—the pheasant—easily seen by getting him against the moon—and—he wasn't there.

He heard the men curse suddenly, moving about to place each branch of the tree between them and the moon.

'I'll swear any money ye like as I seed 'im a-roostin' on that very branch, Bill.' The voice sounded plainly enough in the damp, chill silence, though no more than a stage-whisper.

Then, 'Well, 'e ain't there na', anywhichways abart it,' came the angry reply, and then, 'Oh lor! Look!' A pause; then, 'It's 'im as 'as done it. Th' beggar!'

They had brought the enraged and amazed stoat, who had returned to the tree to see if the pheasant had had a bedfellow, in silhouette against the moonlight, and he, transfixed with horror at his position and the acrid, sulphurous fumes hurting his sensitive nostrils, glared down at them, motionless. But only for a moment.

Came a swift drumming of feet on the hollow earth, a lean lurcher dog shot up panting, and——

'Billo! Some blighter's abart. The dawg sez so,' quoth one of the men, and they vanished back into the darkness that gave them birth, just as a keeper's whistle blew shrilly among the arched aisles, and the report of a gun sounded, crashing thunderously, from somewhere in the heart of the wood. Followed that, till dawn, only the whispering, mysterious silence of the night, and the old cock-pheasant slept undisturbed, as he—but not we—could.

The day had long since broken; the raw, red sun was up, and the mists were peeling off the hollows like smoke, when the old cock-pheasant arose, flew down, flapped his wings—you could hear 'em a quarter of a mile away in that wonderful morning air—and crowed harshly. Dozens of other cock-pheasants were doing the same thing, had done the same thing every morning; but how were they to know that this morning was to be different from all other mornings to some, one not to be forgotten easily by all?

The king passed, creeping cautiously and wonderfully low and self-effacingly for so large and gorgeous a bird, to the stream. He was never very far away from water of some sort, by the way, for he was, as has been said, a thirsty king.

He drank, with the clear, limpid, crystal water that had come, unpolluted, straight from the chalk downs, flashing like strings of diamonds from the tip of his dainty beak, and his shadow frightened those other shadows, the speckled trout, as he did so.

Then his right eye fell upon something swim-

ming across the stream lower down. It might only have been a water-rat, of course; but, on the other hand, it might not. In the wild, those who leave anything to chance are not desirable applicants for a life insurance policy, so to speak. Moreover, do water-rats follow one another in line across a stream? He crouched.

Next thing he knew was some beasts flinging themselves upon him in a long wavy line. He cut one flying with his spurs, and fled, running —there was no room to rise—through the undergrowth, and the enemy, which were small, chased him like a pack of yapping terriers. But they soon gave it up. They were only a family party of weasels on the war-path, and had not the slightest intention of attacking a full-blown cock-pheasant; only, this one happened to be in their path, and they thought he was asleep.

Beech-mast, in company with the polite, blue, foreign wood-pigeons, 'eggs' from an ants' city of pine-needles and easily scratched over, and some buckwheat—of which he was inordinately fond—spread by the hand of one of his velveteen slaves in a sunlit well-trimmed 'ride,' completed his breakfast. Then for an hour or so he indulged in a sun-dust-Turkish bath at the side of a dry bank, with other royalty for company.

After this he made his way to a little, old woodland farmyard, where were stacks of corn; but he had the foolishness to dispute rights of feed with a mangy, scarred, old buck-rat, who suddenly slashed upwards with his yellow chisel teeth, in that shark-like way rats adopt, and cut several bronze feathers, to say nothing of half-an-inch of skin, out of the king's breast.

Then the whistle came. From far out across the blue-gray, gold and brown, and dark-green fields it sounded—a long, shrill, metallic whistle. It was answered by another near, another, and yet others, until at last the very field in which the king's pæan of victory was waking the echoes resounded to its alien note, causing every one of the wild folk to evaporate back into the landscape, and the domestic ones to stare stupidly.

It was nothing—only the gamekeepers driving the pheasants back into their own coverts, in order that they should not wander too far from the guardian angels in velveteens, and foolishly get themselves shot by farmers out rabbiting, make a free meal for the wandering gipsy, turn themselves thoughtlessly into cats' meat, or save the innocent shepherd's dog the necessity of stealing the butcher's bones.

He had been used to those sounds lately, our king, and rather despised them, but he had never known such furious whistling as that morning brought forth. He turned superciliously, and strutted—entirely unhurried, mark you—back into the covert. There the cave-like silence, broken only by the tap-tap-tap of a woodpecker hammering his breakfast from wood, and the raucous voice of a jay on the look-out for trouble, was more to his liking. Here for the next hour or two he amused himself frightening the life out of any young cock-pheasant unfortunate enough to get in his way—the covert seemed strangely swarming with them this morning; ignoring the sedate crouching hens with a fine contempt; delving for roots and tubers of rare taste; watching a grinning, agony-twisted stoat extended on that modern rack, a steel-jawed trap, set for *his*, the king's, good, by those modern inquisitors of his, the gamekeeper guard, to exterminate his assassins —beautiful forms of life all, whose only fault was that, being flesh-eaters, like ourselves and the men who slew them, they had to live somehow. Corn he found in an outlying woodland-enclosed corn-rick, the grubs by scratching under an oak-tree, where the wood-eating caterpillars had dug vaults in the ground wherein to become mummy-like chrysalids, and there was a tiny lonely field of mangel-wurzels wherein he—hem! —quite considerably lowered the population of the grubs of Messrs *Argiotes lineatus* & Co., that precise beetle whose young are better known in the vernacular as wireworms.

Then a man and a big black dog and a double-barrelled gun appeared all together and quite suddenly, and the king, picking up his train, so to speak, crouched and ran low, with proud head well down, all along the row of mangel-wurzels in which he found himself, to the wood; and mighty pleased he was to get there, too. He never rose on wing when dealing with men if he could help it, for, mind, he was an old bird, and could give you one or two reasons why, if you are a pheasant, you shouldn't.

But the king was no sooner in the wood than his quick sense of suspicion and his ripe experience warned him of a difference. (He hadn't liked the look of that man-dog-gun trio, anyway.) The wood was not at all still, as it should be. Away up the hill (it ran up a steep hill, that wood) the pigeons were rising one by one and hurrying away high over the valley, with that staccato clap-clap of the wings which all the wild knows is a sure sign of danger; the rabbits were beginning to move about restlessly, as if something were forcing them where they didn't want to go; the jays had given one wild exhibition of foul language, and shut up absolutely; a hare—what was she up to in a wood, I wonder?—with ears flat and eyes astare, bolted past, going like the wind; more than one hen-pheasant showed like a wraith of the woods, creeping unobtrusively in the same direction; and an old cock came by, crouching, working off to the right as one seeking a private way out.

Not till our cock saw that other cock there did he show alarm. Then he did. He stood for a moment motionless, erect—listening, and what he heard settled it: tap-tap, tap-tap-tap, tap-tap, tap, tap, tap, tap-tap. It came from everywhere up the hill, that ceaseless, quiet

tapping, and from nowhere down the hill. Twigs cracked. Some one whistled on a dog. Somewhere to one side a single outlying pheasant rose like a rocket; there was a pause, during which the whir of its wings could be heard, growing fainter and fainter, out over the valley below; then, from far down at the end of the wood, the single report of a gun, and—the whir stopped.

About this time our old cock-pheasant began to run. All running that we have seen him do before counted for nothing; it was slow by comparison. He raced, fairly raced, like a long bronze streak, head and body and tail all in the same line, not downhill away from the mysterious approaching tapping, but across-ways, towards the edge of the wood.

He knew perfectly well what to do, for this wasn't the first pheasant battue at which he had attended officially, though it was the first that year, and he had almost forgotten the experience he had learnt, though it came back into the little, tiny bird brain of him, under his metallic green Viking helmet, in streaks.

The others, save for a few very quiet and cautious old cocks, didn't seem to know what to do a bit, especially the young 'this year's' cocks and hens; they were running all ways at once, so to speak, losing their heads with panic—which among sheep, horses, and men is so infectious—and getting in anybody's and everybody's way except the beaters', whose terrifying tap, tap, tapping was drawing slowly nearer at every second, pushing the crowd steadily, almost, one might say, stealthily, before them.

The king knew from bitter experience—he had a scar on his right thigh to this day to remind him—that anything was better than letting himself be thus driven to the bottom end of the wood, outside which would be drawn up the waiting line of 'guns.' He dashed for the side. He could see it. The light shining through from the fields without was plainly in sight. There was nobody there. He charged on, hope rising within him at every stride, and—stopped so utterly instantaneously that his head and neck seemed to have been literally telescoped through his resplendent body. At the same moment he appeared to have evolved out of thin air a most infernal jangling of bells—the wild folk loathe a bell—and dancing of bunches of golliwog-like feathers, suspended apparently in space.

It must be admitted that the way that king picked himself up in that instant—all shaken as he was—and fled frantically in the opposite direction, was worth seeing; only, there was nobody there, in that place, to see him, save for two perfectly daft rabbits, and they were past noticing anything. As a matter of fact, he had simply run into what is known as a 'stop-net,' which, as its name explains, was placed there to prevent cunning old cock-pheasants like himself from sneaking away in the direction they were not wanted to go.

By the time our pheasant had got to the other side of the wood—he collided with one terrified stoat, one rabbit, and a half-crazed young hen-pheasant by the way—the beaters and their infernal eternal tapping-sticks were not fifty yards away. Then he made a bolt for it, and—almost ran into the legs of a boy tapping with a stick there too. He had been placed at that spot to act like the net on the other side, and prevent the cunning old pheasants from breaking away there too, because you cannot place your guns all round a covert, you know.

That last shock rather did it with the king, and he felt sickish, I fancy. He blundered off into the undergrowth, and stood blinking and looking half-dazed. His brain didn't work very quickly, and this last shock had rather cornered him. For a minute or two he did not know what to do, and all the time those unspeakable tap-tapping beaters were drawing nearer and nearer, and the denizens of the wood, pheasant and rabbit and weasel and jay and stoat and rat, were tearing past him, half-crazed with fear and dismay.

Then he took his courage in both claws, so to speak. He was always a high-spirited bird at any time, and he had not got victories single-handed over a cat, a weasel, a rat, a pet dog, and goodness knows how many domestic cocks and undomestic cock-pheasants to his credit for nothing. Moreover, go down to the 'guns' he would not.

He put his head down, and running low and keeping out of sight as much as possible, he *charged straight at the line of beaters* as hard as he could go. It was splendid, and I like to think of him then, as he tore along, his little feet fairly winking, his tail streaming out behind. And as he ran he heard the first whir of the rising pheasants below, and the first crashing fusillade that met them.

Then he hit the right-hand legging of one of the beaters—smack. It was only a glancing blow, and would not have mattered, but the man put his hand down among the brushwood, to see what it was, and the king hurled himself at it, spurring like fury. The hand was removed quickly, nicely gashed by his spurs, and, with a flutter and a crash, up rose the grand old cock-pheasant, right out of the amazed beaters' line.

Bang! Bang!

He saw the little wicked stabs of flame, he heard the hail of small shot whimpering and hissing all around—a keeper had remained with the beaters, in case of anything of this kind happening—but he kept on and on, unscathed, rising and gathering speed every instant, till, going like a cannon-ball, and far out of the reach of any gunshot, he hurtled down-wind, above the crashing 'holocaust' where his foolish fellows were being wiped out as they rose close to the line of 'guns,' away and away to safety.

[*Christmas Number.*

'HIGH EXPLOSIVES.'

BY 'ÆSCULAPIUS'

I.

OF course, it pleased the men immensely when the ship's cook opined they were going home. Sailors are always longing for somewhere thousands of miles away, and in this case the galley had it right for once. Their lordships did order H.M.S. *Alcibiades* back from Pitagora.

All the same, west-country voices were raised in loud protest a few weeks later when she passed Plymouth Sound, and went on to Portsmouth instead. The *Alcibiades* being a Devonport ship, many of her complement failed to appreciate the reason for her not nipping in there. Besides, it lacked only a few days of Christmas, and they wanted to eat dinner in the bosom of their adjacent families. As it was, these otherwise jolly tars mourned the leave that could not now be arranged in time for them to have their hearts' desire.

Whitehall made an exception, however, in the case of Lieutenant-Commander Shirley C. Faulconbridge, R.N. His new appointment came off shortly after mooring.

'The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty hereby appoint you to His Majesty's depot ship *Ptolemæus* at Port Royal, Jamaica,' that officer read. 'You may proceed on leave until informed concerning passage out.'

'What do you think of it, Deans?'

'Damned fine,' answered that Royal Naval Reserve lieutenant, who had just come down from the bridge, and was warming himself by the wardroom fire. 'Wish I could get a billet like that myself for the winter. Goodness knows where we'll go after the dockyard maties are done with us!—Steward, bring two cocktails.'

'I suppose it's better than the North Sea again,' Faulconbridge admitted doubtfully.

'Here's luck, No. 1,' Deans proposed cheerily. 'When are you shoving off?'

'Now,' the first-lieutenant replied, seeing his servant coming forward to tell him his gear was in the picket-boat.

'Good-bye, old man.' Deans gripped him. 'Take care of yourself.'

'I'll do my best,' Faulconbridge responded. 'Good-bye, everybody,' he sang out to the others in the mess, who were busy reading their mail, and there was a chorus of answering 'Good-lucks.'

II.

'He might have taken this with him,' the captain complained, affixing his signature to the thin sheet of paper the clerk put before him. It was known in the navy as a 'flimsy,' and spoke in commendable terms of the service of Lieutenant-Commander Shirley Cantacuzenus Faulconbridge.

'Thank goodness I'm clear of that name!' the clerk of H.M.S. *Alcibiades* muttered, posting the certificate on to the first-lieutenant; 'it's the worst in the whole Navy List.'

That fastidious young gentleman was not alone in his opinion. Writers disliked having this lengthy cognomen on their ledgers; post-captains frowned at its appearance on a memo; admirals questioned the accuracy of it on documents, and their secretaries fumed with rage at the suggestion.

When young Faulconbridge received his commission as a sub-lieutenant, the parchment had to be returned for rectification. The clerks would get as far as Cant, and after that it was hopeless. As one waggish scribe said, 'Why didn't his people let it go at Cant and be done with it?'

The trouble started long before his people's time, however, when Henrietta Fanariot married Richard Faulconbridge, a yeoman-farmer of Gloucestershire. Miss Fanariot was Russian, claiming descent from John Cantacuzenus, emperor of the Byzantines. In this way, perhaps a millionth drop of the illustrious blood was transmitted to their Birmingham descendants.

At any rate, John Fanariot Faulconbridge called his manor-house at Fair Oaks 'Byzantium,' and filled it with reminders of his exalted lineage. Indeed, when Shirley was born, the steel magnate revived the imperial idea of 'porphyrogenitus' by having that notable event take place under a canopy of antique purple.

The ripple of merriment with which his father's friends greeted this foible was nothing to what Shirley experienced on entering the navy. Fun was poked at the Cantacuzenus element in his name in ever-widening circles of gun and ward room acquaintances, until an *opera-bouffe* climax was reached when the young lieutenant's ship visited the far-flung Pitcairn Island, in the South Pacific. Councillor Adams came on board, and so bounteous was the mess's hospitality that their guest was carried ashore on a stretcher. There was an awful row over the affair. Alcohol is strictly prohibited on the island, and in this case the incident was particularly unfortunate, because Bill Adams, as the mess called him, died of apoplexy next day. Lieutenant Faulconbridge was summoned to give evidence before an elaborate tribunal. Decorum prevailed up to the time the punctilious but stuttering Tahitian policeman attempted to

call out his name in full. Then judge, jury, and simple Pitcairn Islanders generally 'chucked in their hands,' and gave themselves up to uncontrollable shrieks of laughter. The court had to be cleared, and rather than risk such a noisy session again, which, in the case of a highly emotional and divided people, was fraught with feudal dangers, it was decided to give out that Bill Adams died from natural causes; and there was an end of the affair.

III.

Not so, however, the blatant pulling of the lieutenant's leg; and perhaps it was the reaction from 'born-in-the-purple' ideas that made him unduly susceptible to Jessie Parsons's charms. Jessie was a fair, soft, pretty little thing from Cornwall, studying music at the Plymouth Conservatoire. She paid her own way by taking on the piano at the Globe Restaurant three nights a week, and when the other orchestral instruments were silent, played with a great deal of expression. After Faulconbridge, who was very fond of music, heard her solo of Liszt's *Liebestraüme*, Jessie spent her off-evenings in the lieutenant's two-seater. That was before the war, when he had a shore billet at Mount Wise. Their courtship, like nearly all naval ones, was short and sweet. One June evening they leaned over the rail at Plym Bridge. The purling sound of the stream was as music to their ears. A skylark sang its sweet yet wistful song, and there was a certain wildness about the scenery which suggested remoteness. Certainly, when the naval officer kissed that sweet young girl, with cheeks telling of the rarest of fruits ripe for plucking, he must have thought his imperial ancestors far too remote for consideration. At any rate, he popped the question entailing further dilution of the Greek prince's blood.

Mount Wise hoisted no nuptial wreath for the wedding. There was instead a quiet ceremony at the registry-office. Faulconbridge got ten days' leave, and they spent their honeymoon anywhere between Plymouth and Land's End. They stayed a couple of nights with Jessie's mother, who was the widow of a marine engineer. Mr Parsons lost his life in the *Titanic*, and the pension allowed by the White Star Line barely enabled the widow to make both ends meet in her little cottage near Penzance, to say nothing about bringing up a ten-year-old boy named Billy. Mrs Parsons gave them Jessie's old room, fragrant with the scent of meadow-sweet, and showed her son-in-law the harmonium on which she learned to play. 'She's been drumming away ever since she was a child,' Jessie's mother said, half-smiling, half-crying. 'Of course, I hadn't means enough to give her a proper musical education, and I'm glad she's come to no harm.'

Billy, too, was ambitious. He told his big brother-in-law he wanted to be a midshipman, and the lieutenant, cranking his car, assured him he would bear the fact in mind.

The newly married couple had scarcely returned to Plymouth, when Lieutenant Faulconbridge was appointed to H.M.S. *Cytherea* for manœuvres. These peaceful naval evolutions lengthened into war; and by that time Jessie's husband was steaming for the Falkland Islands.

IV.

Faulconbridge had anticipated going to sea in any case, so his plans were fully prepared. Conscious of his wife's talent, he gave her a bank draft on Dresden, whither she went to study under the celebrated Dr Liedbourg. As was his wont, the great master scoffed at her technique, and said she had no real gift; but this 'cold water' did not damp the Cornwall girl's ardour. 'What odds,' she smiled, 'so long as I make my husband happier?' The famous man shrugged his shoulders, but nevertheless took a great deal of pains with his English pupil; and she was doing well, when war suddenly interposed. The Berlin Government interned Mrs Faulconbridge, and subjected her to a lot of unnecessary bullying on account of her being the wife of a British naval officer. The brutes even hinted at Jessie being a spy, and confiscated all her music in case some of the notes should make up a secret code. The little woman, too, suffered from lack of the nourishing food she had been used to in Devonshire, and developed a cough which left crimson stains on the delicately woven fabric of her handkerchiefs. Her censored and much-deleted letters did not mention these things in so many words, but the anxious Mrs Parsons read between the lines, and warned Jessie's husband accordingly. That officer, however, was not in touch with the General Post-Office, and when the distraught mother could stand it no longer, she appealed to her son-in-law's father, who was now making a princely fortune out of munitions. The Birmingham gentleman asked for particulars regarding his son's surprising marriage, and was furious when he heard Shirley had contracted an alliance with what he called a 'band girl.' There was a motherless Miss Faulconbridge, who might have mollified the old man's resentment had she been at home, but she was away taking lectures at Cambridge, and by the time she returned the feud had become chronic. In her absence Shirley was disowned, and Jessie's mother informed that bold, designing hussies like her daughter were better out of the country.

Belated tidings of these misfortunes reached Faulconbridge, who was now a lieutenant-commander, although a young one, and nearly drove him frantic. His ship was returning, however.

In the meantime the compassionate Dr Liedbourg had been interceding for his quon-

dam pupil, and finally succeeded in having her included in an exchange that was being effected.

The lieutenant-commander arrived at Southampton in time to see Jessie come off a hospital-ship, the shadow of her former self.

'Take me back to Penzance,' she pleaded. 'I'd like to die there.'

V.

When the end came Lieutenant-Commander Faulconbridge was again at sea, this time in the *Alcibiades;* nor did he see the tiny boy Jessie had borne him until the little chap was several months old. Billy was godfather, and insisted on christening the infant Rodney, after the great admiral. The would-be midshipman was overjoyed when, fondling his son during a snatch of leave, Faulconbridge told Billy he would find himself at Osborne yet if he paid attention to his books.

Even when the much-buffeted officer arrived home from Pitagora, he was not allowed to linger long by the blustery, Christmas fireside at Penzance, where he spent most of the time admiring his now chubby-faced Rodney. The Admiralty's transportation department could not always find accommodation for officers taking up western appointments, and as the *Luneville* sailed in a few days, the lieutenant-commander was ordered to join her at Barkershead. Before leaving for that port of embarkation, however, Faulconbridge posted a lengthy letter to his friend Deans.

VI.

The *camaraderie* of these two officers had its inception a long time back, and was never marred by any of those bouts of acrimony which are apt to occur at times in the happiest of wardrooms. As boys, they had danced with each other's sisters in the Town Hall at Sutton Coldfield, and drifted apart when Deans's father moved up Wolverhampton way. In addition to his coal holdings, the paternal Deans was a big shareholder in the Yellow Funnel Line, and very much annoyed he was, too, when his son insisted on going to sea in the merchant service. However, somewhat of a compromise was effected, when that obstinate youth consented to take out a commission in the Royal Naval Reserve, which brought him in contact with Shirley once more during manœuvres, and led to his being called up for service at the beginning of war.

In the case of Lieutenant Deans, however, he had been detained on board the *Alcibiades* at Portsmouth. That is one reason why he happened to be dining under the lofty rafters of the *Victory* dining-hall early in the new year.

VII.

The president of the evening sat in the middle of a long table, and the muffled rap of his hammer silenced the incipient murmur of a hundred voices. The chaplain offered grace; and before the most eager talker could get in a verbal thrust, two clicks, almost simultaneous in time, broke the stillness. One of them extinguished the hall lights; the other brought into being the more agreeable candlestick lights of the table. Naval flunkeys with calves that might have adorned My Lord Steyne's entertainments served the soup and passed the sherry. When the band had struck up 'Entry of the Gladiators,' all the trappings of a Royal Naval Barracks dinner were in full swing.

Indeed, these fresh-featured naval officers, taking life with such smiling easiness, were gladiators in their own way. Not that their wordy 'kags' suggested sea-battles on a scale far more colossal than the paintings on the walls, or epoch-making events ranking with the golden-lettered records of the entablatures.

Seriousness is not tolerated at a naval dinner, and on this particular night they would not have missed for worlds the discussion which the loud-voiced commander was carrying on across the table with Staff-Surgeon O'Brien. The versatile three-striper would keep on insisting there was an ideal drug which induced a sort of artistic but conscious coma, making painful childbirth a thing of the past. The staff-surgeon hotly opposed the theory, and had just about convinced his hearers that it existed only in the facile brain of magazine-writers, when the head-waiter reported, 'Table cleared.' The president rapped. 'For these and all His mercies'—— the chaplain murmured.

'Moreover,' the staff-surgeon perorated, 'it's a mighty good thing we haven't such a drug.'

'Why so?' the commander asked.

'Because woman would lose the greatest thing marriage brings her—the humanising effect of an avalanche of pain that puts her head and shoulders above the wisest spinster who ever lived.'

'Nevertheless'——

'Wine passed, sir,' the clear-cut voice of the super-flunkey insisted.

The autocrat of the dinner-table, as if brooding over the impending finale, thoughtfully replaced the stoppers in the cut-glass decanters before applying the gag of his office to the irresponsible babble.

Contrary to the custom on board ship, there was a general sliding back of chairs, and the whole mess rose, glasses in hand.

'Mr Vice, the King,' the president said.

The vice-president paused until the band had played the first part of the National Anthem before responding, 'Gentlemen, the King.'

'By the way, Deans,' his friend the secretary remarked as they sat down again, 'the *Luneville's* been mined off the Irish coast, and Faulconbridge is among the missing.'

Deans, in the act of lighting his cigarette, repressed a tendency to cry aloud for vengeance

on the sowers of these cruel tares of the sea, and asked if there were any particulars.

'The boats cleared the sinking ship's side all right, but in a howling gale. Some of them were blown out to sea; others reached land stiff with frozen bodies.'

The words slipped out of Secretary Carew in the unemotional way that naval people have of mentioning such things, but which Deans's mood bitterly resented. He felt an almost uncontrollable desire to hit this man, who had the pale, æsthetic look many of the paymaster branch develop owing to the sedentary nature of their duties. Yes, a smashing blow might make him feel a modicum of the anguish Deans was experiencing, or, better still, serve him up with an avalanche of pain. That's what some of his sort needed to make them human. Bah! this air of smug-faced nonchalance in the presence of things that mattered was being overdone almost to the point of priggishness. . . . Then Deans got entangled in the confounded Puccini music the band was playing, and its *motif* kindled others within him, and he lost track of his laughing, puffing messmates, and found himself back with Faulconbridge in the loch-like harbour of Pitagora. . . . They had got to like this fortress city, with its wondrous skies, and old and new towns on either side of the cleaving river. 'What about a last drop of *vino* on the beach?' Faulconbridge had suggested before coming away; and after quarters they left the ship in the steam-pinnace. They were just in time to get a table outside the Ristorante Moderno, commanding a fine view of the sea, with its gentle surf breaking softly on the battlements beneath them. What a sea they had to look at! It left the tops of the Moorish houses over the bridge aglow with colour, and there was a trail of glory extending across the sea as far as the glooming mountains. When it was quite dusk, their attention had been diverted from a hospital-ship, creeping along like a huge glow-worm of the sea, to a belated funeral-party. Masked pall-bearers, carrying lighted tapers in their hands, walked on each side of the hearse. What was that sputtering on the pavement? *Misericordia!* one of the pall-bearers had dropped his taper! In their ignorance, they had started up to stamp it out; but an Italian naval officer restrained them, for, said he, touching it meant bad luck! How concerned he had been when the reckless Faulconbridge, pooh-poohing the superstitious idea, not only touched the blessed thing, but lit his cigarette with it before returning to the ship!

'Bah!' Deans reflected, as the music came to an abrupt end; 'it's nonsense thinking a waxy light at Pitagora could send a ship to the bottom of the Atlantic.' All the same, he was unable to repress a slight shudder when somebody touched him on the shoulder.

'I say, Deans,' he finally heard Staff-Surgeon O'Brien murmur, 'have you been having a drop of "twilight" on your own? I've been trying to get your eye for ten minutes. Besides, it's being very rude to your host,' he chided.

'I'm afraid we were both under the spell of *La Bohême*,' Carew smiled; 'they play it awfully well.'

'Well, whatever it was, I've brought this for you, Deans. It came after you left.'

Here was another *motif* for Deans to carry away from that dinner. There was something for him to do that might mitigate the calamity of his friend's death. The knowledge braced him, and he re-read greedily the letter Faulconbridge had written from Penzance, but which had been several days adrift. 'From what I have told you,' it concluded, 'you will see how the land lies; and I hope you haven't gone on leave yet, because, if the *Luneville's* submarined, I'd like you to do something for me, seeing that it's not much of a run down to Birmingham from where you'll be. Try to have my father take up Rodney,' the off-hand lieutenant-commander wrote.

'Have another glass of port?' Carew asked, looking at him curiously.

'No, thanks,' Deans said, rising. 'I'm sorry, but I must get back to the ship.'

VIII.

'Mr Faulconbridge's place is a long way out, and he *will* not have a telephone in his house. Besides, he's almost sure to be at the munition-works this time of day,' smiled the chatty telephone-girl at the Queen's Hotel when Deans finally arrived in Birmingham. 'Why not take a run out there? It's well worth seeing. Shall I get them on the line and say you're coming?' she asked.

'Please don't trouble,' Deans said; 'I'll take my chance.'

It was gloomy enough in the busy thoroughfares, but it got worse as the taxi moved along toward Sward End. The murkiness in the vicinity of Peppery Docks was awful, and depressed the lieutenant, especially as he had not the faintest idea how he was going to approach the old man. It was all very well making up his mind at Portsmouth to see the thing through, but up here it looked a different sort of proposition. These Birmingham business men had the reputation of being as hard as flint, and how was he, a guileless sailor, to bring about Mr Faulconbridge's capitulation? Had not Shirley's sister been unsuccessful? He wondered whether she was at home now, and if he would have a chance of seeing her.

The taxi turned up a hilly street. Ravished fields made up its ulterior view. Stone walls, enclosing low-lying buildings, formed its near aspect. The driver stopped in front of one of several ponderous gates, and Deans was admitted

by a policeman, who waved him toward an atrium-like entrance.

'Mr Faulconbridge's out of town, and 'll not be back for a day or so,' the hall-porter informed him.

'Wish I had taken the telephone-girl's advice,' Deans muttered gloomily. 'Seeing I'm out here, I'd like to have a look round,' he said to the porter.

'Have you a pass, sir?'

'No.'

'Then I'm afraid it can't be done,' demurred the man.

Deans recognised the symptoms, and gave him half-a-crown.

'Of course, there's no harm in letting you go as far as the corridor,' he apologised.—'Look out for me, Jim, while I take this officer along,' he told his opposite number.

Through a marvellous glass partition, Deans had the opportunity of seeing for himself the smooth working of the new industrialism, where smiling gusto, light-blue caps and smocks, and hygienic surroundings play a leading part.

Five thousand female munitioneers were busy getting ready the dread necessities of war on a vast scale.

'The girls come from every part of England,' the omniscient porter volunteered, 'and many of them are ladies.'

There was one in particular who caught Deans's eye, and the more he looked at her, the more he was convinced he was face to face with one of the many posers of the present conflict, a rich girl working in her father's works.

The observant porter seemed to divine his thoughts. Certainly, he followed the direction of his gaze. 'Her brother was a naval officer, too, sir. Poor fellow! he was lost at sea the other day. Of course, you know she's the proprietor's daughter?'

'I thought I recognised Miss Faulconbridge, in spite of her uniform,' Deans answered calmly enough, although he could have shouted for joy at his discovery,

'And a very plucky girl she is,' the man went on. 'Our young women are constantly losing near relations at the front, and the example of a lady like that steadies and encourages them to stick it out no matter what happens. I call that the right spirit, sir,' he concluded proudly.

'I say,' Deans asked, 'could you take a message to Miss Faulconbridge? Say I'm from the same ship as her brother, and I'd like to have a word with her.'

The man hesitated. 'It's dead against the rules. You see, sir, we're under Government control, and the Department of Munitions is responsible for our regulations.'

This time Deans gladly slipped him a couple of two-shilling pieces, and waited his answer in the lobby.

'It's all right, sir,' the porter beamed on him a moment later. 'She wants you to dine at Fair Oaks to-night.'

'Thanks, very much,' Deans said excitedly; 'and if you have a chance of whispering in her ear again, assure her I'll be there all right.'

IX.

Deans's luck continued. He ran into Nancy Faulconbridge in New Street late that afternoon. Over a cup of tea at her club he broke the ice of what might have been a constrained discussion under less informal circumstances. The outlook for Penzance was not altogether without hope. Before her father left for Harrogate to take the baths Nancy had said to him, 'After all, Jessie's playing in that orchestra was no worse than my working at Sward End,' and he did not bite her head off, as nearly happened on several former occasions. Nancy, too, had taken the biology lectures at Cambridge, and held her own theories on the subject of heredity. 'Father dear,' this charming young lecturer expounded, 'our bodies are only temporary billets for this potent something which is transmitted from generation to generation, and what does it matter whom we make its custodian so long as there is purity and love? Ought we not to be ever so grateful to Jessie for continuing the line?' she asked, the tears welling up into her eyes, which were as big as ever.

The old man flared up, and declared hers were the views of a scientific blue-stocking.

'That may be,' the intrepid Nancy had answered, 'but if you value the Cantacuzenus blood, you ought to look after one who at least possesses it.'

X.

But other factors far more forceful in their nature were at work. The great munitions explosion occurred at Silvertown, and a few hours later rumour had it at the Cairn Hydro, Harrogate, that there had been another one at Sward End. Without daring to make further inquiries, the grief-stricken master of 'Byzantium' hurried back to Birmingham. In the course of that melancholy train journey what an avalanche of suffering fell upon the old man! He was shaken to the core a thousand times by the violent end he fancied for Nancy. Indeed, his heart-rending cry of 'My poor Nancy! Why did I ever let you come into the works?' frightened a quiet looking woman out of the compartment. He thought of Shirley's effacement, and felt all the helpless rage of a Laocoon at his family being snuffed out of existence in this awful way. He had never figured on these sudden calamities. He had got into the habit of regarding life as something in which every action could be planned out logically and consistently. That was why he had been intolerant of Rodney. He was beginning to think that things had a way of adjusting themselves without much

respect for clap-trap conventionalism. Nancy was right. He ought to have worshipped Jessie for what she had done. What an unfeeling monster he had been! After all, didn't the Rodney touch mean more to him than all the Cantacuzenuses that ever lived? The Greek prince's people had lost their country owing to parsimony. They had buried gold rather than use it defending their capital. He, Faulconbridge, would at least show people he possessed enough largeness of mind to acknowledge and make good his mistake so far as was in his power. The train stopped half-way, and he sent a telegram to Mrs Parsons. There was something of his old arrogance in the wording of it. 'It is my direction,' he wired, 'that Rodney, Billy, and yourself should come up to Fair Oaks immediately.'

XI.

Nancy was safe enough. Was she not with the gallant sailor? In the good old Yellow Funnel days, how many pretty girls had he protected east of Suez!

But why ring in a longitude suggestive of so many things? In truth, events had been moving fast in Birmingham. These young people, who had met again only a few hours ago, were in no less a place than 'Bagdad'!

The lieutenant nearly had a fit when this fascinating munitioneer, whom the rites of the dressing-table had transformed into a sort of very young Madame Le Brun, proposed the expedition. 'Where's the magic carpet?' he asked lamely.

Miss Faulconbridge pointed to the broad stairs of 'Byzantium.' 'My "Bagdad" isn't far off,' she explained. 'It's really an extension to the house.'

'I'm glad of that,' Deans said with a sigh of relief. 'I've dined far too well to undertake much of a journey.'

She led the way to a wonderful domed apartment. 'This is what we call "Bagdad,"' she smiled, holding silken hangings aside for him to enter what seemed to be a little corner of the East; 'only, instead of the call of the minaret we have the clatter of the dumb-waiter to tell us that coffee is on the way.'

'How pleasant it is to feel softness everywhere!' Deans murmured, sinking into a rich divan. 'Up to the present hardness has been the dominant feature of my life. However, I hope it'll be different after the war.'

'After the war,' Nancy repeated, passing him the cigarettes, 'what wonderful things are going to happen! What's it to be in your case?'

'My father's giving me a shore billet in the Yellow Funnel Line,' he told her. 'I've done my bit at sea.'

'I wish Shirley had never taken it up as a career,' she sighed; and as she listened Deans's story of their life together her eyes g softer and softer, until they almost seemed melt. 'It's a pity he ever touched the beastl thing,' she grieved over the ill-omened incident

There was that infernal taper again, Deans thought. Why had he been tactless enough to mention it? Something always happened whe it lurked in the vicinity. Even going off to the ship that night at Pitagora, they nearly sank the admiral's barge. This time it took the form of a wailing, intense and heart-breaking, making the whole house resound with its awfulness, and penetrating even the confines of 'Bagdad.'

'What's that?' Nancy gasped, starting up.

'Nancy! Nancy!' she heard the anguished voice of her father cry out; and there was no relief for the old man until he held her close.

'You poor old thing,' she soothed the broken spirit. 'So they had us blown up, had they? Why, dear, it was nothing at all, a mere handful of flames at the most, and we were sent home more as a precautionary measure than anything else.'

'They're coming up,' he sobbed. 'You can have the name of the house changed to "Rodney." It'll please Shirley when he hears of it.'

'What do you mean, father?' she asked agonisingly, fearing the strain had been too much for him.

'That,' he faltered, handing her a folded-up copy of the *Birmingham Evening News*. They gave it to me at the railway station.'

They read the 'Stop Press' item. 'Barquentine *Subrosa* has been spoken in tropical Atlantic, *en route* for Antigua,' it stated. 'She has on board eleven survivors of the ill-fated *Luneville*, picked up from their open boat far out at sea. Among the saved is Lieutenant-Commander Faulconbridge, R.N., of this city.'

'Hurrah!' they shouted, and in the excitement of the moment it seemed natural for them to fall into each other's arms, although they had some difficulty in explaining this curious phenomenon to the old man.

The kisses that Deans snatched after they had had a bite of supper with Mr Faulconbridge were another matter.

'You caught me at a weak moment,' Nancy protested; 'and, in any case, what use was it resisting a strong person like yourself? And perhaps we're not intended to resist too much,' she consoled herself, in his arms, just before they parted.

Nancy's philosophy, however, is not always so sustaining. Now that Lieutenant Deans is at sea again, she is a bit shaky at times; and no wonder, with all these rumours of another naval engagement in the air, not to mention the illustrated weeklies.

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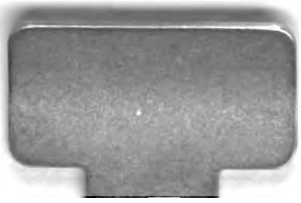

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